

GRTgaz creates RICE, a Research & Development center



On 1st January 2018, GRTgaz created its own research center, called RICE (*Research & Innovation Center for Energy*). All the “R&D gas infrastructure” activities of ENGIE’s CRIGEN Lab have now been transferred to the new GRTgaz research center, structured into 4 divisions:

- gas analysis and metering;
- gas pipelines (integrity of metal and non-metal network activities);
- industrial performance and security;
- innovation and promotion.

A hundred or so staff – doctors, researchers and technicians – form the RICE workforce on two sites located at Saint-Denis (Seine-Saint-Denis) and at Alfortville (Val-de-Marne). The creation of RICE is also accompanied by the transfer of material assets such as the gas quality analysis laboratories as well as immaterial assets: 54 inventions and 330 patents. These patents cover all types of gas infrastructure including gas storage, distribution and transport. The teams responsible for promoting the industrial property of these immaterial assets have also joined RICE as well as those of GRTgaz’s innovation mission.

The main research themes of the new center will focus on industrial security and operation excellence as well as on renewable gases (bio-methane and hydrogen). On these topics, the RICE teams will concentrate their efforts on developing specifications regarding the quality of the gas required for injection in gas infrastructure. They will also contribute to the deployment of the first reverse flow stations, equipment which will enable surplus bio-methane to be carried from the distribution networks to the transport networks when local production exceeds demand.

RICE will carry out R&D activities for various gas infrastructure operators and other customers with the same demanding standards. The center will continue the work and cooperation with international organisations such as the Pipeline Research Council International (PRCI) and the European Gas Research Group (GERG). GRTgaz thus wishes to strengthen its position as the acknowledged leader of gas infrastructure in Europe.

The [1st research, development and innovation report 2016](#) by GRTgaz is available on the Regulatory Commission of Energy website. This report presents details of the current and future research activities.

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GRTgaz is one of the European leaders of natural gas transmission and a world expert of gas transmission networks and systems. In France, GRTgaz owns and operates 32,450 km of buried pipes and 28 compression stations used to ship gas between suppliers and consumers (distributors or industrial companies directly connected to the transmission network). GRTgaz fulfils public service missions to ensure the continuity of supply to consumers and sells transmission services to users of the network. An actor of the energy transition, GRTgaz invests in innovative solutions to adapt its network and reconcile competitiveness with security of supply and preservation of the environment.