

Reliability and Security Technical Committee (RSTC) Notional Work Product Flow Process

Background

The RSTC appoints technical subcommittees, task forces, and working groups (“Technical Groups”) as needed to accomplish objectives contained in the RSTC Strategic Plan, ERO Reliability Risk Priorities Report (RISC Report), and other ERO Enterprise strategic guidance.¹ The RSTC is responsible for directing and overseeing the work of the Technical Groups (Technical Group’s Work Scopes) and for their work products (Technical Group’s Work Plans). The RSTC Executive Committee (RSTCEC) reviews work scopes, provides guidance and advice, and is responsible for determining which Technical Group is most appropriately suited to execute a given assignment.² The following notional process describes how reliability and resilience issues can be added to a Technical Group’s Work Scope and be addressed through the respective Technical Group’s Work Plan and the RSTC Work Plan.

Process Flow Chart

The figure and accompanying table below show typical Technical Group, RSTCEC, and RSTC interactions that occur in the development and approval of RSTC deliverables.³ In broad terms, the following steps are involved in this process: 1) Risk Identification and Validation, 2) Risk Prioritization, 3) Remediation and Mitigation Identification and Evaluation, 4) RSTC Deploy Mitigation, 5) Measure Success, and 6) Monitor Residual Risk.

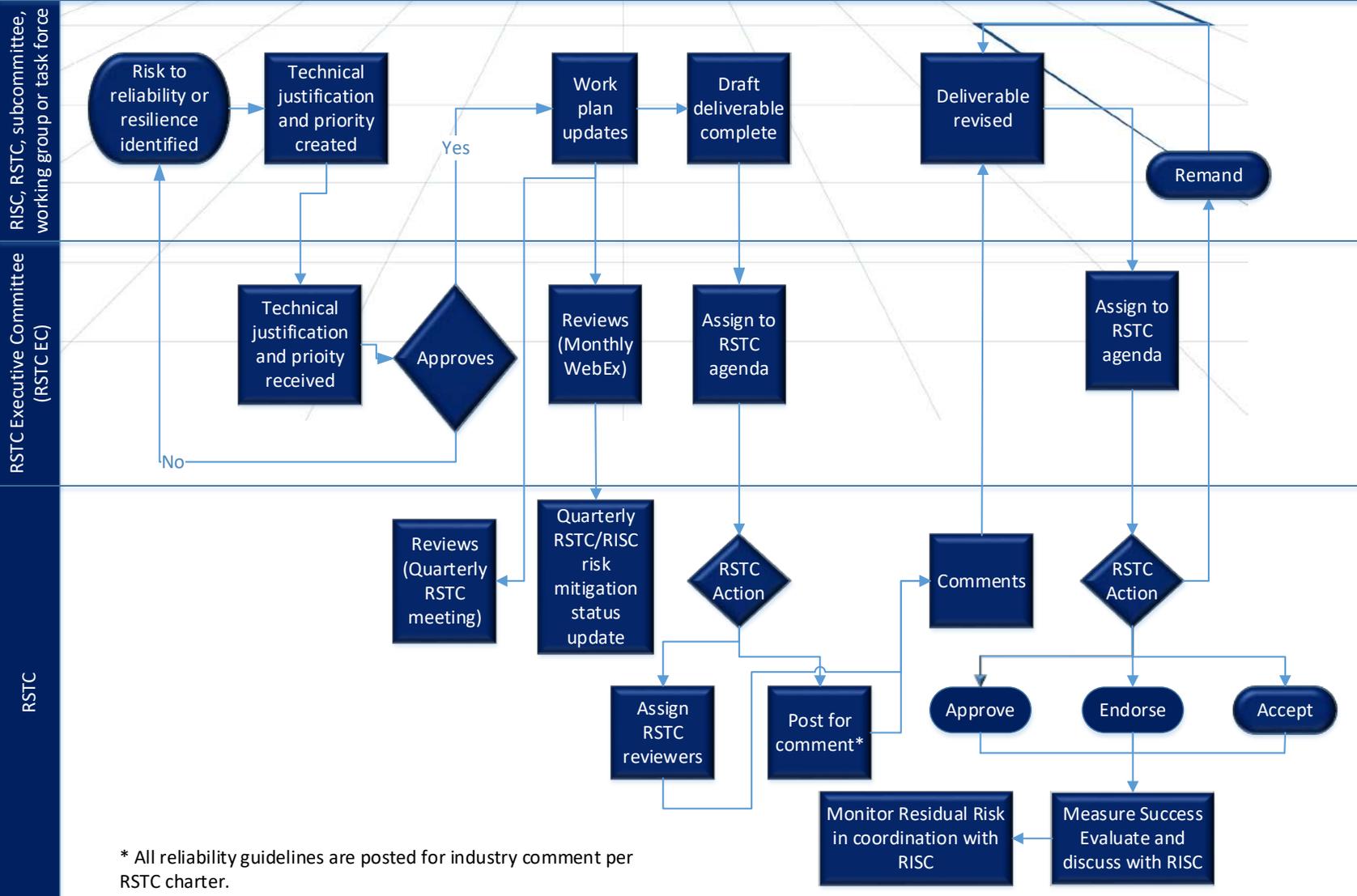
Table 1 contains additional details and guidance for each step.

