



October 7, 2010

News Media Contact

Mary O'Driscoll | 202-502-8680

Docket No. RM11-2-000

FERC takes first step in smart grid rulemaking process

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) today took the first step in starting a formal rulemaking proceeding involving the five groups of smart grid standards identified by the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) as ready for consideration.

The NIST standards are the first of what may be several hundred more to be identified for FERC consideration in the coming years. NIST handed off the first standards to FERC under Section 1305 of the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (EISA), which requires FERC to adopt in a formal rulemaking proceeding standards and protocols necessary to ensure smart grid functionality and interoperability in interstate transmission of electric power, and regional and wholesale electricity markets.

FERC has created a docket, RM11-2-000, for this rulemaking, and in the near future will issue a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NOPR) that will include opportunity for public comment.

According to NIST, the groups of smart grid standards will:

- Provide a Common Information Model necessary for exchanges of data between devices and networks, primarily in the transmission (IEC 61970) and distribution (IEC 61968) domains (the IEC numbers reference two related groups of standards);
- Facilitate substation automation, communication and interoperability through a common data format (IEC 61850);
- Facilitate exchanges of information between control centers (IEC 60870-6); and
- Address the cyber security of the communication protocols defined by the preceding IEC standards (IEC 62351).

EISA does not authorize FERC to require compliance with the final standards; however, FERC may consider requiring compliance with the standards under its Federal Power Act authorities.

The summaries of the smart grid standards are available on FERC's eLibrary under Docket No. RM11-2-000. There will be an opportunity for public comment on the standards only after FERC issues the NOPR in this case.

R-11-01

(30)