



**Reliability & Security
Workshop**

WECC

**March 17–18, 2026
San Diego, California**

WECC Assurance Program

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**Electric Reliability
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WECC Assurance Program

- Why have one?
- What is assurance?
 - Confidence of mind or manner
 - Freedom from self-doubt or uncertainty
- What information do we have?
- What achievements have others made?



Basic Principles

- Designed to provide an assessment of readiness and sharing of best practices with registered entities in the Western Interconnection
- Aligns with WECC's holistic risk-based strategy and risk assessment and mitigation activities
- Uses all available tools for effective risk mitigation
- Encourages a collaborative approach
- Designed to address any risks and will be used for other high-priority risks going forward
- Focuses on reliability and not compliance
- Sharing of best practices and evaluates interconnection readiness

Entity Selection and Engagement Process

- **Risk**
 - Identification of risks requiring better understanding interconnection-wide
 - Impact of the risk on the interconnection
 - Concerns about inherent risks and obligations for identified risks
 - Mitigation plan uncertainties
 - Confusion over the applicability of a Standard or Requirement
- **Sources**
 - Newly registered entities or those planning to register soon
 - GADs, TADS, MIDAS, System Events, ERO Enterprise
- **Foundational perspectives**
 - Development and identification of best practices and effective internal controls
 - Development of an understanding of expectations
 - Opportunity to discuss practices that are working well and to provide guidance on general readiness

Engagement

- WECC board technical session
- R&S Workshop presentations
- Participation in MRO and RF visits; collaborative visits with MRO and TRE
- **In Progress/Upcoming:**
 - Follow-up meetings/calls/RFIs
 - Site visits (dependent upon responses)
 - Entity feedback (areas of strength and opportunities for improvement)

Best Practices Observed

- Exhibiting an attitude of continuous improvement by using various opportunities to strengthen their extreme weather readiness program
 - Incorporating insights from industry disturbance reports, lessons learned, and engagement in industry forums and groups
 - Conducting end of season review focused on identifying actions to strengthen programs
 - Entities that have correction action programs (CAP)
- “Tone at top” (senior management support) was very apparent at some entities and was reflected in their overall approach and culture to extreme weather preparedness
- Initiation of an AI-based advanced pattern recognition approach for monitoring and tracking critical components within their Facilities. The premise was to use the information across its fleet to enhance support of reliable operations

Best Practices Observed

- Creation of a program to rotate personnel between plants to support operational flexibility, help ensure consistency in approaches to extreme weather preparedness, and encourage sharing of field experience
- Implementation of periodic drills for summer and winter extreme conditions has become an expectation that goes beyond any Reliability Standard
- Automated weather-related work orders created for inspection of critical components and preparation efforts to ensure seasonal preparedness

Best Practices Observed

- The resourcefulness, innovation, accountability, and pride when personnel responsible for effective operation during extreme cold weather **owned and implemented** the extreme weather preparedness plan
- Use of detailed annual checklists to confirm freeze protection measures are in place for winter operations
- Enhanced communication protocols during extreme weather events ("tailboard meetings," operator check-ins, buddy systems to ensure worker safety in extreme conditions)
- Increased periodicity of walkdowns during extreme weather

Areas for Improvement

- Extreme Cold Weather Preparedness Plans based mainly on meeting the requirements in Reliability Standards. Reliability goes beyond standards
- Summer preparedness plans appear to be lacking in terms of defined processes and procedures
- Increasing the use of thermal imaging equipment during operator rounds to recognize potential issues due to extreme weather
- Bringing heat trace-related alarming into control rooms for more Real-time awareness
- Inclusion of lessons learned from beyond the fence line (e.g., industry lessons learned) in training programs
- Lack of strong engagement process; executive sponsor; sharing information from industry forums and regional entities activities

WECC Assurance Program Areas for Improvement

- Improved tracking of assurance activities
- Timelier outreach and feedback with applicable entities
- Continued review and update of program documents
 - Western Interconnection Readiness Assessment
- A brief survey from participants to collect feedback to assist in continuous improvements to the program

General Next Steps

- Entity follow-up (as needed)
 - Webex or Teams meeting
 - Site visits
 - Continued improvement based on feedback provided
- Identify areas the program can be used for other high-priority risks (blackstart extreme weather preparedness, wildfire mitigation, system events, IBR performance, etc.)

Updates – Feedback

- Assurance Program website ([Assurance Program | Western Electricity Coordinating Council](#))
- Resources
 - Program documents
 - WI Cold Weather Readiness Assessment
 - NERC alerts
 - Event reports
 - Other resources (SGAS/lessons learned/practice guides/reports)
 - Recommendations from Extreme Cold Weather Event reports
 - ERO Enterprise themes and best practices for extreme cold weather



ENGAGE WITH WECC





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