



November 24, 2014

News Media Contact

Mary O'Driscoll | 202-502-8680

Docket No. IN14-9-000

FERC Approves Fourth Settlement in 2011 Southwest Blackout Case

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) has approved a stipulation and consent agreement among FERC's Office of Enforcement, the North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC), and the Western Area Power Administration - Desert Southwest Region (Western-DSW) that resolves the investigation by FERC Enforcement staff and NERC into Western-DSW's involvement in the Sept. 8, 2011, Southwest blackout.

This marks the fourth settlement related to the FERC-NERC joint investigation into the outage that left more than 5 million people in Southern California, Arizona and Baja California, Mexico, without power for up to 12 hours.

Enforcement staff and NERC determined that Western-DSW violated four Requirements of three Reliability Standards in the Transmission Operations (TOP) and Voltage and Reactive Control (VAR) categories. These groups of standards cover the responsibilities and decision making authority for reliable operations and maintenance of Bulk Power system facilities within voltage and reactive power limits to protect equipment and ensure reliable operation of the interconnection. Western-DSW failed to operate its portion of the transmission system within voltage system operating limits and to maintain sufficient situational awareness prior to and during the event. Enforcement staff and NERC found that these violations undermined reliable operation of the Bulk Power System.

Western-DSW stipulated to the facts in the agreement and agreed to implement compliance measures necessary to mitigate the violations and improve overall reliability, including improving its models by adding critical external facilities and facilities operated below 100 kV that can impact system operating limits on its transmission system, working with a neighboring entity to add reactive support in order to better support voltage on its 161 kV system, and improving its situational awareness by adding a real-time monitoring tool that analyzes and alerts operators to potential contingencies. Western-DSW also agreed to make semi-annual compliance reports to Enforcement staff and NERC for at least one year.

R-15-11

(30)