

Power squandered by protection policy

BY JAMIE STEWART

Excess power generated by the Bahrain World Trade Centre's (BWTC) wind turbines is being wasted, the firm that installed the turbines has said.

The BWTC's turbines are being switched off intermittently because utilities companies will not accept power into the grid from alternative sources despite power shortages across the GCC.

Ole Sangill, managing partner of Danish firm Norwin which installed the turbines, believes the move forms part of a protection policy on the part of the Bahrain authorities.

"It's mostly a political decision," said Sangill. "Somebody needs to say we want to do this, and they need to accept the wind turbines that can supply the grid.

"If you want to put in wind farms the whole idea is to export the power into the grid. The situation has to be resolved. It is a discussion that has been going on for quite a while."

The Bahrain director of electricity distribution was unavailable for comment.

Norwin has been constantly monitoring power consumption in the BWTC and comparing this to power generated by the turbines since they were switched on in April.

"There are times when there is wind yet practically no power consumption within the building, so we actually need to stop the turbines," said Sangill.

"I believe that down the road this issue can be solved and we



Norwin's Ole Sangill at the launch of the Bahrain World Trade Centre wind turbines.

will be allowed to do that (feed into the grid), because that is the way forward."

When fully operational, the BWTC will generate 15% of its power requirement via the turbines. But excess power is generated when the buildings power requirement falls, such as overnight and at weekends.

A project to link the electricity grids of the six GCC nations to create a more functional and effi-

cient "super grid" is due for completion in 2010.

The project will be the first development to include all six GCC nations and would form part of a bid to avoid crippling power shortages across the region.

A recent Global Insight report predicted that Gulf energy consumption will increase by 50% over the next five years, while power generation will increase by only 30%.