BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Order Instituting Rulemaking to Consider Refinements to and Further Development of the Commission's Resource Adequacy Requirements Program.

Rulemaking R.05-12-013 (December 15, 2005)

REPLY COMMENTS OF THE CALIFORNIA INDEPENDENT SYSTEM OPERATOR ON STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS ON CAPACITY MARKET STRUCTURE

Pursuant to the rulings of the Assigned Administrative Law Judge for the California Pubic Utilities Commission ("Commission" or "CPUC"), dated January 18, February 4, and February 19, 2008, the California Independent System Operator Corporation ("CAISO") submits the following reply comments:

I. SUMMARY

If the goal of the Commission is to allow a meaningful role for competitive market-based investment to provide needed electric infrastructure – including new generation, upgrades to existing generation, demand response and transmission – it is critical for the Commission in this proceeding to adopt a multi-year forward framework for committing capacity to serve the load and operating needs of the CAISO balancing authority area. Today's one-year ahead Resource Adequacy ("RA") process will not provide sufficient lead time, either for investment decisions and commitments by investors or for economical comparison of alternative infrastructure investments in a manner the yields the most cost-effective outcomes for consumers. Moreover, once the decision is made to provide a multi-year forward RA commitment framework that will

attract competitive market-based investment, a Centralized Capacity Market ("CCM") structure provides the most effective, fair and transparent way to accomplish that objective as well as related state policy objectives, while preserving full state authority over RA as contemplated in the Energy Policy Act of 2005.

Some parties commenting in this proceeding argue that a CCM structure will cause the Commission to relinquish authority over RA to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission ("FERC"). The most important response to this argument is to emphasize the Commission's continuing authority over the bilateral procurement of its regulated Load Serving Entities ("LSEs"), which will in no way be diminished by the adoption of a CCM framework. The CAISO further suggests the opposite of these parties' assertions may be true – a bilateral framework may reduce the Commission's control over procurement through, for example, reduced ability for its decisions to affect procurement criteria and pricing through the CAISO's backstop procurement mechanism. The parties who advocate the bilateral model based on the fear of loss of Commission control ignore the important role of the CAISO backstop under a permanent bilateral framework. Specifically, in the absence of a more robust, transparent capacity pricing mechanism on a permanent basis, the backstop mechanism will assume heightened significance because it may be the only source of transparent price signals for new investment in locations that have a capacity deficiency. Under a CCM design, however, the backstop mechanism can be integrated into the CCM structure through the

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In the context of the CAISO's recent stakeholder process to develop the Interim Capacity Procurement Mechanism ("ICPM"), the CAISO concluded it was not appropriate to use the ICPM to provide investment price signals in deficient locations, given, *inter alia*, the interim nature of the ICPM and the CAISO's desire not to step ahead of the Long Term RA decision. If the forthcoming Commission decision does not provide for a transparent forward price signal to stimulate investment,

reconfiguration auctions, and as such the backstop will not serve as the only source of a transparent price and would simply inherit any environmental constraints that may be included in the primary auction, rather than a stand-alone backstop mechanism that is not structurally linked to forward RA procurement.

The opponents of a CCM also argue that the CCM will force the Commission to compromise its ability to implement state environmental policy. This argument also is ill-founded and controvertible. Under a CCM, bilateral contracting can still be the predominant form of RA capacity procurement, and the CAISO expects that the Commission will continue the Long Term Procurement Proceeding ("LTPP") as the means to exercise oversight of the procurement practices of its regulated LSEs. In particular, the LTPP can be a primary vehicle for the Commission to implement state environmental policy, with or without a CCM. The advantage of the CCM, however, is that it also can incorporate environmental constraints to supplement the results of bilateral procurement, and such constraints can apply starting from the primary auction through the sequence of reconfiguration or backstop auctions. Thus the specter of "cheap coal" dominating a CCM auction with no possibility to invoke environmental procurement criteria is simply a scare tactic.²

Opponents of a CCM assert that it will result in vastly higher costs to consumers.

This assertion rests on the presumptions that under the bilateral model (1) LSEs will be

this matter will have to be reconsidered in the context of developing a permanent backstop mechanism.

