

NERC News

January 2022

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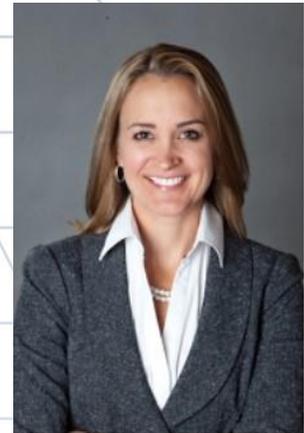
ERO Executive Spotlight – Kelly Hanson Senior Vice President and Chief Administrative Officer, NERC

Transforming Ourselves to Meet the Needs of Our Industry

NERC has focused on being more efficient for many years. As a small, knowledge-based organization with a very bold mission, we simply have to always look for ways to continually improve how we manage our people, processes and technology.

Last year, we developed a “people strategy” that looked not only at *how* we work, but also at *where* we work. The pandemic showed us that employees can be just as productive working from home, and they actually prefer this flexibility to maintain work–life balance. Today, our workforce does their “head’s down” work from their home offices and uses the NERC offices for in-person collaboration sessions and stakeholder meetings. Changing our mindset from how we’ve always done it to what works best for retaining our team and attracting new employees also allowed us to reduce the operational costs of our D.C. office space.

Another great example of efficiency improvements comes with improving process through the use of technology. The goal of the Align project, which started in 2014, was to improve and standardize the compliance monitoring and enforcement processes across the ERO Enterprise. Align was developed to be scalable — to evolve and enhance capabilities as the Enterprise’s CMEP needs change. Still under development, we just released the third phase of the project and expect to have Release 4 completed in 2022. [Continued on page 2](#)



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Transforming ourselves (cont'd)

Through the Align project, we have been able to create a common portal for registered entities, enabling consistency of experience; enhance quality assurance and oversight, enabling consistent application of the CMEP across the ERO Enterprise; and standardize common business processes and workflows, enabling increased productivity throughout the ERO Enterprise CMEP staff.

At 224 employees, NERC has also had to figure out how to maximize our influence through industry partnerships. We have built strong synergies between the North American Transmission and Generator Forums; the Department of Energy, including the national laboratories; the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers; and a number of universities, to name just a few. Another example is our partnership with the Electric Power Research Institute, which leverages our collective knowledge to respond to industry reliability challenges, including modeling of solar generation, electromagnetic pulse impacts and energy assurance. We are grateful for the many industry partnerships and industry leaders who have worked tirelessly to carry our messages.

These are just three examples of the ways we have looked differently at how we approach our business — there is a long list of other examples that are just as impactful. However, as we look ahead at the many challenges that our industry faces, we have to think differently about how we are going to maintain a reliable and secure bulk power system.

From the cyber threat environment to the integrated impact of changing resource mix and climate change driven by weather events, our systems and cyber security need to be on par with the best in the industry. Our processes need to become more agile to be able to respond to the increasing pace of change, which is especially true of our standards development process as well as our underlying business and financial management processes.

Supporting this step change will require creativity, patience and a fresh look at how we accomplish NERC's mission, both the work that meets our regulatory mandate and the new insights and tools needed to support the industry. Important topics like finding ways to make our core processes and programs more agile to adjust to the changing risk environment all while holding true to collaboration and deliberation, the hallmarks of our work. All with industry recognition that investing in the ERO's sustainability is required for growth. I look forward to the year ahead — working to become a more agile and efficient organization and tackling the evolving needs of our industry. With the strong support of our stakeholders, I'm confident we are well prepared to meet these challenges. ■■■

Headlines

NERC and ReliabilityFirst Brief Indiana State Senate Utilities Committee on Regional Reliability

Jim Robb, president and CEO of NERC, and Tim Gallagher, president and CEO of ReliabilityFirst, briefed the Indiana State Senate Utilities Committee on national and regional reliability topics on Thursday, January 27. Drawing from NERC's *2021 Long-Term Reliability Assessment* and *2021–2022 Winter Reliability Assessment* and data from ReliabilityFirst, Robb and Gallagher reviewed reliability trends and presented the latest risk analysis for the current winter season.

Statement on FERC January Open Meeting Action

At its monthly open meeting on January 20, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) issued a [Notice of Proposed Rulemaking](#) that proposes to direct NERC to develop new or modified Critical Infrastructure Protection Reliability Standards addressing internal network security monitoring for high- and medium-impact Bulk Electric System cyber systems. The ERO Enterprise appreciates FERC's attention to cyber security matters and will continue to work with FERC and stakeholders toward assuring the reliability of the North American bulk power system. ■■■

Compliance

Implementation Guidance Update

Implementation Guidance is developed by industry and vetted through pre-qualified organizations. In order for an organization to become pre-qualified, a member of that organization must submit an application to the Compliance and Certification Committee. Vetted examples can then be submitted to the ERO Enterprise for endorsement, and, if endorsed, the ERO Enterprise would give the example deference during CMEP activities with consideration of facts and circumstances. Implementation Guidance would not prescribe the only approach to implementing a standard and entities may choose alternative approaches that better fit their situation. Draft Implementation Guidance is posted while it is being considered for ERO Enterprise endorsement. Once the Implementation Guidance is endorsed, it will be moved to the ERO Enterprise-Endorsed Implementation Guidance section. Draft Implementation Guidance that does not receive ERO Enterprise endorsement will be removed, but tracked in the Non-Endorsed Implementation Guidance tracking sheet.

