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# FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION



WASHINGTON, D.C. 20426

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## NEWS RELEASE

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 18, 2006  
Docket Nos. AD06-6-000,  
RM01-10-005 & RM05-30-000

### COMMISSION, NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION TO MEET JOINTLY APRIL 24 ON GRID RELIABILITY

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) will meet jointly April 24 to discuss and promote interactions between the two agencies on matters relating to the nation's electric power grid reliability and the operation of U.S. commercial nuclear power plants.

In February 2006, FERC issued an interpretive order relating to the Standards of Conduct of Transmission Providers (RM01-10-005) clarifying its standards of conduct requirements to make clear that transmission providers may communicate essential information to nuclear power plants in order to preserve power grid reliability.

The August 14, 2003, blackout led to the shutdown of nine NRC-regulated nuclear power plants. Similar to non-nuclear facilities, when the grid is lost or significantly degraded, the protective circuits of the nuclear reactor and the turbine generator automatically shut down the plant to protect equipment. Nuclear facilities are designed with backup power sources, typically emergency diesel generators, to provide power to essential safety systems. During the blackout, diesel generators kept the nine plants in a safe condition.

Both the NRC and FERC participated in a joint U.S.-Canada task force that reviewed the blackout. The agencies signed a Memorandum of Agreement on September 1, 2004, to facilitate collaboration between the two agencies on power grid reliability and address the task force's recommendations.

“Our February order eliminated any ambiguity as to whether Commission rules impede communication with nuclear plant operators regarding safety and reliability,” said FERC Chairman Joseph T. Kelliher. “With our joint meeting, I look forward to building

upon our Memorandum of Agreement by talking with my NRC colleagues about their relationship with the private-sector Institute of Nuclear Power Operations, and exploring whether there are any parallels FERC can draw upon as we establish an Electric Reliability Organization and mandatory reliability standards.”

In addition to discussions between the Commissioners, NRC staff will discuss issues including the concept of adding new reactors to the grid and the recently issued NRC Generic Letter 2006-02 on grid reliability, while FERC staff will discuss issues including the agency’s recent Interpretive Order related to the Generic Letter.

Further details are available in the notice of the joint meeting, which is attached to this press release.

R-06-19

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION

Joint Meeting of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

Docket No. AD06-6-000

Interpretative Order Relating to  
the Standards of Conduct

Docket No. RM01-10-005

Rules Concerning Certification of  
the Electric Reliability Organization

Docket No. RM05-30-000<sup>1</sup>

NOTICE OF JOINT MEETING OF THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION  
AND THE FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION

(April 3, 2006)

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) will hold a joint meeting on April 24, 2006, in Room 2C, 888 First Street N.E., Washington, DC 20426. The meeting is expected to begin at 2:00 p.m. (EDT) and conclude at 4:00 p.m. All interested persons are invited to attend.

Purpose of Joint Meeting:

The NRC and FERC signed a Memorandum of Agreement on September 1, 2004, to facilitate interactions between the two agencies on matters of mutual interest pertaining to the nation's electric power grid reliability and related implementation activities based on the August 14, 2003, outage recommendations by the U.S.-Canada Power System Task Force. Both agencies have ongoing matters that are relevant to the April 24 joint meeting. The purpose of the joint meeting is to continue the dialog between the two agencies in furtherance of the goals set forth in the Memorandum of Agreement, especially in light of the concurrent matters involving offsite power,<sup>2</sup> and to explore the

<sup>1</sup> The Commission does not anticipate any decisions being made in either of these rulemaking dockets at this meeting; however, as both rulemakings may be discussed, the Commission is noticing both dockets to ensure no violation of the Sunshine in Government Act requirements occurs.

<sup>2</sup> On February 1, 2006, the NRC issued Generic Letter 2006-002, Grid Reliability and the Impact on Plant Risk and the Operability of Offsite Power, OMB No. 3150-0011. On February 16, 2006, in Docket No. RM01-10-005, FERC issued *Interpretive Order Relating to the Standards of Conduct for Transmission Providers*, 114 FERC ¶ 61,155 (2006).

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most effective role of each agency in addressing grid reliability issues and, thereby, to ensure an integrated approach in accomplishing their respective missions.

Format for Joint Meeting:

The format for the joint meeting will be discussions between the two sets of commissioners following presentations by their respective staffs, as set forth in the agenda below. There will not be industry presentations.

**Agenda:**

***Opening Remarks by FERC Chairman Kelliher, NRC Chairman Diaz and Commissioners***

Brief presentations by NRC Staff on grid reliability and adding new nuclear reactors to the grid and by FERC Staff on grid reliability and the Electric Reliability Organization proceeding.

***Discussion***

Brief presentations by NRC Staff on encouraging excellence and adopting and revising standards and by FERC Staff on new responsibilities under the Energy Policy Act of 2005.

***Discussion***

Brief presentations/updates by NRC Staff on Generic Letter and by FERC Staff on Interpretive Order Proceeding.

***Discussion***

***Closing Remarks by NRC Chairman Diaz, FERC Chairman Kelliher and Commissioners***

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A free webcast of this event is available through [www.ferc.gov](http://www.ferc.gov). Anyone with Internet access who desires to view this event can do so by navigating to [www.ferc.gov](http://www.ferc.gov)'s Calendar of Events and locating this event in the Calendar. The event will contain a link to its webcast. The Capitol Connection provides technical support for the webcasts and offers access to the meeting via phone bridge for a fee. If you have any questions, visit [www.CapitolConnection.org](http://www.CapitolConnection.org) or contact Danelle Perkowski or David Reininger at 703-993-3100.

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Transcripts of the meeting will be available immediately for a fee from Ace Reporting Company (202-347-3700 or 1-800-336-6646). They will be available for free on the Commission's eLibrary system and on the events calendar approximately one week after the meeting. FERC conferences and meetings are accessible under section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. For accessibility accommodations please send an email to [accessibility@ferc.gov](mailto:accessibility@ferc.gov) or call toll free (866) 208-3372 (voice) or 202-502-8659 (TTY), or send a fax to 202-208-2106 with the required accommodations.

All interested persons are invited. Pre-registration is not required and there is no fee to attend this joint meeting. Questions about the meeting should be directed to Mary Kipp at [Mary.Kipp@ferc.gov](mailto:Mary.Kipp@ferc.gov) or by phone at 202-502-8228.

Magalie R. Salas  
Secretary