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NORTH AMERICAN ELECTRIC RELIABILITY CORPORATION

Standards Announcement

Initial Ballot Window Open
July 9–19, 2010

Now available at: https://standards.nerc.net/CurrentBallots.aspx

Project 2007-07: Transmission Vegetation Management

An initial ballot window for proposed standard FAC-003-2 — Transmission Vegetation Management is now open **until 8 p.m. Eastern on July 19, 2010**. An associated implementation plan has been posted with the revised standard.

Members of the ballot pool associated with this project will receive a separate e-mail with a link to the non-binding on the Violation Risk Factors (VRFs) and Violation Severity Levels (VSLs).

On March 18, 2010, FERC issued several orders and notices of proposed rulemakings pertaining to standards development activities and processes, suggesting a lack of progress in responding to directives from Order 693 as well in the timeliness of standards development in general. At the May 2010 NERC Board meeting, Gerry Cauley, NERC's President, also expressed these concerns, indicating that the resolution to these concerns is one of NERC's top priorities in the near term. As a result, the Standards Committee has authorized deviations from the normal standards development process for the Vegetation Management project, as well as other projects that have been through significant stakeholder review through the development process, to demonstrate that the NERC enterprise is responsive to FERC directives, and is making progress in developing new standards.

The Standards Committee approved the following deviations from the standards development process:

- The proposed changes to the standards will be posted for a shortened comment period;
- The ballot pool will be formed during the first few weeks of the comment period;
- The initial ballot will be conducted during the last 10 days of the comment period; and
- The drafting team may make modifications between the initial and recirculation ballots based on stakeholder comments to improve the overall quality of the standard.

Instructions

Members of the ballot pool associated with this project may log in and submit their votes from the following page: https://standards.nerc.net/CurrentBallots.aspx

Next Steps

Voting results will be posted and announced after the ballot window closes.

Project Background

The project is an update to FAC-003-1, which was approved in 2006. The items identified for revision include the incorporation of FERC Order 693 comments related to applicability, procedural repairs to conform to the current standards format and development procedure, technical updates and guidance to address stakeholder suggestions, and the elimination of "fill-in-the-blank" components.

Project page: http://www.nerc.com/filez/standards/Vegetation-Management_Project_2007-7.html

Special notes about this project:
The NERC Standards Committee endorsed the use of Project 2007-07: Vegetation Management as the prototype for the proof-of-concept for using the "results-based" criteria for developing a reliability standard. The overall approach includes considerably more emphasis on the "concepts and assumptions" underlying the development of requirements and goes beyond the steps most drafting teams use when developing a standard. Accordingly, the "look and feel" of the vegetation management standard is quite different than NERC's existing standards. However, at the core is a set of mandatory and enforceable requirements with useful guidance supporting these requirements, an approach NERC's legal counsel has reviewed and finds acceptable. More information about results-based standards can be found at:
http://www.nerc.com/filez/standards/Project2010-06_Results-based_Reliability_Standards.html

Applicability of Standards in Project

Transmission Owners
Specific facilities (see standard)

Standards Development Process

The Reliability Standards Development Procedure contains all the procedures governing the standards development process. The success of the NERC standards development process depends on stakeholder participation. We extend our thanks to all those who participate.

For more information or assistance, please contact Lauren Koller at Lauren.Koller@nerc.net