



To: Stakeholders
From: Kristin Ralff Douglas
Date: November 22, 2023
Re: Working Group #4 Topics

MEMORANDUM

2023 Undergrounding Plans (Docket #2023-UPs)

Topics for Working Group #4 on Development of Guidelines for the 10-Year Undergrounding Distribution Infrastructure Plan (Undergrounding Plan)

The Electrical Undergrounding Division of the Office of Energy Infrastructure Safety (Energy Safety) is developing guidelines for large electrical corporations to submit a 10-Year Undergrounding Distribution Infrastructure Plan (Undergrounding Plan) pursuant to Public Utilities Code sections 8385 and 8388.5.

The questions below are part of Energy Safety’s ongoing process to develop these guidelines and will be discussed at the November 28, 2023 working group meeting. The working group discussion will benefit from your responses. The working group discussion will include some questions about data and modeling needs. Although we are not seeking detailed input at this time, we do want to confirm that we have the right starting place. If possible, please include the data/modeling person on your team.

Please send the name and email of any data/modeling team member that you expect will participate in the working group. ElectricalUndergroundingPlans@energysafety.ca.gov.

1. Compliance

Section 8388.5 directs Energy Safety to “*consider the independent monitor’s report and whether the large electrical corporation has cured any deficiencies, and may recommend penalties to the commission.*” For ease of reference, the relevant excerpts from section 8388.5 are included in the appendix to this memo.

During the working group discussion, please point out any elements that will be essential to a compliance evaluation. How can the guidelines ensure that the reports provide sufficient and useful information for a compliance review? Are there specific reporting requirements that Energy Safety should be required to focus on for compliance and any penalty recommendation? Are there guiding principles that should inform identification of crucial report items?

2. Progress Reports

6-Month Progress Reports

When implementing an approved Plan, the electrical corporation must file a progress report every six months.

- a. What categories of information should be included in the progress reports?
- b. Should the progress reports address each of the section 8388.5(c) plan components separately?
- c. Should stakeholders be able to file comments on the reports?
- d. Should these reports be incorporated into the independent monitor annual report?

Annual WMP Filings

The electrical corporation is also required to include ongoing work plans and progress in annual Wildfire Mitigation Plan (WMP) filings.

- a) How should “work plan” be defined?
- b) What specifically should be included in the annual WMPs? Should the reporting be different in WMP update years?
- c) Should the WMP include the complete progress reports and independent monitor report from the last year?
- d) Should information and findings from the WMP be incorporated into the independent monitor report?

3. Independent Monitor Annual Report

- a. The independent monitor is directed to “*review and assess the large electrical corporation’s compliance with its plan*” and “*assess whether progress on undergrounding work has been consistent with the objectives identified in its plan.*”
 - i. Should the independent monitor report address each of the section 8388.5(c) components separately?
 - ii. How should the phrase “compliance with its plan” be specifically defined? Should this include all of the components listed in 8388.5(c)? Why or why not?
 - iii. Should the independent monitor report on costs and related information?
 - iv. Should the independent monitor report on the electrical corporation’s efforts to apply for federal, state, and other non-ratepayer funds?
 - v. What other topics would be appropriate for the independent monitor to address?
- b. The *independent* monitor report shall include “*any failure, delays, or shortcomings*” and “*provide recommendations for improvements to accomplish the objectives.*” How should the word “failure” be defined? “delay”? or “shortcoming”? How should these issues be categorized or otherwise ranked?

- c. The electrical corporation has 180 days to *“correct and eliminate any deficiency specified in the independent monitor’s report.”* How should *“correct and eliminate”* be defined?
- d. The independent monitor report is due *“on before December 1 of each year.”* Should we consider setting a date earlier in the year? Should the date match up with the date of other events such as CPUC filings or the WMP?

4. Data and Modeling

These working group questions are intended to set the groundwork for future, more in-depth development of data and modeling requirements. To understand and evaluate submitted Plans, Energy Safety expects to use the following questions as a starting point. Are the questions below an appropriate starting point? For each item, please comment on any specifications or limitations that Energy Safety should consider as we begin considering data and modeling requirements.

- i. What is the input data?
- ii. What type of model does the electrical corporation use? (taxonomy)
- iii. How was the model solved/trained?
- iv. What is the expected shelf-life of the model?
- v. What are the outputs?

Appendix 1
Excerpts from Public Utilities Code section 8388.5
Related to Reporting and Compliance

8388.5(f) If the plan is approved by the office and commission, the large electrical corporation shall do all of the following:

- (1) Every six months, file a progress report with the office and the commission. The large electrical corporation and the office shall publish these progress reports on their internet websites.
- (2) Include ongoing work plans and progress in annual wildfire mitigation plan filings.
- (3) Hire an independent monitor, selected by the office, to review and assess the large electrical corporation's compliance with its plan and submit a report with the office each December 1 over the course of the plan.

(g) (1) In reviewing and assessing the large electrical corporation's compliance with its plan pursuant to paragraph (3) of subdivision (f), the independent monitor shall assess whether the large electrical corporation's progress on undergrounding work has been consistent with the objectives identified in its plan. The independent monitor's report shall specify any failure, delays, or shortcomings of the large electrical corporation and provide recommendations for improvements to accomplish the objectives set forth in the plan.

(2) The large electrical corporation shall have 180 days to correct and eliminate any deficiency specified in the independent monitor's report.

(3) On or before December 1 of each year the plan is in effect, the independent monitor shall submit the report to the office.

(h) The office shall publish reports received pursuant to paragraph (3) of subdivision (g) on its internet website.

(i) (1) The office shall consider the independent monitor's report and whether the large electrical corporation has cured any deficiencies, and may recommend penalties to the commission.

(2) The commission may assess penalties on a large electrical corporation that fails to substantially comply with a commission decision approving its plan.