

**Report to the Western Conference of Public Service Commissioners
on Activities of the Committee on Regional Electric Power Cooperation
(CREPC) and the Western Interconnection Regional Advisory Body
(WIRAB)**

July 2016 to June 2017

I. COMMITTEE ON REGIONAL ELECTRIC POWER COOPERATION (CREPC)

CREPC is a joint committee of the Western Interstate Energy Board (WIEB) and the Western Conference of Public Service Commissioners. In 1984, CREPC organized to provide a forum for discussion and information sharing among the Governor/Premier offices, energy agencies and the regulatory commissions from the states and provinces in the Western Interconnection.

CREPC meets twice a year to share and exchange information and views on energy policy matters relevant to the Western Interconnection. In recent years, CREPC held joint meetings with the Western Interconnection Regional Advisory Body (WIRAB). These meetings include participation by representatives of the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Western Electricity Coordinating Council (WECC), and the Western power industry.

Fall 2016 Joint CREPC-WIRAB Meeting

CREPC and WIRAB jointly met in San Diego, California on October - November 2, 2016. Major themes for this meeting were developments in regional transmission planning, updates on proposals for a regional ISO, and reliability issues in the Western Interconnection. The joint meeting included the following specific topics:

- Regional transmission planning
 - Assessment of regional transmission plans by the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory
 - Report on California Renewable Energy Transmission Initiative (RETI) 2.0 Western Outreach project carried out by the Western Interstate Energy Board
 - Report on the WECC Joint TEPPC-PCC Task Force proposals for the Anchor Data Set and creation of the Reliability Assessment Committee (RAC)
- International policy update
 - Mexico electric industry restructuring

- Canada climate policy developments by the federal Canadian government, Alberta, and British Columbia
- Electric system natural gas infrastructure risk
 - Western Interconnection natural gas and electric sector interdependency report
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 - Expert response panel on the need for a new gas-electric report
- Regional ISO market initiatives and topics
 - Mountain West Transmission Group
 - Regional ISO governance principles
 - Response panel to Regional ISO governance issues
 - Regional ISO market monitoring experiences at the CAISO, FERC, and other ISOs
 - Regional ISO western states committee role, authority and jurisdictional issues
- Distributed Energy Resource (DER)
 - NARUC distributed resource pricing manual
 - State roundtable on net metering proceedings
- Synchrophasor technology update
 - Wide-area sensing and “big data” analytics
 - Synchrophasor deployment in the West
 - Response panel: Peak Reliability and Ping Things
- Coal unit retirements in the West
 - Overview of announced retirements
 - Response panel

Spring 2017 Joint CREPC-WIRAB Meeting

CREPC and WIRAB jointly met in Boise, Idaho on April 12-14, 2017. Primary themes for this meeting were storage, resource adequacy, essential reliability services, and state/provincial coordination. The specific topics for the joint meeting were as follows:

- Energy Storage
 - Energy storage technologies and services
 - Energy storage projects and state policies
 - Response panel
- Treatment of coal unit decommissioning costs in utility ratemaking
- Planning for Resource Adequacy
 - Planning reserve margins
 - Contribution of variable renewable and demand-side resources
 - Contribution of baseload thermal resources

- Planning for flexible capacity
- Response panel
- Southwest Power Pool market expansion
 - Update on the Mountain West Transmission Group
- Western electricity markets and spring over-generation
- Provision of essential reliability services

The agendas, with links to speaker presentations, are available on the WIEB website:

<http://westernenergyboard.org/crepc-spsc/crepc-meetings/>

II. WESTERN INTERCONNECTION REGIONAL ADVISORY BODY (WIRAB)

The Western Interconnection Regional Advisory Body (WIRAB) was created in 2006 pursuant to Section 215 of the Federal Power Act (FPA). The Governors initiated the formation of WIRAB to provide public policy input on matters effecting the reliability of the Western Interconnection. All states and provinces with territory in the Western Interconnection, including the provinces of Alberta and British Columbia and the State of Baja Norte in Mexico, participate in WIRAB.

Under the FPA, WIRAB has statutory authority to advise FERC, the North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC), and WECC on the following:

1. *Governance* of an existing or proposed Regional Entity within the region;
2. Whether a *standard* proposed to apply within the region is just, reasonable, not unduly discriminatory or preferential, and in the public interest;
3. Whether *fees* proposed to be assessed in the region are just, reasonable, not unduly discriminatory or preferential, and in the public interest; and
4. "...any *other responsibilities requested by the Commission*."

