



UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
BEFORE THE  
FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION

North American Electric Reliability        )  
Corporation                                    )

Docket No. RD20-2-000

**INFORMATIONAL FILING OF THE NORTH AMERICAN ELECTRIC RELIABILITY  
CORPORATION REGARDING STANDARDS DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS**

Pursuant to paragraph 5 of the Order Directing Informational Filings Regarding NERC Standard Drafting Projects,<sup>1</sup> the North American Electric Reliability Corporation (“NERC”)<sup>2</sup> hereby submits to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (“FERC” or the “Commission”) an informational filing regarding one active Critical Infrastructure Protection (“CIP”) standard development project: Project 2016-02 – Modifications to CIP Standards (“Project 2016-02”).<sup>3</sup> Project 2016-02 focuses on modifications to the CIP Reliability Standards to incorporate applicable protections for virtualized environments. This informational filing provides an update to the current schedule for Project 2016-02.

**I. BACKGROUND**

NERC initiated Project 2016-02 to address the directives from Order No. 822<sup>4</sup> as well as issues identified during implementation of the CIP Reliability Standards approved in Order No. 791.<sup>5</sup> One issue identified during implementation included how the CIP Reliability Standards

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<sup>1</sup> N. Am. Elec. Reliability Corp., “Order Directing Informational Filings Regarding NERC Standard Drafting Projects,” 170 FERC ¶ 61,109 (Feb. 20, 2020) [hereinafter February 20 Order].

<sup>2</sup> The Commission certified NERC as the electric reliability organization (“ERO”) in accordance with Section 215 of the FPA on July 20, 2006. N. Am. Elec. Reliability Corp., 116 FERC ¶ 61,062 (2006).

<sup>3</sup> Unless otherwise designated, all capitalized terms shall have the meaning set forth in the *Glossary of Terms Used in NERC Reliability Standards*, [https://www.nerc.com/pa/Stand/Glossary%20of%20Terms/Glossary\\_of\\_Terms.pdf](https://www.nerc.com/pa/Stand/Glossary%20of%20Terms/Glossary_of_Terms.pdf).

<sup>4</sup> Revised Critical Infrastructure Protection Reliability Standards, Order No. 822, 154 FERC ¶ 61,037, at PP 32, 73, *reh’g denied*, Order No. 822-A, 156 FERC ¶ 61,052 (2016).

<sup>5</sup> Version 5 Critical Infrastructure Protection Reliability Standards, Order No. 791, 145 FERC ¶ 61,160 (2013), *order on clarification and reh’g*, Order No. 791-A, 146 FERC ¶ 61,188 (2014).

address virtualization.<sup>6</sup> Because of the increasing use of virtualization in industrial control system environments, the Project 2016-02 standard drafting team is considering modifications to the CIP Reliability Standards and associated definitions to address permitted architecture and the security risks of virtualization technologies. The Project 2016-02 standard drafting team is working on proposed virtualization modifications to currently enforceable Reliability Standards CIP-004-7, CIP-005-7, CIP-006-6, CIP-007-6, and CIP-010-4, with conforming changes to Reliability Standards CIP-002-5.1a, CIP-003-8, CIP-008-6, CIP-009-6, CIP-011-3, and CIP-013-2.

In the February 20 Order, the Commission directed NERC to submit, within 30 days of the issuance of the Order, an informational filing that includes project schedules for Projects 2016-02 and 2019-02.<sup>7</sup> The Commission stated that these schedules should include the status of the projects, interim target dates, and the anticipated filing date for new or modified Reliability Standards. In addition, the Commission directed NERC to file quarterly informational status updates, beginning in June 2020, until NERC files new or modified standards with the Commission.<sup>8</sup>

NERC provided the initial informational filing regarding the schedules on March 19, 2020<sup>9</sup> and 16 additional quarterly informational filings with updated schedules and one supplemental informational filing within the abovementioned docket. NERC filed for Commission approval the

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<sup>6</sup> “Virtualization is the process of creating virtual, as opposed to physical, versions of computer hardware to minimize the amount of physical computer hardware resources required to perform various functions.” *Virtualization and Cloud Computing Services*, Notice of Inquiry, 170 FERC ¶ 61,110 at P 4 (2020) (citing the National Institute of Standards and Technology, *Guide to Security for Full Virtualization Technologies, Special Publication 800-125* (Jan. 2011), <https://nvlpubs.nist.gov/nistpubs/Legacy/SP/nistspecialpublication800-125.pdf>).