Moreover, even if no environmental constraints were included in the CCM design or the LTPP requirements, investment decisions are also made in consideration of the costs of compliance with environmental regulation and the impacts of such regulation on expected revenues in energy and ancillary services. Given the already established greenhouse gas reduction goals in AB32, the prospects for investment in a coal plant to serve California will be extremely slim given the high number of emissions allowances such a plant would be required to obtain.

able to pay existing resources less for RA capacity than they pay for new investment, and (2) that paying less to existing resources even if feasible would be unequivocally advantageous to consumers. The CAISO disagrees with both presumptions. First, the purported savings would be eroded both by suppliers who will calculate their offer prices to try to earn their estimates of the fair market value of their capacity, and by the activities of financial intermediaries that will offer profitable market-making services to buyers and sellers to compensate for the absence of a transparent market. Second, contrary to assertions that paying a market clearing capacity price to existing resources will prevent dirty and inefficient resources from retiring, the CAISO would point out that the ability to earn a market clearing price could enable such resources to invest in environmental upgrades and repowering which could meet state environmental objectives at lower cost than driving them to retire and replacing them with new resources. Tightening environmental restrictions and rising costs of compliance (e.g., greenhouse gas allowances) will tend to limit the output of the inefficient or dirty plants. Instead of letting them slip into retirement, however, the recent CAISO study on renewable integration has pointed out that they may be needed primarily for ancillary services, such as regulation, and load following to support the shift of the supply fleet to include increasing amounts of intermittent renewables. In this case paying them a sufficient capacity payment will support the objective of meeting environmental goals reliably and cost effectively. Opponents of a CCM assert that it is incompatible with and will preclude an eventual transition to the gold-standard "energy-only" market. The first thing to point out is that, based on the experience of PJM Interconnection, LLC ("PJM") and ISO New England, Inc. ("ISO-NE"), market-based investment does not appear in

energy-only markets with bid caps of \$1,000 per MWh, i.e., where there are no meaningful capacity payments. Accordingly, it appears that without bid caps in the multithousand dollar range – and credible assurances to investors that policy makers will not intervene when prices hit that range for hours at a time under peak conditions – new investment in response to an energy-only market in California is a vision of the more distant future. Moreover, the energy-only markets of the Electric Reliability Council of Texas and the Midwest Independent System Operator, Inc., are still too new to provide any evidence of success in attracting investment, whereas the ISO-NE's recent first run of its Forward Capacity Market ("FCM") cleared the full quantity of demanded capacity at the price floor, including a substantial quantity of new investment in demand response. The argument that a CCM will prevent a, eventual transition to an energyonly market is also incorrect. Suppliers in a competitive CCM will calculate their offer prices to reflect expected earnings in the spot markets. If an energy-only market is found later to be desirable for California, then bid caps will be lifted to allow spot market prices to rise, and prices in the CCM will fall commensurately as spot market earnings reduce the need for RA capacity payments.

Some parties commenting in this proceeding oppose a multi-year forward commitment of RA capacity on the grounds that it will stifle Direct Access. That may be true under the bilateral model they advocate, but in the context of a CCM the opposite is true. Under the bilateral model it is necessary to establish individual procurement requirements for each LSE which, as opponents of a multi-year forward framework argue, are onerous enough in today's one-year ahead RA process, particularly for smaller LSEs that may be subject to significant amounts of load migration. In a multi-

year forward process, these parties argue, the burden on such LSEs would be insurmountable, and they are probably correct – but only if it is assumed that these LSEs will all have the same multi-year forward forecast-based procurement obligations and compliance provisions. In a CCM framework, however, each LSE, in conjunction with its regulatory authority, can adopt the amount of forward procurement that best fits its business model, then allow the CCM to meet the capacity needs of the system and the local areas, and each LSE will be charged only for its share of the CCM procurement based on its realized load in each delivery month. For this reason a CCM structure in a multi-year forward framework, besides being a boon to Direct Access, also allows for simpler administration and more equitable cost allocation than a bilateral structure.

One party argues for the bilateral non-CCM model, but recognizes the need for a multi-year forward capacity commitment process. It goes on to suggest that the Commission open a single-issue proceeding to decide the optimal time horizon for the multi-year forward process, and then simply move today's one-year forward process to fit that time horizon. The CAISO believes that this suggestion is unrealistic. One issue likely to be extremely contentious, among others, will be how to establish enforceable four- or five-year forward RA procurement obligations for LSEs, particularly smaller LSEs whose business model depends on the Direct Access program. The CAISO therefore believes that a multi-year forward non-CCM long-term RA design would adversely impact the viability of Direct Access.

