

FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS TO ELECTRIC UTILITIES ON WINTER STORM EVENT

At the Commission's February B&E, the Electric Utilities and Regional Transmission Organizations ("RTOs") were questioned about the winter storms that occurred the week of February 15, 2021 (hereinafter "Winter Storms"). For the Electric Utilities, the questioning surrounded: 1) peak outages; 2) main causes of outages; 3) duration of restoration efforts; 4) curtailment of customers; and 5) customer communication during the Winter Storms. For the RTOs, the questioning surrounded the load shedding events.

Chairman Greene indicated that additional questions would also be submitted to the Electric Utilities after the B&E, with answers due back to the Commissioners within a month. Below are the specific questions as of today. Please submit written answers to each individual Commissioner no later than Wednesday, April 7, 2021 by close of business. Please note, all responses will be publicly posted on the Commission's website. If a particular question, or subset of questions, is not applicable, please indicate that with a brief explanation why.

Questions for All Electric Utilities

Questions pertaining to the Distribution Grid:

1. How many MW of generation were offline or otherwise subject to unplanned outages during the Winter Storms?
2. What were all identified causes of storm related outages for generation during the Winter Storms for your system? Please also indicate what was the main contributing factor.
3. How many miles of distribution and transmission lines do you own and manage in Louisiana? Please separate your response by distribution and transmission.
4. Did any part of your bulk transmission system suffer unplanned outages as a result of the Winter Storm? Please include the following in your response:
 - a. The length of lines affected;
 - b. The specific cause of the outage;
 - c. The time span each line was offline;
 - d. The expected return to full service time and date; and/or
 - e. The actual return to service of these lines.
5. Was any of the utility's bulk transmission system or generating units offline due to planned maintenance when the Winter Storm event was declared? If yes, please provide:
 - a. The name of the transmission system and/or generating unit(s);
 - b. The size (KV) and length of the transmission lines, if applicable;
 - c. Why such maintenance was scheduled in February 2021 as opposed to another time period.

6. What was the average restoration time for power outages due to storm damage from the Winter Storms?
7. How heavily do you rely on contracted crews (compared to your own linemen) to restore power during normal¹ outages?
8. How heavily did you rely on contracted crews (compared to your own linemen) to restore power during the Winter Storms?
9. Could any of those outages been prevented with different preparation or enhanced vegetation maintenance prior to the Winter Storms?
 - a. If outages were caused by fallen or sagging tree limbs, could those outages have been prevented with better vegetation maintenance by your company?
 - b. Please provide all locations within your service area that were included within your vegetation maintenance schedule over the past two years (2019-2020) and the first 2 months of 2021.
 - c. Please provide the locations in your service area that received the most scheduled vegetation maintenance within the two years (2019-2020) and the first 2 months of 2021.
 - d. Please provide the locations in your service area that received the least scheduled vegetation maintenance within the past two years (2019-2020) and the first 2 months of 2021.
 - e. Please provide the locations with the most distribution grid damage due to fallen or sagging trees or tree limbs during the Winter Storms.
 - i. If possible, please explain how many customers lost power due to the vegetation damage in these locations?
10. How much of your total operating budget is dedicated to vegetation maintenance in Louisiana? Please provide both a percent of total budget and dollar amount.
11. Please provide a narrative explanation of the “winterization” procedures and protocols utilized by the utility for each of its generating facilities and verification that those procedures and protocols were followed.
 - a. Please indicate whether there are any winterization procedures that were not performed on any of the utility’s generating units for this winter season and why such procedures were not performed.

Questions Pertaining to Rolling Blackouts:

12. Please describe the procedures used by the RTOs and by you to determine which load should be shed and for what duration.

¹ Normal outages would be non-emergency events, whereas emergency events are hurricanes or a scenario like the Winter Storms.

