



WIRAB Advice to WECC On the Draft Long Term Strategy

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Introduction:

The Western Interconnection Regional Advisory Body (WIRAB) appreciates the opportunity to submit Advice to WECC on the Draft Long-Term Strategy.

Background:

WECC is revising its Long-Term Strategy to reflect evolving challenges in the Western Interconnection, while aligning with the ERO Enterprise Long Term Strategy and expanding on it for critical matters that are unique and important in the West.

ERO Enterprise Long-Term Strategy: The ERO Enterprise represents the collective mission of NERC and its six Regional Entities, including WECC. A year-long refresh of the ERO Enterprise Long-Term Strategy has taken place, with input from various stakeholders, including WECC. In September, the WECC Board endorsed the draft strategy, and further action by the NERC Board of Trustees is expected in December.

WECC's Long Term Strategy Feedback: At its Annual Members Meeting, WECC solicited feedback on its draft Long-Term Strategy. WIRAB Leadership participated in that session along with other WECC members and the WECC Board of Directors. WECC received valuable feedback, particularly on the tone, descriptions, and alignment with WECC's mission and vision.

General Feedback:

Draft 2 of the WECC Long-Term Strategy reflects significant progress in aligning with WECC's mission and vision. WECC's efforts to frame the strategy around its core "why" are well-articulated, showing the emphasis on reliability in an evolving energy landscape. Furthermore, the holistic risk-based approach, combined with a focus on interconnection-wide perspectives, shows a strong commitment to addressing the region's unique challenges.

Notable Improvements from Draft 1 to Draft 2:

1. **Expanded Description of WECC's Why:** WECC describes itself as *The Independent Voice of Bulk Power System Reliability in the Western Interconnection*, a significant improvement from *The Voice of Reliability in the West* touted in Draft 1. This description highlights WECC's crucial role while staying balanced and not overstating its influence. Additionally, WECC added in an important description of the Western Interconnection, helping connect its role and overseeing an

energy system that supports essential services for communities, public safety, and economic growth.

2. **Updated Forward Looking Tone:** Throughout the document, WECC improved the tone of the document by using statements like “we will” and using actionable language that give the document forward looking strategic tone, contrasting with the past-accomplishment tone of Draft 1. The goal of the Long-Term Strategy is to build on successes, but to continue to advance because past success does not necessarily mean future improvement.
3. **Enhanced Stakeholder Collaboration:** Draft 2 improved upon the importance of partnership, particularly in addressing evolving risks. The recognition that WECC has a unique role as a reliability regulator but also a subject matter expert, it requires collaboration, with stakeholders including utilities, state and regional partners, and others to proactively address reliability risks.
4. **Improved Independence Description:** A key improvement in Draft 2 is the expanded explanation of WECC's Independence in Impact Area 4. WECC understands that its role is to inform decision-makers and to meet them where they are when it comes to understanding the impacts policy and business decisions have on the reliability of the grid. WECC expanded its description to emphasize that it will produce work products tailored to different audiences to improve their effectiveness. This focus enhances trust in WECC's impartiality.

Areas for Further Improvement:

1. **Emphasize Social Welfare Status:** WECC mentions that it is a non-profit with delegated authority to perform reliability functions, but WECC's status as a 501(c)(4) social welfare organization should be more prominently mentioned to reinforce its role in serving the broader stakeholder community, not individual interests. This would support WECC's focus on maintaining neutrality in its role as a reliability organization without being swayed by business, political or policy agendas of individual companies, groups, governmental entities or personal interests.
2. **Create a Celebrated Workforce Culture:** Draft 2 could benefit from a more detailed description of how WECC plans to embed continuous improvement in its organizational culture. WECC does an excellent job emphasizing that it is important to “trust each other” and “empower” employees. One important aspect of workplace culture is acknowledging and celebrating accomplishments and understanding the impact. WECC should consider explicitly adding a goal to celebrate accomplishments to continuously improve workplace culture.

Conclusion:

The WECC Long-Term Strategy is a comprehensive effort that aligns with WECC's mission and vision while addressing unique challenges in the Western Interconnection. The improvements in Draft 2—especially in tone, stakeholder collaboration, and independence—show significant progress. Moving forward, emphasizing WECC's social welfare role and celebrating accomplishments will further enhance the strategy's effectiveness in achieving an organization that can enhance the long-term reliability and security for the grid.