¹ See strategic documents:
RISC Report: <https://www.nerc.com/comm/RISC/Related%20Files%20DL/ERO-Reliability- Risk Priorities- Report Board Accepted February 2018.pdf>
ERO Enterprise Operating Plan: <https://www.nerc.com/gov/Annual%20Reports/ERO Enterprise Operating Plan Approved by the NERC Board on November 9 2017.pdf>

² Responsibilities of the RSTC and the RSTCEC with respect to Technical Groups are specified in the RSTC Charter, Sections 5 and 6. <https://www.nerc.com/comm/RSTC/Related%20Files%202013/RSTC Charter RSTC Approved Board May 2018.pdf>

³ Reports directed by the NERC Board or prescribed by NERC Rules of Procedure which are developed by NERC Staff and RSTC subcommittees (e.g., State of Reliability Report, Long-term and seasonal assessments) have established review and endorsement processes that may differ from the notional process described here.

Reliability and Security Committee (RSTC) Work Product Notional Process



* All reliability guidelines are posted for industry comment per RSTC charter.

Notional RSTC Work Product Process

Activity	Group	Description
Risk Identification and Validation	Technical group ⁴	<p>Prepare a technical justification that documents the technical need and banding for an identified reliability or resilience issue. Banding includes answering the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the technical issue and how does it impact the reliability of the BPS? • How this is within current scope of ERO goals and objectives? • What is the involvement required from other ERO functional groups? • What is the level of current technical awareness in industry? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What subject-matter expertise has been involved, or is needed to be involved in order to comprehensively understand the issue? <p>Provide the technical justification to the RSTCEC. (Normally considered at next monthly RSTCEC web meetings) The RSTCEC will also have discussions with RISC leadership to coordinate risk identification and validation.</p> <p>The risk registry will be maintained by the RISC and RSTC to determine if an inherent nature of a risk changes over time, and consider removing risks or adding others</p>
Risk Prioritization	RSTCEC and Sponsors	<p>Prioritizing risks is accomplished through an analysis of their exposure, scope, and duration as well as impact and likelihood. Among other sources, the RISC Report identifies and prioritizes short-term and long-term risks to reliability. The RSTC will incorporate the prioritized risks into the annual work plan.</p>
Remediation and Mitigation Identification and Evaluation	Technical group, RSTCEC and Sponsors	<p>Technical group, RSTCEC and Sponsors discuss the reliability / resilience issue, technical justification, and consider potential solutions. Potential outcomes or solutions include deliverables in the RSTC Charter such as white papers, reference documents, technical reports, reliability guidelines, and compliance implementation guidance.⁵ Other potential solutions are contained in NERC Rules of Procedure (RoP), ERO Event Analysis Process, NERC Alerts, and other risk management measures. The RSTCEC authorizes tasks to be added to the RSTC Work Plan (which could include collaboration with other groups), rejects proposed tasks, or refers matter(s) to the RSTC for further discussion.</p> <p>Technical group provides updates on progress by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing and updating the RSTC Work Plan (monthly)

⁴ Risks to be addressed by the RSTC could come from an existing Technical Group, or other sources (e.g., an individual, other ERO committee, ERO governing body, or stakeholder group). When necessary, the RSTCEC can assign a Technical Group to support development of a technical justification.

⁵ See the RSTC Charter, Section 8, for a description of RSTC deliverables.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presenting updates to the RSTCEC (monthly webex meeting; leaders can update more often if necessary) • Presenting updates to the RSTC (Quarterly in-person meeting) <p>The RSTC and will communicate with the RISC to inform of actions being taken.</p> <p>When the technical group has completed a draft deliverable, it will be presented to the RSTCEC for assignment to the RSTC meeting schedule as a review item. Deliverables are reviewed as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reliability Guidelines must be posted for 45-day stakeholder comment period⁶ • Other deliverables are normally assigned to RSTC members for review <p>Technical groups review each comment received, consider revisions to the deliverable, and prepare a response matrix for the RSTC and stakeholders.</p>
RSTC Deploy Mitigation⁷	RSTC and Sponsor	When the technical group has completed review and revisions, the draft deliverable shall be presented to the RSTCEC by the Sponsor for assignment to the RSTC meeting schedule for final action. ⁸ Once the RSTC has approved, endorsed or accepted the deliverable(s), it (they) will be implemented for industry action.
Measure Success	RSTC, RISC and ERO	Once a solution(s) has been deployed, the effectiveness of the mitigation must be measured to determine if the residual risk has achieved an acceptable level. The RSTC will evaluate mitigation strategies/plans for effectiveness and discusses with the RISC, highlighting any necessary next steps.
Monitor Residual Risk	RSTC, RISC and ERO	Once the level of residual risk is at an acceptable level, the risk is monitored through ongoing performance measures to ensure that risk remains at acceptable risk levels. The residual risk should be monitored for progress and to ensure that the mitigations that are in place continue to address the risk. The RSTC will continue to coordinate with the RISC on maintaining an acceptable level of residual risk.

⁶ Reliability Guidelines receive special vetting in the RSTC charter. The process for review, approval, and updating of Reliability Guidelines is specified in the Charter, Section 8.

⁷ RSTC actions on deliverables are described in the Charter, Section 8.

⁸ Both the RSTC and the RSTCEC are authorized to act between regularly scheduled meetings. Provisions are described in the Charter, Section 4. Due to the need for flexibility in the review and approval process, timelines are provided as guidelines to be followed by the committee and its subgroups. A default review period of no less than 10 business days will be provided for all committee deliverables. Requests for exceptions may be brought to the RSTC at its regular meetings or to the RSTCEC if the exception cannot wait for a RSTC meeting. In all cases, a final report may be considered for approval, endorsement, or acceptance if the RSTC or RSTCEC, as outlined above, decides to act sooner.