13. Did your utility undergo in any mandated or self-imposed rolling blackouts?

- a. If you did execute rolling blackouts, how much time lead time did you receive from when you knew a blackout would occur to when the blackout took place for the end user? Please include a timeline of all notices received from MISO or SPP (as applicable) regarding the necessity to begin load shedding.
 - i. In that time, were the effected customers notified in preparation?
 - ii. Were the effected customers notified during or after the rolling blackout?
 - iii. If effected customers were notified of a rolling blackout, what mode of communication was used?
 - iv. If effected customers were notified before or during, were they given a timeline of how long the blackout would occur? Was that timeline accurate?
- b. If the blackout was mandated, who made that decision and was a recommended time period given for how long the blackouts needed / should last?
- c. If you did execute rolling blackouts, how long did the blackouts last? Please provide a shortest, longest, and average time of the rolling blackouts.
- d. Please indicate the amount of industrial, commercial and/or residential load tripped off/shed during the Winter Storms, including the number of customers in each class and the number of MW by region and/or location.
- e. If you did execute rolling blackouts, were you able to target those blackouts in order to:
 - i. Lessen the impact on vulnerable customers, such as, but not limited to, those needed electricity for health reasons or those customers who were just getting their power back after multiple days?
 1. If not, is there something different that can be done in the future to potentially achieve this?
 - ii. Ensure the most power was conserved during a rolling black while potentially affecting the least customers? For instance, were you able to conserve energy by shutting off closed commercial customers and therefore spare shutting off residential customers trying to stay warm in their home?
 2. If not, is there something different that can be done in the future to potentially achieve this?

14. How many of your meters were turned off intentionally due to rolling blackouts versus lost power naturally due to storm damage from the Winter Storms?

15. Were any Load Modifying Resources (“LMRs”), including interruptible load, utilized during the Winter Storms?

- a. If yes, please provide:

- i. The type of LMR;
 - ii. The total number of MW of LMR; and
 - iii. The duration of their use.
- b. If no, please provide identify any interruptible customers who were not interrupted during the Winter Storm and provide a narrative as to why they were not interrupted. Included with this response, please also identify any interruptible load that did not fulfill its obligation to interrupt load when called.

Questions Pertaining to Fuel and Generation Needs throughout the Winter Storms:

16. Please describe the impact of the Winter Storms on fuel costs and the expected impact on upcoming utility bills.
17. Please describe any factors that limited the ability to import fuel to serve load and quantify the level of imports that were limited.
18. Please indicate whether there were any fuel suppliers who failed or refused to deliver the contracted quantities of fuel during the Winter Storms. If there were any failures or refusal of delivery, please indicate:
- a. The name of the fuel supplier;
 - b. The amount of fuel that was not delivered;
 - c. The generating unit(s) to which fuel was not delivered;
 - d. The reason provided by the fuel counterparty for failure to deliver; and
 - e. Whether or not that generating unit had to cease or curtail operations as a result of the failure of the fuel supplier to deliver contracted-for quantities.
19. What are your suggestions on how to spread the fuel costs through the Fuel Adjustment Clause (“FAC”) such that these costs are not incurred on a single bill?
20. What are your suggestions on other ways to share the risk of such effects to the FAC rather than flowing those costs through to customer bills?
21. How much did the price of fuel go up during the Winter Storms and for how long did it stay at those peak prices?
22. Ultimately, who bears the risk of Locational Marginal Pricing (“LMP”) changes throughout MISO? Throughout SPP?
23. Could different measures have been taken in preparation for the Winter Storms in order to prevent fuel shortages? If so, why were those measures not taken?
- a. Should these measures have been taken when the Winter Storms were forecasted in weather reports?

Questions pertaining to customer service and communication:

24. How many customers do you serve in the state of Louisiana?
25. How many customer service representatives² do you have in Louisiana answering phone calls or making live calls to your customers? Please provide the job title and business address for each of these employees.
26. Do you make live phone calls (non-recording) to communicate to your customers?
27. Do you answer phones with live personnel or use pre-recorded messages to answer phone calls?
28. Do you have a local (area code within your Louisiana service territory) customer service number, or do you utilize a 1-800 number?
 - a. Please explain the advantages or disadvantages of utilizing a local number over a 1-800 number or vice versa.
29. Does your company have local, customer service offices or facilities within your Louisiana service area?
 - a. If so, please explain any perceived or realized advantages of such local facilities.
30. On average, when a customer calls your customer service number, how long does it take for them to reach a live person who can answer their questions?
 - a. Will that live person always be in Louisiana?
 - b. Do customers have to press extension numbers to reach a live person?
31. Are your customer service representatives able to communicate directly to other departments of your utility operations in order to get helpful, accurate information efficiently for customers calling in?
32. Do you utilize text notifications to communicate with your customers? Did this service work during these past Winter Storms?
33. Do you utilize automated phone calls to communicate with your customers?
34. Do you utilize email notifications to communicate with your customers?
35. Do you have personnel dedicated to monitoring social media pages related to your company as well as social media pages in general and social media trends within your service territory in order to further understand any problems that may be arising for your customers and/or communicate directly with customers?
 - a. Do you answer questions your customers post on social media?

² For the purposes of these questions, answering parties should understand that “customer representatives” refer to live, human-being employees of the utility (not a third-party contractor), who are trained to handle customer issues that may arise in the utility’s duty to provide service to their customers.