In summary, the CAISO believes that the bilateral proposals, with or without a multi-year forward capacity commitment process, are thinly-veiled arguments for a

return to the pre-restructuring paradigm whereby all investment in electric infrastructure was made through regulated-monopoly Investor Owned Utility ("IOU") procurement or construction. The CAISO does not believe that such a return to the past would be in the best interests of consumers, with respect to the overall cost of electricity, the allocation of risk between ratepayers and investors, and the cost of achieving the state's environmental policy objectives in a timely manner. The CAISO believes that California residents and electricity consumers will be better off on all counts with a long-term RA framework that provides a meaningful role for competitive market-based investment through a multi-year forward CCM-based structure.

A meaningful role for competitive market-based investment does not mean having blind faith in uncontrolled, unregulated "free" markets and their participants to provide the needed infrastructure when and where needed at reasonable prices. There is no such thing as a "free" market. Thus, the policy decision that is required is not markets *versus* regulation, it is to find the right balance of markets *and* regulation.

California's initial market structure clearly did not find the right balance, as the crisis experience proved. Following the crisis the Commission, working closely with its regulated LSEs, the California Energy Commission, the CAISO and other industry participants, has come a long way toward achieving the effective balance of markets and regulation, as demonstrated by the successes of the RA program thus far. At the same time the CAISO – also working closely with the Commission and its staff and all the stakeholders – has completely overhauled its spot markets to create a structure that will send transparent and accurate price signals for efficient short-run operation, more extensive demand response, and new infrastructure investment. Most recently the

Commission has responded to AB32 by proposing a major environmental regulation – a cap-and-trade system for greenhouse gas allowances – which explicitly takes into account the need to align the market-based components of environmental regulation with well-functioning, transparent wholesale markets.³ The next major piece of a well-balanced market-and-regulatory structure to be decided and developed is the long-term RA framework.

The Commission could decide, of course, that it prefers to return to the prerestructuring investment paradigm and adopt one of the bilateral models. It is worth
pointing out, however, that that paradigm assigns all investment risks and costs to
ratepayers instead of investors, and the rates that resulted under that paradigm in the
1980s and 1990s became powerful drivers for industry restructuring. Thus, going back
to that paradigm would not be without risks and costs for ratepayers, which the
advocates of such a return via the bilateral model sidestep by offering logically-flawed
assertions of the dangers of a multi-year forward CCM structure. The CAISO believes
that California's electric industry participants – consumers in particular – deserve better
than a return to the old paradigm. They deserve a renewed commitment to find the
workable, environmentally sound and cost-effective balance of competitive markets and
regulatory oversight.

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[&]quot;Interim Opinion on Greenhouse Gas Regulatory Strategies," Proposed Decision of President Peevey in Rulemaking 06-04-009, dated 3/13/2008.

II. CAISO REPLY COMMENTS

A. Multi-Year Forward Commitment Of RA Capacity And Transparent Capacity Prices Are Needed To Attract Market-Based Investment In Generation And Demand Response, And To Provide An Efficient Means To Compare Supply And Transmission Investment Alternatives.

The BTG proposal of retaining today's one-year forward RA obligation and showing, combined with spot energy-based markets limited by the currently-anticipated bid cap levels (which will rise to \$1,000/MWh after two years of MRTU market operation), will not be sufficient by themselves to attract market-based investment in generation and demand response. Absent a multi-year forward RA commitment process, a market-based investment climate would require much higher levels of energy bid caps than are currently planned for the CAISO markets. Further, the prospects for adopting bid caps in the multi-thousand dollar range seem unlikely for the foreseeable future, and the CAISO expects that even if the BTG parties who advocate an "energy-only" market were successful in raising the bid caps to an effective level, in the range of \$5,000 per MWh, potential investors would still be wary of regulatory intervention at the first sign of prices anywhere near that level. As a result, the CAISO believes that a decision to adopt the BTG proposal will, in effect, be a decision to obtain all new supply investment through IOU-based procurement for many years to come.

The ISO-NE and PJM experiences have clearly proven this. Those markets for several years relied on "energy-only" markets with bid caps in the \$1,000 per MWh range and no meaningful capacity payments to compensate for the inability of new generating resources to be viable on spot market earnings alone. The resulting inability to attract new investment led both entities to develop new forward capacity markets.

