

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION

Before Commissioners: Joseph T. Kelliher, Chairman;
Sudeen G. Kelly, Marc Spitzer,
Philip D. Moeller, and Jon Wellinghoff.

Western Electricity Coordinating Council

Docket No. ER06-1094-001

ORDER GRANTING REQUEST FOR WAIVER

(Issued November 16, 2006)

1. On June 1, 2006, the Western Electricity Coordinating Council (WECC) filed a request for waiver from the Manual Time Error Correction standard adopted by the Commission in Order No. 676.¹ In this order, the Commission grants the requested waiver, as discussed below, because the WEQ has revised its standard to conform to WECC's current practice.

Background

2. In Order No. 676, the Commission incorporated by reference in its regulations certain standards promulgated by the Wholesale Electric Quadrant (WEQ) of the North American Energy Standards Board (NAESB). In addition, the Commission directed public utilities to comply with these standards and revise their open access transmission tariffs (OATT) to include these standards. The standards establish a set of business practice standards and communications protocols (Standards WEQ-001, 002, and 003) for the electric industry that replace the Commission's existing Open Access Same-Time Information Systems (OASIS) standards, and also include business practices to complement reliability standards of the North American Electric Reliability Council (NERC) (Standards WEQ-004, 005, 006, and 007). As an alternative to complying with the standards, Order No. 676 gave public utilities the option of applying for a waiver, in whole or part, of the standards.

3. Specifically, Order No. 676 required public utilities to revise their OATTs to include the following WEQ standards: WEQ-001 – Business Practices for Open Access Same-Time Information Systems (OASIS); WEQ-002 – Business Practices for Open

¹ *Standards for Business Practices and Communication Protocols for Public Utilities*, Order No. 676, 71 *Fed. Reg.* 26,199, FERC Stats. & Regs., Regulations Preambles ¶ 31,216, *order on reh'g*, Order No. 676-A, 116 FERC ¶ 61,102 (2006).

Access Same-Time Information Systems (OASIS) Standards & Communication Protocols; WEQ-003 -- Open Access Same-Time Information Systems (OASIS) Data Dictionary; WEQ-004 – Coordinate Interchange; WEQ-005 – Area Control Error (ACE) Equation Special Cases; WEQ-006 – Manual Time Error Correction; and (WEQ-007) – Inadvertent Interchange Payback.²

4. As explained above, Order No. 676 also permitted public utilities to request a waiver of specific standards by explaining the reasons why the waiver should be granted. Further, Order No. 676 stated that public utilities, including ISOs and RTOs, that have existing waivers of certain OASIS standards may reapply for such waivers using simplified procedures. These streamlined procedures require an applicant to identify the specific standard(s) from which it seeks waiver and to provide the caption, date, and docket number of the proceeding in which it previously received the waiver. In addition, an applicant must certify that the circumstances warranting its waiver(s) have not changed.³

Description of the Applicant

5. The WECC is the regional reliability council responsible within the NERC structure for the entire Western Interconnection.⁴ The WECC was formed on April 18, 2002, by the merger of the Western Systems Coordinating Council, Southwest Regional Transmission Association, and Western Regional Transmission Association. The WECC is the largest and most diverse of the eight regional councils of the North American Electric Reliability Council (NERC). The WECC's service territory extends from Canada to Mexico, and includes the provinces of Alberta and British Columbia, the northern portion of Baja California, Mexico, and all or portions of the 14 western states in between.

Basis for Granting Waiver

6. In its waiver application, WECC requests waiver of the threshold for initiation of manual time error correction in the Western Interconnections of +/- 2 seconds in the Manual Time Error Correction (MTEC) standard (WEQ-006). Specifically, WECC requests, on behalf of the Control Area/Balancing Authorities of the Western

² Order No. 676 at P 19.

³ *Id.* at P 79.

⁴ As we stated in *North American Electric Reliability Corporation*, 117 FERC ¶ 61,091 at P 15 (2006), NERC anticipates that the WECC, along with other current member regional reliability councils, will become a Regional Entity under FPA section 215.

Interconnection, a waiver to establish the manual time error correction threshold of +/- 5 seconds. WECC states that keeping the threshold at +/- 5 seconds will allow it to maintain a higher level of reliability, and lessen the number of times the interconnection needs to be operated at a scheduled frequency less than or greater than 60 Hz. WECC states that the waiver is necessary to allow for the Automatic Time Error Correction (ATEC) employed by WECC's Control Area/Balancing Authorities to work effectively maintaining reliability while reducing the number of unnecessary manual time error correction. On May 31, 2006, WECC submitted a request to the North American Energy Standards Board (NAESB) to modify WEQ-006 to change the threshold for initiation of manual time error correction in the Western Interconnection from +/- 2 seconds to +/- 5 seconds.

Notice of Filing

7. Notice of applicant's filing was published in the *Federal Register* with comments, interventions, and protests due on or before June 22, 2006.⁵ No protests were filed.

Comments and Interventions

8. On July 21, 2006, Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) filed a motion to intervene and comments in support of WECC's filing. In its comments, BPA submits that applying the +/- 2 second correction would provide no benefit and would reduce reliability in the Western Interconnection. BPA states that the proposed standard would reduce reliability because time error corrections made at intervals shorter than the natural fluctuation cycle would increase deviations from true time compared to applying a time error correction based on the natural fluctuation cycle. BPA states that WECC has applied to NAESB for approval to modify the existing WEQ standard to provide a +/- 5 second time error correction interval for the Western Interconnection. BPA requests that the Commission grant WECC's requested waiver, pending the final outcome of WECC's request to NAESB.

Discussion

On October 30, 2006, NAESB notified the Commission that it has modified Standard WEQ-006 to incorporate the +/- 5 second time error correction interval for the Western Interconnection as requested by WECC.⁶ Based on this information, we will

⁵ 71 *Fed. Reg.* 34,916 (2006).

⁶ Report filed by NAESB in Docket No. RM05-5-000 on October 30, 2006.

grant WECC's request for a waiver of the +/-2 second requirement and will direct public utilities belonging to WECC to comply with the WEQ's revised Standard WEQ-006-4 and to include revised Standard WEQ-006-4 when they file to comply with Order No. 676 or, if they have already filed to comply with Order No. 676, to revise their respective OATTs to reflect the revised Standard WEQ-006 when they make their next OATT filing.

The Commission orders:

(A) The WECC's request for a waiver of Standard WEQ-006 is hereby granted, as discussed in the body of this order.

(B) Public utilities belonging to WECC are hereby directed to comply with the WEQ's revised Standard WEQ-006-4 and to include revised Standard WEQ-006-4 when they file to comply with Order No. 676 or, if they have already filed to comply with Order No. 676, to revise their respective OATTs to reflect the revised Standard WEQ-006 when they make their next OATT filing.

By the Commission.

(S E A L)

Magalie R. Salas
Secretary