- b. Do you find a social media presence is helpful in responding to your customers?
36. Do you have an automated or advanced meter system?
- a. If so, did it function/perform properly during the Winter Storms? Why or why not? Please support with examples and evidence.
37. Does your utility utilize an online outage map accessible to customers?
- a. Was that map accurate during the Winter Storms? Why or why not?
38. Are your systems able to identify whether a customer has power or does not have power?
- a. If yes, was this function working properly during the Winter Storms?
 - b. If yes, are you able to therefore communicate with customers who have power differently than customers who do have power?
 - c. At any point during the Winter Storms, did your company ask customers who did not have service to curtail their usage?
39. If your company realizes their customer service or communications systems are not working, what is your company's response to this issue? What mitigation measures are taken to address any malfunctions? What mitigation measures are taken to explain any deficiencies to your customers?
40. Do you have a public relation, customer service, or other team in charge of crafting and sending out notifications and public outreach messages to your customers?
41. Do you target messages based on relevancy to your customers or simply send general notifications across your entire service territory, regardless of its relevancy for each customer?
- a. If the answer depends on a scenario, please expand on those different scenarios to provide a full understanding of how your teams attempt to best communicate with customers.
 - b. Does your company believe that targeted messages (or different forms of messaging) are more useful in ensuring accurate, relevant communication to customers? Why or why not?
 - c. What are barriers to communicating tailored, relevant information to each customer that would cause a company to rely only on general communications?
42. Were you able to get accurate information to your customers before, during and after the Winter Storms?
43. What is your utility's total yearly operating budget?
44. How much of your utility's total yearly operating budget is allocated to customer service? Please provide dollar number and percentage.
- a. Please break down the dollars allocated to customer service based on categories your utility spends in, such as, but not limited to:
 - i. How much money is spent on human customer service representatives?

- ii. How much money is spent on automated systems?
 - iii. How much money is spent on physical customer service locations (places where the public can contact either physically or by telephone an individual dedicated to handling their customer service issue)?
45. How much does it cost (rough estimate based on current employment) to hire and maintain one customer service representative?
46. Do you feel your customer service and communication allowed for your customers to adequately prepare for events that unfolded during the Winter Storms?
47. Do you believe useful and helpful customer service was provided by your company to your customers during the Winter Storms?
48. Based on your company's customer service performance in the Winter Storms, does your company plan on increasing the amount of budget they allocate to customer service?
- a. Will your company ask for a rate increase to do so?

Closing Questions:

49. Please provide all temperature forecasts you received for your Louisiana service territory (and the source of those forecasts) for February 14-20, 2021 and the actual temperatures experienced on those dates.
50. In your opinion, was your utility adequately prepared for the Winter Storms?
- a. Did your customers benefit from your level of preparedness?
51. In your opinion, was your response to the Winter Storms sufficient or to a standard of excellence your customers deserve?

Questions for Entergy Louisiana, LLC only

1. If your company realizes their customer service or communications systems are not working, what is your company's response to this issue? What mitigation measures are taken to address any malfunctions? What mitigation measures are taken to explain any deficiencies to your customers?
- a. At what point did Entergy notice their communications system was not working during the Winter Storms?
 - i. At the point Entergy noticed their communications system was not working, how did Entergy address these issues? Did Entergy make known to the public their communication system was not accurate or that customers should not rely on such information? Was Entergy asked or recommended to do this by any Commissioner?
2. Do you target messages based on relevancy to your customers or simply send general notifications across your entire service territory, regardless of its relevancy for each customer?

- a. If the answer depends on a scenario, please expand on those different scenarios to provide a full understanding of how your teams attempt to best communicate with customers.
 - b. Does your company believe that targeted messages (or different forms of messaging) are more useful in ensuring accurate, relevant communication to customers? Why or why not?
 - c. What are barriers to communicating tailored, relevant information to each customer that would cause a company to rely only on general communications?
 - d. At any point during the Winter Storms, did Entergy work to ensure customers received the most relevant notifications for them?
 - e. Why were people who notified your company that they were without power asked “are you sure?”?
 - f. Why did customers who communicated outages to you multiple times throughout the week told Entergy received no notifications of such outages?
 - g. Why did customers who did not have power receive messages to curtail power?
3. How much would it cost to have a local customer service office of at least five people, providing person to person communication with a local contact phone number, in Baton Rouge? In New Orleans?
 - a. Do you feel that local customer service centers would be helpful to your Louisiana customers? Why or why not?