

2020 Q-2 Interconnection Discussion Forum

MEETING LOGISTICS:

Wednesday June 24, 2020, 1:00pm – 3:30pm

Note: Shelter-In-Place and Social Distancing Restrictions will be Observed.

The meeting will be held online-only if necessary.

Courtyard Room
California Public Utilities Commission
505 Van Ness Avenue
San Francisco, CA

WEB-EX INFORMATION (Visual and Audio):

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AGENDA

1:00 - 1:50p.m. – Large Scale NEM – Potential Impact to Transmission System Operations Due to Rule 21 Projects (Topic Description as Proposed and Presented by CAISO)

- The CPUC's NEM 2.0 program removed the capacity ceiling on eligible resources. As a result, the CAISO has begun to see large generators interconnecting under Rule 21 directly to the transmission grid. Although to date the the results of project studies have been shared with the CAISO they may not be required to be shared. Additionally, the CAISO is not aware of them during the actual study process and unable to inform or advise the Participating Transmission Owners (PTOs) at that time. The Rule 21 projects do not have to go through the CAISO's interconnection, contracting, or New Resource Implementation (NRI) processes—CAISO's

interconnection process for market participation. The CAISO therefore lacks operational visibility once the NEM generator comes online. Ensuring reliability at these interconnections thus becomes more challenging.

1:50 p.m. - 2:45 p.m. – Service Planning Work Requests (Topic Description as Proposed and Presented by CALSSA)

- A. For service upgrades, customers and their representatives should be able to submit requests directly to service planning without going through the interconnection department. For PG&E, work requests, such as service upgrades, were working more smoothly when DER providers were allowed to make requests via the Express Connections team (aka Customer Connections Online). PG&E recently changed their policy to disallow projects involving solar to use that channel. For many cases, such as a main panel upgrade, there is no reason for the interconnection department to be involved in a service request. Making the request to the interconnection department creates an unnecessary step that causes delay and sometimes causes projects to fall through the cracks.
- B. There should be a web portal for simple service requests such as a meter change or a main panel upgrade. This work is traditionally handled independently by each field office. It is fine for each service office to process and fulfill work requests independently, but there should be centralized accountability on timelines and a centralized way to submit a work request. There should also be an up-to-date contact list for service planning offices to follow up on requests.
- C. Current utility spot meter processes require utility site verification for the existing equipment before scheduling disconnections for main panel upgrades. This process can cause major delays for some customers. This can be improved through the development of a process for developers to submit required information and photos as an alternative to the utility site verification for the spot meter process.
- D. The utilities have PV meter collar adapters that can be purchased by a very limited number of customers to enable more streamlined and cost effective interconnection. They are used to avoid a main panel upgrade. There are many limitations and varying processes across the utilities. Meter collars should be encouraged and utilized more readily to improve customer satisfaction. In light of PSPS, meter collars compatible with backup power sources should be investigated to expedite the safe interconnection of these systems. Additionally, the use of customer owned meter collar adapters should be investigated to further streamline processes and cost effectiveness for customers.

2:45 p.m. - 3:15 p.m. – NEM-A Engineering Review Timing (Topic Description as Proposed and Presented by CALSSA)

- NEM Aggregation projects need to go through land review to ensure that one entity owns or controls all of the adjacent sections of land. This often takes considerable time, due either to utility delays or time for customers to create leases between different signatories. Utilities wait to perform the engineering review of an interconnection application until land review is complete. This is an unnecessary delay, especially since the customer pays for the engineering studies. Very few projects fail to get through land review. Utilities should begin engineering review on receipt of the application. They would not begin designing upgrades and would not issue PTO without land review approval, but they could present the results of engineering review to customers so that projects are ready to enter the next stage when land review is complete.

3:15 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. – Wrap Up & Next Steps