

Reliability Issues Steering Committee Mandate

Final Draft – June 7, 2012

This organization shall be known as the Reliability Issues Steering Committee, abbreviated as “RISC,” and report directly to the NERC Board of Trustees (the Board).

Purpose and Responsibilities

1. The RISC is an advisory committee whose purpose is to triage and provide front-end, high level leadership and accountability for nominated issues of strategic importance to bulk power system reliability, and through consensus, establish a common understanding of the scope, priority, and targets for the development of solutions to address these issues. In doing so, the RISC provides a “framework” for steering, developing, formalizing, and organizing recommendations to the Board.
2. The RISC is responsible for receiving reliability issues and risks from stakeholders, regulators, and the Board which meet the following criteria:
 - a. Contain a documented reliability problem and reliability risk (or reason why a current standard is insufficient);
 - b. Link to actual events that provide an example of the problem;
 - c. Contain sufficient technical understanding/description of the problem;
 - d. Contain sufficient studies, analyses, and data necessary to support the development of a standard or other action to address risk (lesson learned, alert, technical paper, etc.);
 - e. Specify the performance results required/expected by the standard or other action;
 - f. Propose how compliance would be evaluated (if a standard);
 - g. At a level that is practical to solve (scope and scale are appropriate);
 - h. Within the scope and jurisdiction of the Electric Reliability Organization (ERO); and
 - i. Contain a justification or proposal for assessing reliability benefits and cost impacts..
3. The RISC will triage and evaluate the reliability issues and risks by:
 - a. Seeking assistance and requesting additional work be done by the standing committees or the Member Representatives Committee (MRC), if that is the consensus of the RISC members. Standing committees may also be requested to provide a work product back to the RISC.
 - b. Obtaining additional resources and expertise, as needed, to assist with the development of recommendations, risk project assignments, and follow-up assessments to the Board.
 - c. Encouraging open dialogue and sharing of information among Board committees, the MRC, industry, NERC staff, etc., to set project management timelines towards an accomplishable and achievable solution.
 - d. Being informed by considering and incorporating findings from recent system events, lessons learned, and outcomes of risk trends and indices developed by NERC’s Risk Controls function.

- e. Assessing the completeness of the nominated reliability issues and risks and requesting additional information from the nominee, if necessary.
4. Upon the completion of its triage and evaluation of each reliability issue and risk, the RISC will:
 - a. Provide the Board a comprehensive Reliability Risk Statement¹, that is designed to steer and manage reliability issues that result in the timely development of solutions; and
 - b. Either: 1) recommend a specific action to the Board that could include, but not be limited to, the development of standards, guidelines, bulletins, lessons learned, or other technical documents, 2) recommend the issue be tabled until more information is provided for necessary clarification, or 3) recommend that no action be taken.
 - c. Reinforce that any recommendation of the RISC can be appealed first to the RISC and then to the Board.
 5. The RISC shall also:
 - a. Respond to the Board's decision and/or policy to accept, reject, or remand the recommendation(s) and task the RISC for further clarification.
 - b. Prepare reports to the Board no less than quarterly and at such other times as deemed necessary by the RISC chair, or as requested by the NERC Board chair.
 - c. Prepare periodic reports to the Board on the relative priority and resources that should be allocated to various emerging and continuing reliability risk issues of strategic importance to bulk power system reliability.
 - d. Perform such other functions that may, from time to time, be delegated or assigned by the Board.

Membership

6. The RISC shall be comprised of no less than 12 members, typically of the following allocation:
 - a. **Six (6)** stakeholder-based — at least four (4) from the MRC and at least two (2) at-large members (not members of the MRC);
 - b. **Five (5)** — one (1) from each of the standing committees: Standards, Operating, Planning, Critical Infrastructure Protection, and Compliance and Certification (SC, OC, PC, CIPC, and CCC). These members will be the chair or vice chair unless otherwise recommended by the standing committee; and
 - c. **One (1)** — senior NERC staff recommended by the NERC CEO as a non-voting member.
7. The MRC will seek to solicit a pool of candidates who meet the following criteria and propose a slate of members to the Board for approval:
 - a. Geographic diversity, including international such that Eastern, Western, and Texas Interconnections, along with Canada are represented on the RISC;

¹ Reliability Risk Statements will include a full description of the risk issue, including the urgency and priority of recommended remedial measures and other initiatives/activities recommended by the RISC, and a preliminary assessment of the costs and benefits associated the risk issue and proposed remedial measures.

- b. Sector, size, and asset (transmission, distribution, load, generation, etc.) diversity;
 - c. High-level understanding and perspective on reliability risks;
 - d. Experience in a leadership role or background in an executive level position is strongly preferred; and
 - e. Balanced consideration of these criteria, across the entire membership of the RISC.
8. At its May meeting each year, the MRC shall review and recommend to the Board a slate of members to the RISC. Members will be appointed by the Board to serve for two-year terms, where half of the terms will be staggered. A nomination period will be announced and the MRC will recommend a slate of RISC participants as set forth in this mandate.
9. The Board shall appoint a chair of the RISC (from the member slate) to serve a two-year term and direct the activities of the RISC and work towards reaching consensus on all recommendations and actions.

Meetings

10. The RISC will meet based on the frequency and rate that reliability issue nominations are received. Meetings shall occur at least once every quarter and can be in person or by conference call as determined by the chair. All meetings of the RISC will be open (except as noted in the paragraph below for confidential sessions).

Confidential Sessions. The chair of the RISC may limit attendance at a meeting or portion of a meeting, based on confidentiality of the information to be disclosed at the meeting. Such limitations will be applied sparingly and on a nondiscriminatory basis as needed to protect critical energy infrastructure information and other information that is sensitive to one or more parties. Confidentiality agreements may also be applied as necessary to protect sensitive information.