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Purpose
Provide protocols for issuing Operating Instructions to ensure accurate communication for the reliable operation of the Bulk Electric System (BES).

1. Responsibilities

- Reliability Coordinator (RC) Operator
- Operations Training Department
- Operations Compliance group
- Reliability Coordinator (RC) Director

2. Scope/Applicability

- Reliability Coordination
- Operations Training and Compliance

3. Procedure Detail

3.1. Professionalism
The RC operator will maintain professionalism during all communications (voice or electronic) with external entities. Being professional includes being polite, pleasant and helpful; however, as the situation warrants, the RC operator will adjust tone of voice to the situation (e.g. friendly, matter-of-fact, or authoritative) while still being professional. General conversations may be conducted in the English language or in another language when agreed to. However, all Operating Instructions issued by the RC West will be issued using three-part communication in the English language.

3.2. Communication Protocol for Operating Instructions
When issuing verbal Operating Instructions during normal and Emergency situations, the RC operator will abide by the following communication protocol:

1. Use English language.\(^1\)
2. All operators should identify themselves by last name and company at the beginning of the conversation, and ensure the other party does the same.
3. Use standard or most-commonly accepted terminology when referring to system components or actions. If a term used is unclear, request clarification to ensure common understanding.

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\(^1\) COM-002-4 R1.1.

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4. When referencing transmission lines, the identification should include the substation-to-substation designation, line number if applicable, and voltage level.²
   - When referencing generating unit, the identification should include the generating station name and unit number.
   - When referencing equipment at a substation, the identification should include the substation name, equipment type and equipment number.

5. Complete any discussions on general information, details and potential options to ensure common understanding; and then inform the receiver that they are about to receive an Operating Instruction, before issuing.

6. Specify time the instruction is to be implemented in the 24-hour time format, in the time zone of the entity receiving instruction, or in the form of an expected time-frame (e.g. within 10 minutes, for the next 30 minutes, until further notice, etc.).³

7. Use the “Three-Part Communication Protocol” (described below).⁴

## Reliability Coordinator Actions

- **Three-Part Communication Protocol:**
  1. **Issue** Operating Instructions in a clear and concise manner.
  2. **Ask** the receiver to repeat the instruction correctly (not necessarily verbatim).
  3. **Confirm** with the receiver that the information is correct, if the instruction was repeated correctly, or
     - **Reissue** the instruction, if it was not repeated correctly, until the information repeated by the receiver is confirmed to be correct.

- **Take** an alternative action, if a response is not received; if the Operating Instruction was not understood by the receiver; or if the receiving entity is unable to carry out the instruction due to physical limitations, safety, equipment, regulatory or statutory requirements.⁵

- **Evaluate** effectiveness of actions being taken on system conditions.
  - **Modify** Operating Instructions if actions being taken are not adequately improving system conditions.
  - **Cancel or Terminate** Operating Instructions that are no longer required due to a change in system conditions (e.g. load changes, weather changes, equipment returned to service, etc.).

- **Notify** the entity once the condition has been alleviated.

- **Log** a summary of all communications and actions.

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² COM-002-4 R1.6.
³ COM-002-4 R1.5.
⁴ COM-002-4 R1.2.
⁵ IRO-001-4 R2, R3 (applicable to BA and TOP)
3.3. Multiple-Party Burst Operating Instructions

Although the preferred method of issuing RC Operating Instructions is verbally, in certain situations, such as an Emergency condition affecting several entities, it may be necessary for the RC operator to issue an Operating Instruction electronically to all the affected entities simultaneously, such as using the Grid Messaging System (GMS).

Reliability Coordinator Actions

- **Issue** a single-party to *multiple-party burst* Operating Instruction if necessary.
- **Verify** that the instruction was received by *at least one receiver* by: ⁶
  - Using the acknowledge feature of GMS, or
  - Calling one of the intended receivers by phone to verify receipt, if the acknowledge feature is non-functional.
- **Log** a summary of all *communications and actions*.

3.4. Operating Instructions during Emergencies

During an Emergency condition, the RC operator will issue Operating Instructions ⁷ without delay, as necessary, and in accordance with applicable procedures, to ensure that the Emergency is mitigated in a timely manner.

While time is of the essence during Emergencies, it is *critical* that Operating Instructions given follow the communications protocol described in Section 3.2 and/or Section 3.3, to ensure accurate communication for the reliable operation of the BES.

