



Department for Transport

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From the Secretary of State
Rt Hon Heidi Alexander MP

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1 April 2025

Dear Robin,

I write to you, following the Oral Statement on Monday 24 March 2025 relating to the Heathrow disruption on Friday 21 March 2025.

You asked whether the National Energy System Operator (NESO) review will include the infrastructure in Northern Ireland, specifically Belfast international airport in your constituency and Belfast City airport.

I recognise the critical role that UK aviation plays in ensuring UK international and Union connectivity, whilst also supporting links to critical infrastructure. Therefore, the resilience of this infrastructure at UK airports is crucial to ensure continued movement of goods, freight and people across the Union.

The Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero, working with Ofgem, has commissioned NESO to investigate the power outage impacting Heathrow and the surrounding area. This investigation will identify any wider lessons to be learned on energy resilience for national infrastructure.

NESO's remit covers the Great Britain (GB) energy network whereas both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland operate under a separate network. The remit of the NESO review will cover the Heathrow incident and the wider resilience and security of the GB electricity system. The full terms of reference for the NESO review are available here:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/review-into-the-north-hyde-substation-outage-terms-of-reference.

Additionally, in July 2024, the Government launched a resilience review to assess UK practices and policies for resilience against a wide range of risks. The evidence-based review will determine what should be kept, changed, or improved, with a final strategy due in Spring 2025. My officials will work with the sector to ensure that lessons are learnt and that plans reflect this.

Through both reviews, we will seek to understand any appropriate lessons for the resilience and security of critical energy infrastructure and will consider how best to address them on a UK-wide basis with the relevant authorities, including the Devolved Governments.

Thank you for your interest on this matter. A copy of the letter has been placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Heidi Alexander', with a stylized, flowing script.

Rt Hon Heidi Alexander MP

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR TRANSPORT