

Vegetation Management SAR Drafting Team

March 22–23, 2007
TVA - Nashville, Tennessee

Draft Meeting Notes

Attendance — Chairman Richard Dearman brought the meeting to order. The following team members attended the meeting:

1. Richard Dearman
2. Paul Beaulieu
3. Stephen R. Cieslewicz
4. Weston Davis
5. Richard E. Dearman
6. Randall F. Gann
7. George Juhn
8. John R. Kellum
9. Randall H. Miller
10. David Morrell
11. Michael Alan Neal
12. John Pinney
13. Gerald Rhode
14. Charles Sheppard
15. John Tamsberg
16. Stephen Tankersley
17. Maureen E. Long
18. Harry Tom

Harry Tom served as the team's coordinator. Maureen Long provided process support.

Antitrust — There were no questions on the Antitrust Guidelines.

Agenda — Richard Dearman and the members were given an overview presentation by Maureen in which she described the Standard Development Process, including the duties and responsibilities of the SAR drafting team chairman, members, the NERC Process Manager and the Standards Coordinator.

At the SAR drafting team's invitation, Bob Snow of FERC staff, et al, participated on the phone (from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.).

The discussion included a series of questions developed prior to the conference call by the VMSDT (see attachment 1).

Response to Comments — the drafting team developed a response to all the comments received from stakeholders. Commenters questioned the need to modify the standard so soon after its initial adoption, the suitability of IEEE 516-2003 Standard, the applicability of the standard to

facilities rated below 200kV, inspection cycles, and clearances among other items. Each comment was reviewed, responded to by the SAR drafting team and recorded in a “Consideration of Comments” document to be posted on the NERC Web site during the week of April 2, 2007.

Next Activities — the drafting team made modifications to the SAR in response to stakeholders, the NERC Rules of Procedure, and FERC staff. The team determined that they would seek another round of comments before moving the SAR forward to the Standards Committee for approval.

Schedule — The drafting team reviewed their project schedule and will forward to stakeholders a consideration of comments document and a revised SAR during the week of April 2, 2007, with a view to receive stakeholder comments back by the week of May 7, 2007. The next meeting of the SAR DT is scheduled for the week of May 14, 2007 in Progress Energy offices in Tampa, Florida to respond to comments and prepare the SAR for submittal to the Standards Committee.

Attachment 1

Bob Snow and Gerry Taylor of the FERC Office of Energy Markets and Reliability along with FERC general counsel (Christy Walsh, Stefanie Watson) were on a conference call with the VMSDT to discuss the FAC-003-1 Standard, the Mandatory Reliability Standards for the Bulk Power System NOPR and Order 693.

QUESTIONS:

1. Would you review what the FERC recommends the SAR DT to focus upon?
 - Inspection cycles
 - Applicability per voltage class
 - Application to federal vs. non federal lands.
 - Physical clearances requirement
 - Bob Snow: agrees with the Commission directives and looks forward to standards that minimize/avoid outages due not to only vegetation causes through rigorous inspection processes.
2. Clarify whether we should modify FAC-003-1 AND write one or more additional standards, re: minimum clearances for transmission lines that cross federal and non-federal lands?
 - Refer to P. 735, this decision is the DT's to make.
3. Why continue with the case-by-case basis for federal lands when it is not cost-effective, impractical and detrimental to bulk electric system reliability? Entities have the obligation to comply but not necessarily the authority to comply.
 - Refer to P. 732.
4. The SAR DT would like to know which agencies have over-riding authority in establishing requirements for lines on federal lands that are under the purview of a variety of agencies, e.g., Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, Fish and Wildlife Service, etc.
 - FERC commissioners have not addressed issue to date and staff cannot answer this at this time. Counsel suggests putting the concern or comment in a Request for Rehearing to the Commission.
5. What is the rationale for a distinction between federal land and non-federal land transmission lines?
 - See response to question 4.
6. Focusing on outage data is not only issue; there are costs associated with dealing with the various federal agencies.
 - Not in the public record to date.

7. Must there be a specific minimum clearance requirement or may a qualitative description relative to the line's inherent reliability be more appropriate?
 - The Commission wanted to identify the objective of attaining a low probability of sustained outage due to vegetation.
8. Discuss the issue of applicability of FAC-003-1 to "critical" lines below 200kV – there is a mechanism in place but how shall regions be encouraged to identify them? What about the WECC lines?
 - There are no items before the Commission at this time with respect to critical sub 200kV lines that are subject to FAC-003-1.
9. The members of the initial Standard DT are concerned about after-the-fact concerns by FERC.
 - FERC staff intends to participate on DT efforts going forward mostly over the phone.
10. Please comment on the Commission's perspective on IEEE Standard 516-2003 relative to personnel safety versus system reliability.
 - FERC staff spoke to chairman of the IEEE Standard 516-2003 and he commented that it is not appropriate for application to transmission line reliability.
 - FERC expects the Compliance Audit program staff to independently formulate and submit audit template to address Commission determinations.
 - Timeline expectation for collection of outage data is not identified in the order but FERC expects one to be defined in an update to the standards work plan. Historical data is available from some entities and is encouraged to submit to NERC for collection and forwarding to FERC staff.