Reliability Coordinator Actions

- **Abide** by *communications protocol described in Section 3.2* when issuing Operating Instructions *during Emergencies*, ⁸ such as:
  - SOL and IROL exceedances (see *RC0310 - Mitigating SOL and IROL Exceedances*),
  - Frequency Trigger Limit (FTL) exceedances (see *RC0210 Monitoring Frequency and Balancing Area Performance*),
  - Capacity/energy Emergencies (see *RC0410 System Emergencies*),
  - Resynchronizing islands (see *RC0460 Reliability Coordinator Area Restoration Plan*), and
  - Extreme weather/environmental Emergencies (see *RC0410 System Emergencies*).

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⁶ COM-002-4 R1.4.
⁷ IRO-001-4 R1
⁸ COM-002-4 R5.
Communications Protocols

### Reliability Coordinator Actions

- **Ensure** that the instruction was received by **at least one receiver** when issuing a single-party to *multiple-party burst* Operating Instruction during an Emergency, by:
  - **Using** the acknowledge feature of GMS, or
  - **Calling** one of the intended receivers by phone to verify receipt, if the acknowledge feature is not working.
- **Log** a summary of all *communications* and *actions*.

### 3.5. Training Requirements

The Operations Training department will ensure that all RC operators complete initial training on the communications protocol described in this procedure prior to the operator issuing Operating Instructions.

### 3.6. Communications Protocols Assessment

The Operations Compliance group will ensure that an assessment of each RC operator is conducted at least once every twelve (12) calendar months to determine adherence to the communications protocol described in this procedure.

The RC Director, or designee, will provide feedback to each RC operator based on the results of the assessment, and specify corrective actions needed to address deviations from the protocol.

As part of the assessment, the Operations Compliance group, in collaboration with the RC Director, will also assess the effectiveness of the communications protocol in this procedure, and determine the need to modify the protocol as necessary.

### 4. Supporting Information

#### Operationally Affected Parties

Shared with the Public.

#### References

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NERC Requirements</th>
<th>COM-002-4 R1, R2, R4, R5, R7; IRO-001-4 R1.</th>
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<tr>
<td>BA/TOP Operating Procedure</td>
<td></td>
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9 COM-002-4 R7.
10 COM-002-4 R2.
11 COM-002-4 R4.1, R4.2
Communications Protocols

Other References

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<tr>
<td>RC0210 Monitoring Frequency and BA Performance</td>
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<td>RC0310 Mitigating SOL and IROL Exceedances</td>
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<tr>
<td>RC0410 System Emergencies</td>
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<td>RC0460 RC Area Restoration Plan</td>
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Definitions
The following terms capitalized in this Operating Procedure when used are defined below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Operating Instructions</td>
<td>A command by operating personnel responsible for the Real-time operation of the interconnected Bulk Electric System to change or preserve the state, status, output, or input of an Element of the Bulk Electric System or Facility of the Bulk Electric System. (A discussion of general information and of potential options or alternatives to resolve Bulk Electric System operating concerns is not a command and is not considered an Operating Instruction.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency</td>
<td>Any abnormal system condition that requires automatic or immediate manual action to prevent or limit the failure of transmission facilities or generation supply that could adversely affect the reliability of the Bulk Electric System.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| System Operator on mitigating System Operating Limit (SOL) | The value (such as MW, Mvar, amperes, frequency or volts) that satisfies the most limiting of the prescribed operating criteria for a specified system configuration to ensure operation within acceptable reliability criteria. System Operating Limits are based upon certain operating criteria. These include, but are not limited to:  
  - Facility Ratings (applicable pre- and post-Contingency Equipment Ratings or Facility Ratings)  
  - Transient stability ratings (applicable pre- and post-Contingency stability limits)  
  - Voltage stability ratings (applicable pre- and post-Contingency voltage stability)  
  - System voltage limits (applicable pre- and post-Contingency voltage limits) |
| Interconnection Reliability Operating Limit (IROL) | A System Operating Limit that, if violated, could lead to instability, uncontrolled separation, or Cascading outages that adversely impact the reliability of the Bulk Electric System. |
5. Periodic Review Procedure

Review Criteria & Incorporation of Changes

COM-002 requires the RC to annually assess the effectiveness of the communications protocols included in this procedure.\(^\text{12}\)

Frequency

Annual

Appendix

No appendices at this time.

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\(^{12}\) COM-002-4 R4.2