
FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION



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NEWS RELEASE

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COMMISSION TO CONVENE RTO COLLABORATIVE IN ORDER TO EXPEDITE POWER MARKET TRANSITION

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission indicated today that it would move quickly to address issues of structure, organization and operations for RTOs during the month of October.

The Commission agreed to move on two parallel tracks—one to get RTOs in place and working and the second to address the important substantive operational issues needed to make power markets work well.

A Commission meeting will be held in October to consider RTOs for the Midwest, Northeast and Southeast, and it was agreed that the Commission will indicate by early November which RTOs are approved.

On the second track dealing with substantive operational issues, the Commission plans a series of commissioner-led workshops at its Washington headquarters from October 15 through 19 with broad participation from experts who will focus on such core issues as congestion management, cost recovery, market monitoring, transmission planning, business and reliability standards, the nature of transmission rights, and more.

A rule making on market design and structure will follow.

State regulators and diverse industry representatives will be invited to participate in all aspects of the workshops. In addition, a broad range of views will be sought in advance of publishing the proposed rule.

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Times and details of the meetings and workshops will be announced in the near future.

The Commission also indicated that four open meetings will be held in different regions of the country to identify energy infrastructure issues and their implications for regional economic development. The first will be held November 1 and 2 in Seattle in conjunction with the Western Governors' Association's Committee on Regional Electric Power Cooperation. A second meeting will be held in the Northeast in December and meetings for the South and Midwest will be held in 2002. Details of all four meetings will be forthcoming.

In a separate order, the Commission approved the establishment of the Western Electricity Coordinating Council (WECC). This will bring better coordination for regional transmission planning to the western United States (EL01-74-000, et al).

The Western Systems Coordinating Council (WSCC), along with two regional transmission groups, the Western Regional Transmission Association (WRTA) and the Southwest Regional Transmission Association (SWRTA), will transfer their operations to the WECC.

WSCC, a reliability council, along with the regional transmission groups, had overlapping functions and today's action by the Commission will improve regional coordination efforts.

The Commission conditionally approved WECC's governing structure, and directed the applicants to make appropriate filings to implement the restructuring and modify the WECC bylaws.