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www.tapsgroup.org

July 22, 2005

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Michehl R. Gent
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Re: Inadvertent Interchange Payback

Dear Mr. Gent and WEQ Executive Committee Members:

I am writing to NERC and NAESB on behalf of the Transmission Access Policy Study Group (TAPS) to request that in future consideration of the treatment of inadvertent energy, an important comparability issue does not get overlooked —*i.e.*, allowing return-in-kind treatment of inadvertent energy among control areas, while non-control area utilities are burdened with punitive imbalance charges.

The TAPS group is an informal association of transmission-dependent utilities in more than 30 states, promoting open and non-discriminatory transmission access. TAPS members have been following the progress of NAESB’s Inadvertent Interchange Payback Task Force (IIPTF). We were pleased to see the establishment of the IIPTF in March of 2003 with the goal of developing standards to define the alternatives that may be used to settle inadvertent interchange, particularly the mitigation of the potential financial gain that misuse of the payback-in-kind methodology does not prevent. However, we are disappointed that, after 27 months and the consideration of numerous proposals to replace the current payment-in-kind methodology of settling inadvertent energy accounts between control areas/balancing authorities, the IIPTF was unable to reach agreement on an improved system and so concluded in its June 1 memo discussing Task Force results, that “...none of the proposed solutions... better than the payback-in-kind methodology (as embodied in the NAESB Version 0 Inadvertent Interchange Payback Standard).” The result would leave a clearly discriminatory practice in place. We understand that the final IIPTF report will be considered by WEQ at its November meeting.

We also understand that NERC has asked that NAESB’s Inadvertent Interchange Payback standard (WEQBPS) be transferred to NERC’s and included as a reliability standard, and is drafting a Standards Authorization Requests (SAR) for this standard. (For that reason, NERC on June 24 asked FERC to defer action on NAESB’s proposed Version 0 standard in FERC Docket No. RM05-5-000.) This proposed transfer will also bring aspects of this issue shortly before both WEQ (for action on the SAR) and NERC.

♦ An association of transmission-dependent utilities and other supporters of equal, non-discriminatory transmission access and vigorously competitive wholesale electric markets. TAPS members are located in more than 34 states, including: Alabama. Arizona . California . Colorado . Connecticut . Delaware . Florida . Illinois . Indiana . Iowa . Kansas . Kentucky . Louisiana . Maine . Massachusetts . Michigan . Minnesota . Mississippi . Missouri . Nebraska . New Hampshire . New Mexico . North Carolina . North Dakota . Ohio . Oklahoma . Pennsylvania . South Carolina . South Dakota . Utah . Vermont . Virginia . West Virginia . Wisconsin . Wyoming

Thus, the inadvertent energy payback issue may soon be before NERC and/or WEQ. We ask that such consideration resolve, and not avoid, the fundamental comparability issue, rather than simply perpetuate a flawed and discriminatory system. Specifically, the payback-in-kind methodology for inadvertent energy between control areas is clearly not comparable to the treatment of imbalances experienced by non-control area utilities under FERC's open access tariffs. For non-control area utilities, return-in-kind provisions are typically limited to imbalances within a narrow 1.5% deadband, with under-deliveries beyond the deadband charged \$100/MWh or 110% of incremental cost for under-deliveries (whichever is higher), with payments of 90% of decremental cost for over-deliveries. Payback in kind of inadvertent energy avoids these penalty aspects of the tariff completely. Neither the NERC nor NAESB standard should be designed to create or perpetuate competitive advantages for control area operators. This is important not only to achieve fundamental fairness, but also to avoid creating an obvious additional impediment to reasonable control area consolidation.

Whether through NAESB or NERC, the current discriminatory system of payback-in-kind should be replaced with a methodology that treats all utilities equally. As FERC, in Order 2000, concluded:¹

In the NOPR, we noted that unequal access to balancing options can lead to unequal access in the quality of transmission service, and that this could be a significant problem for RTOs that serve some customers who operate control areas and other customers who do not. We conclude that control area operators should face the same costs and price signals as other transmission customers and, therefore, also should be required to clear system imbalances through a real-time balancing market. We believe that providing options for clearing imbalances that differ among customers would be unduly discriminatory.

Because much of the nation will not have RTO balancing markets any time soon, it is critical that any policies promote a non-discriminatory system to manage inadvertent energy flows. Therefore, we ask the WEQ Executive Committee to reject the recommendation of the IIPTF and direct the IIPTF to develop a methodology that does not perpetuate what FERC has recognized to be a discriminatory treatment of imbalances. To the extent the issue is transferred to NERC, NERC should do the same. If NERC and/or NAESB cannot deal with this fundamental comparability issue (*e.g.*, because sufficient consensus is not possible), they should clearly inform FERC of this problem, identifying the comparability concern as a tariff issue that should be addressed by FERC.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Roy Thilly". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Roy Thilly

cc: TAPS Members
Allen Mosher, APPA

¹ *Regional Transmission Organizations*, Order 2000, FERC Stat. & Regs. ¶ 31,089, at 31,142 (1999).