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HiQ is developing a mobile testing tool for remote read electricity meters for Senea

The Nordic IT and management consultancy HiQ is developing a hand held computer-based installation and testing tool for installation technicians to use in the field. The testing tool will allow Senea to quickly and easily test that radio communication is working and to configure the meters directly in the field.

Senea develops and delivers complete systems for metering data collection and network automation. Senea's equipment continuously reports the actual energy consumption to the energy supplier's central system. The advantage of this system is that the customer is invoiced for actual consumption instead of estimated consumption.

"In the production of this tool, HiQ has been responsible for requirement specifications, development, testing and project management. Developing testing tools used for testing complex systems is difficult and requires knowledge of systems, software development and testing environments. HiQ has that knowledge," says Patrik Boman, Managing Director of HiQ Stockholm.

The tool, which is used for testing and installation, can initiate radio traffic between the meters and in this way check that they are communicating as they should be. The tool allows the technicians to configure the meters in the field so that they can be put into operation with ease and speed. Among other things, the tool allows the meters to be configured for different times or weekends when electricity rates vary.

The demand for remote reading of electricity meters is expected to increase significantly as a result of a new government energy policy agreement according to which all of the five million electricity meters in Sweden will be read monthly by 1 July 2009 at the latest. This essentially makes remote reading of meters a necessity.

Testing tools are being used to ensure that they function faultlessly through automatic regression tests or load tests. HiQ has been developing test tools for clients in many business sectors with multiple areas of application.

"HiQ has developed testing tools for system verification of telephony platforms, diagnostic tools for various vehicle suppliers, and tools to test protocol converter systems between different trading locations for the finance sector," says Boman.

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HiQ is an IT and management consultancy that focuses on high-tech solutions in the fields of communication, software development and simulation. The company is a leader in these fields and the Nordic region is its domestic market. HiQ employs about 400 people at offices in Sweden, Finland and Denmark. HiQ is listed on Stockholmsbörsen (the Stockholm Exchange). For more information, please visit www.hiq.se.