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News Media Contact

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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 "suites," or groups, of smart grid operability 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 took its action under Section 1305 of the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (EISA), which requires FERC to institute a rulemaking proceeding to adopt 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 consideration of the smart grid standards. It is not yet known when the formal rulemaking proceeding, through issuance of a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NOPR) and a public comment period, will begin.

According to NIST, the suites 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 suites 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 standards; however, FERC may consider 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

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