



# NORTH AMERICAN ELECTRIC RELIABILITY COUNCIL

Princeton Forrestal Village, 116-390 Village Boulevard, Princeton, New Jersey 08540-5731

August 15, 2003

## August 14-15, 2003, Power Outages – Media Briefing 11:00 AM

- Starting at about 4:11 PM EDT on August 14, major losses of electric load occurred in the northeastern U.S. and Canada.
- The exact cause is not known at present, although there is no evidence of a physical or cyber terrorist attack.
- All efforts are presently focused on system restoration.
- Investigations are under way and data collection continues. It could be days before we understand the sequence of events that lead to this massive power failure.
- The areas most affected center around the Great Lakes: Michigan, Ohio, New York City, Ontario, Quebec, northern New Jersey, Massachusetts, and Connecticut.
- Load was lost in the PJM Interconnection, the Midwest ISO, Hydro Quebec, Ontario IMO, ISO New England, New York ISO
- Approximately 61,800 MW of customer load was lost in an area that covers 50 million people. We cannot say with precision how many customers were affected at this time.
- At least 48,600 MW has been restored at present and we expect customers in most areas to have power by the end of today.
- We know that a number of transmission lines and generators tripped out of service prior to and during this event. However, a great deal of additional data and information must be gathered and analyzed before definitive conclusions can be drawn as to the root cause of this outage.
- A large number of nuclear plants in the affected areas went off-line and may take several days to return to service.
- Most fossil-fired generation has been restored to service.
- Utilities worked throughout the night and will continue to work over the next several days throughout the affected areas to return all customers to service.
- Although the event was felt throughout the entire Eastern Interconnection, customers and utilities in the south and western part of the Interconnection were not affected.
- NERC, in conjunction with its regional reliability councils and member utilities, and in coordination with government agencies, will conduct a thorough investigation and report its findings as soon as possible.
- NERC will continue to evaluate and analyze the situation throughout the day and we will report as more information becomes available.