In 2013, FERC acknowledged that deference to WIRAB's advice on matters of Peak Reliability's governance, strategic direction, budget, and fees is also appropriate.

WIRAB's 2017 strategic initiatives related to WECC and Peak Reliability include the following:

1. Encourage WECC and Peak Reliability to set strategic planning priorities and align budgets and work plans based on rigorous analyses of existing and emerging risks to reliability in the Western Interconnection.

2. Encourage Peak Reliability and WECC to develop policies to protect Critical Electricity Infrastructure Information (CEII) and to promote sharing of non-CEII data with third parties to foster research and development.
3. Encourage WECC to systematically assess the availability of Essential Reliability Services under a wide-range of future resource scenarios.
4. Encourage and work with Peak Reliability to identify, disseminate, and promote best operational practices.

WIRAB Advice to WECC, Peak Reliability, and FERC

In addition to conducting two in-person meetings with CREPC (described above), WIRAB provided written comments and advice to WECC, Peak Reliability, and FERC. Advice filings submitted by WIRAB during the period July 2016 to June 2017 are listed below:

- Comments on Proposed Amendments to the Peak Reliability Bylaws
- Advice on the Composition of the WECC Nominating Committee
- Advice on the FERC Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NOPR) on Primary Frequency Response
- Comments on WECC Bylaw Amendments
- Comments on WECC's Strategic Planning Process, 2017-2020 Operating Plan, and Strategic Direction Outline
- Comments on the Peak Reliability Audit Committee Charter
- Comments on WECC's Information Sharing Policy
- Advice to FERC in Support of the WECC 2017 Statutory Budget and Assessment
- Advice on the FERC NOPR on Regulations Implementing FAST Act Section 61004 – Critical Electric Infrastructure Security and Amending Critical Energy Infrastructure Information
- Comments on the Peak Reliability 2017 Business Plan and Budget
- Comments on the Peak Reliability 2016-2020 Strategic Plan

Reliability Webinars

WIRAB also hosted webinars for state and provincial policy makers on key reliability matters. Webinars conducted by WIRAB over the past year are listed below:

- **Critical Energy-Electric Infrastructure Information**

This webinar focused on criteria and procedures for designating information as CEII and steps FERC can take to facilitate the voluntary sharing of data with researchers and entrepreneurs working to improve the reliability and security of the bulk-power system.

- **The Role of the Reliability Coordinator and Balancing Authorities in the Western Interconnection**

This webinar highlighted two recent reliability events to illustrate the roles of the Reliability Coordinator and Balancing Authorities in responding to system events. Peak Reliability and the CAISO discussed how they work together to maintain reliability during these types of events.

Video recordings of WIRAB webinars are available on the WIEB website:

<http://westernenergyboard.org/category/webinars/>

Peak Reliability and WECC Member Advisory Committees

Both Peak Reliability and WECC have established Member Advisory Committees (MAC) to advise their respective Boards on key organizational matters, including the development of business plans, budgets, and other matters pertinent to the purpose and operation of each organization.

WIRAB works closely with state and provincial representatives on both the WECC and Peak Reliability MACs when developing policy positions and recommendations for the WECC and Peak Reliability Boards. WIRAB holds monthly calls with all WIRAB Members and WECC and Peak Reliability MAC Class 5 representatives to provide progress reports on key initiatives and activities, to educate attendees on important reliability topics, and to seek input on the development of WIRAB advice.

Announcements for WIRAB's monthly calls are posted on the WIEB website:

<http://westernenergyboard.org/category/announcements/>

III. IDAHO-WIEB STATE ENERGY PLANNING GRANT

CREPC and WIRAB worked closely with the Idaho Governor's Office of Energy and Mineral Resources and WIEB to implement a two-year U.S. DOE State Energy Planning (SEP) grant.

The purpose of the project was to identify opportunities for multi-state or region-wide collaboration to address emerging energy issues. A primary goal of the project was to develop a roadmap to advance multi-state collaborations on the emerging issues.

In October, 2016, the draft *Roadmap for Policy Makers: Options for Addressing Emerging Energy Issues in the West* (the [*Roadmap*](#)), the final work product for the project, was completed. The *Roadmap* is an executive summary of the technical briefs.

A project webpage was developed where all project documents will remain posted for review: <http://westernenergyboard.org/wieb-board/projects/idaho-wieb-state-energy-planning/>.