<sup>7</sup> February 20 Order, *supra* note 1, at P 5. Project 2019-02 has concluded, and FERC approved the Reliability Standards revised as part of that project (CIP-004-7 and CIP-011-3) on December 7, 2021.

<sup>8</sup> *Id.*

<sup>9</sup> NERC, *Informational Filing of the North American Electric Reliability Corporation Regarding Standards Development Projects*, Docket No. RD20-2-000 (March 19, 2020).

standards revised under Project 2019-02 (CIP-004-7 and CIP-011-3) on September 15, 2021,<sup>10</sup> and the Commission approved CIP-004-7 and CIP-011-3 on December 7, 2021.<sup>11</sup>

## II. PROJECT SCHEDULE

The schedule for Project 2016-02, shown below, reflects one minor change from the previous informational filing in this docket but otherwise remains on schedule. The final ballot commenced on April 3<sup>rd</sup> and concluded on April 12<sup>th</sup>, resulting in all Reliability Standards in Project 2016-02 passing final ballot.<sup>12</sup> Subsequently, the NERC Board adopted the Reliability Standards on May 9, 2024,<sup>13</sup> and the projected FERC filing date remains unchanged from the previous informational filing in this docket:

### Project 2016-02 Modifications to CIP Standards

- Additional 45-day formal comment period and ballot: Posted October 2023
- Final ballot: ~~To be Posted March~~ **April 2024**
- NERC Board Adoption: May 2024
- FERC Filing: June 2024

As the Reliability Standards revised under Project 2016-02 will be filed with the Commission imminently, this instant filing is the last schedule update that NERC will submit to the Commission in this docket. Accordingly, NERC requests the Commission consider that NERC has satisfied the February 20 Order directive to file schedule updates.

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<sup>10</sup> NERC, *Petition of the North American Electric Reliability Corporation for Approval of Proposed Reliability Standards CIP-004-7 and CIP-011-3 Addressing Bulk Electric System Cyber System Information Access Management*, Docket No. RD21-6-000 (Sep. 15, 2021).

<sup>11</sup> FERC, *Petition of the North American Electric Reliability Corporation for Approval of Reliability Standards CIP-004-7 and CIP-011-3*, Letter Order, Docket No. RD21-6-000 (Dec. 7, 2021).

<sup>12</sup> Ballot results may be found on the Project 2016-02 webpage here: <https://www.nerc.com/pa/Stand/Pages/Project%202016-02%20Modifications%20to%20CIP%20Standards.aspx>.

<sup>13</sup> NERC, *Board of Trustees Agenda Package May 9, 2024*, Agenda Item 5a (Project 2016-02 Modifications to CIP Standards), available at <https://www.nerc.com/gov/bot/Agenda%20highlights%20and%20Mintues%202013/Board%20of%20Trustees%20Agenda%20Package%20-%20May%209%202024.pdf>.

### III. CONCLUSION

At the time of this filing, Project 2016-02 remains on schedule as described herein. NERC appreciates the Commission's continued interest in supporting the reliability of the Bulk Power System through its engagement in the Reliability Standards development process.

Respectfully submitted,

*/s/ Marisa Hecht*

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June 13, 2024

**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

I hereby certify that I have served a copy of the foregoing document upon all parties listed on the official service list compiled by the Secretary in the above-referenced proceeding.

Dated at Washington, D.C. this 13th day of June 2024.

*/s/ Marisa Hecht*

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