NERC has updated the [ERO Enterprise Non-Endorsed Implementation Guidance tracking spreadsheet](#) to include the following:

- CIP-004-7 Personnel & Training (2019-02 SDT)
- CIP-005-7 R3 Electronic Security Perimeters (2019-03 SDT)
- CIP-010-4 R1 Configuration Change Management and Vulnerability Assessments (2019-03 SDT)
- CIP-013-2 Supply Chain Risk Management Plans (2019-03 SDT)
- EOP-011-2 Emergency Operations and Preparedness (2019-06 SDT)

Two Practice Guides Published and Program Alignment Issues Resolved

CMEP Practice Guides address how ERO Enterprise CMEP staff execute compliance monitoring and enforcement activities. They are developed and maintained by the ERO Enterprise, although in some cases, may be developed following policy discussions with industry stakeholders.

CMEP Practice Guides are posted on the NERC website for transparency.

NERC posted two new CMEP Practice Guides to the [NERC Compliance Guidance web page](#). The [CIP-014-2 R1 Practice Guide](#) provides guidance to CMEP staff around the CIP-014-2 R1 risk assessment. The [TPL-001-4 and TPL-001-5.1 Table 1 Contingencies Practice Guide](#) provides guidance to CMEP staff around understanding entity practices and controls for creating the Contingency lists identified in Table 1 of TPL-001-4 and TPL-001-5.1.

By publishing the aforementioned Practice Guides, NERC resolved two Program Alignment issues pertaining to considerations for ERO Enterprise CMEP staff regarding the CIP-014-2 R1 risk assessment and TPL-001-4 and TPL-001-5.1 Table 1 Contingencies Practice Guides. The ERO Enterprise Program Alignment Process is intended to enhance efforts to identify, prioritize and resolve alignment issues across the ERO Enterprise. Using this process, NERC captures identified issues from the various resources in a [centralized repository](#).

CIP-012 Small Group Advisory Sessions Announced

NERC will host small group advisory meetings (Date/Time TBD) with registered entities, standards developers and Regional Entities to assess the implementation of CIP-012-1 – Communications between Control Centers. All meetings will be held virtually through WebEx.

The event will consist of two parts:

- **General Sessions and Live Webinar:** A general interest session, including possible industry speakers and ERO Enterprise staff, will be held to discuss CIP-012 and possible compliance concerns.
- **SGAS One-on-One Sessions:** Closed, one-on-one discussions between a registered entity's subject matter experts and ERO Enterprise staff about issues pertinent to that entity's implementation of the CIP-012-1 Standard. The registered entity should provide the ERO Enterprise their questions prior to the scheduled one-on-one session. **NERC will schedule the one-on-one sessions after**

registration is received and is coordinated with regional staff.

Registration:

- **SGAS One-on-One Sessions:** NERC accepts SGAS one-on-one registrations on a first-come, first-serve basis; if the number of requests exceeds the time allotted, NERC will coordinate alternative arrangements.
 - There is no limit to the number of SMEs who can participate in SGAS sessions.
 - NERC will notify those who request a SGAS of their appointment time so the registered entity can make staff arrangements accordingly.
 - SGAS registration closed January 28.
- **General Sessions and Live Webinar:** Workshop is open to industry.
 - Webinar announcement will be sent prior to the workshop/webinar.

For more information or assistance, please contact [Daniel Bogle](#). ■■■

Standards

Standards Committee Segment Representative Election Results

In January, the Standards Committee (SC) held a Segment 2 special election to fill the remainder of the 2022–2023 term. An election was held from January 4–13, 2022. After verification of votes cast, Jamie Johnson received the majority vote and was elected to fill the remainder of the two-year term ending December 31, 2023. ■■■

Upcoming Events

For a full accounting of NERC events, such as meetings and conference calls for standard drafting teams, other standing committees, subcommittees, task forces, and working groups, please refer to the [NERC calendar](#).

- **Board of Trustees Committees, Member Representatives Committee, and Board of Trustees Meetings** – February 9–10, 2022 | [Schedule of Events](#)

- **Personnel Certification Governance Committee Meeting** – February 15–17, 2022 | [Register](#) | [Agenda](#)
- **Energy Reliability Assessment Task Force Industry Update and Opportunity for Industry Comments** – 11:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m. Eastern, February 16, 2022 | [Register](#) ■■■

Regional Entity Events

Midwest Reliability Organization (MRO)

- [MRO Security Advisory Council Threat Forum Meeting](#), February 9
- [MRO Compliance Monitoring & Enforcement Program Advisory Council Q1 Meeting](#), February 15
- [MRO Security Advisory Council Q1 Meeting](#), February 16
- [MRO Protective Relay Subgroup Q1 Meeting](#), February 22
- [MRO RAM/CIP Virtual Conference](#), March 23

ReliabilityFirst (RF)

- [Technical Talk with RF](#) – February 14

Texas RE

- Talk with Texas RE – [Cybersecurity Threats](#), February 10
- Talk with Texas RE – [PUCT Update](#), February 17
- Talk with Texas RE – [Odessa Disturbance Lessons Learned and Best Practices](#), March 3

WECC

- [Joint Guidance Committee meeting](#), February 4
- [Reliability Risk Priorities Workshop](#), February 15
- [Reliability Risk Committee meeting](#), February 15–16
- [Reliability Assessment Committee meeting](#), February 16
- [Member Advisory Committee meeting](#), February 16
- [Grid Fundamentals workshop](#), February 22–23



Filings

There were no NERC Filings to FERC in January.

There were no Canadian Filings in January.



Careers at NERC

CIP Assurance Advisor

Location: Atlanta

[Details](#)

E-ISAC – Exercise and Resilience Specialist

Location: Washington, D.C.

[Details](#) ■ ■ ■