The CAISO notes that a multi-year forward capacity commitment process and a CCM can be effective in inducing new investment in demand response. One noteworthy recent success was achieved in the first running of the ISO-NE FCM, where the total requirement of over 32,000 MW of capacity for the 2010-11 timeframe was fully procured at a clearing price that equaled the price floor, and which included 1188 MW of new demand-side projects among the 1813 MW of investment in new resources.

Admittedly, the possibility of high spot energy prices would also be a strong incentive to invest in demand response, but as noted above it is not likely that bid caps over \$1,000/MWh will be adopted in California during the next several years.

Similarly, a multi-year forward commitment process through a CCM can provide a transparent, economically efficient means for owners of existing plants to evaluate investment in repowering or environmental upgrades versus retirement. And, as was described in the CAISO's section of the Staff Report and its initial comments, a CCM will also provide a transparent mechanism for making economic decisions to build or not to build transmission upgrades depending on the prices and quantities of RA capacity offers.

B. A CCM Would Not Cause The State To Give Up Its Resource Adequacy Authority To FERC, Nor to Compromise Its Ability to Implement State Environmental Policy.

The BTG asserts that its proposal would retain state control over procurement, whereas a CCM would cede that control to FERC. The CAISO believes that BTG's assertion is not logical. The adoption of a CCM would have no obvious adverse impact on state authority over resource adequacy.

The BTG argument misses the crucial points that under any RA structure, the Commission would retain full authority over the bilateral procurement of its regulated LSEs,⁵ the results of which would be self-supplied by the LSEs into the CCM auctions, and the CAISO would need to have a FERC-approved backstop mechanism in any event. Regarding bilateral procurement, the CAISO expects that the CPUC will continue using the LTPP as a vehicle for reviewing and approving the IOU procurement plans. Through the LTPP the CPUC can exercise its full authority and implement environmental and other policy objectives with respect to procurement by the IOUs to meet their requirements, with the IOU-procured RA capacity then offered as self-supply into the CCM.

With respect to the backstop, participants in the CAISO's recent stakeholder process to design the Interim Capacity Procurement Mechanism ("ICPM") can attest to the nature and extent of controversy over price determination, which the CAISO believes was appropriately resolved for purposes of this interim mechanism as a transition to the Long Term RA framework the Commission will adopt in the instant proceeding. If the Commission now decides that the RA framework will not include a forward CCM, the CAISO will need to reopen all aspects of the backstop discussion to develop a design that is no longer interim but permanent. In that context it is likely that, in the absence of a CCM that provides an efficient capacity price signal based on the cost of new entry in local areas where there is a deficiency and additional infrastructure

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The CAISO notes that it has recommended, in its recommendations contained in the Staff Report and its initial comments, that the Commission adopt a multi-year forward collaborative state assessment of capacity needs, which would provide comprehensive analysis and information to inform bilateral procurement by LSEs. The CAISO believes that such a process in needed irrespective of the design of the long-term RA framework the Commission adopts, and in the instant Reply presumes the adoption of such a process although it is not discussed further herein.

is needed, a more permanent backstop mechanism would need to take on that role and provide benchmark prices for negotiating forward bilateral RA contracts. Moreover it is likely that such a framework would be less affected by Commission decisions than would a CCM. The reason is that a CAISO-operated mechanism to backstop a purely bilateral procurement framework would be a stand-alone mechanism that is not linked explicitly to the mechanisms and processes governing bilateral procurement, whereas under a CCM the backstop could be an explicit element of the CCM structure through the reconfiguration auctions. For example, if state environmental policy objectives are incorporated as constraints in the CCM, those constraints would apply to the reconfiguration auctions as well. In contrast, if the backstop is a stand-alone reliability procedure it may be more difficult for to incorporate such policy objectives.

Thus, assertions that a CCM will compromise the Commission's ability to implement state environmental policy are also not valid. The CCM (including the primary and reconfiguration auctions) can be designed to incorporate constraints that ensure that particular quantities of particular resource types will clear. By enforcing such constraints the auctions would not simply take the lowest-cost coal plant irrespective of its environmental attributes, as the BTG asserts, but would optimize to achieve lowest cost subject to the environmental constraints. Even without such constraints, rising environmental compliance costs will cause a coal plant that may have been low-cost to become more expensive and hence be dispatched less over time as cleaner units with lower or no compliance costs enter the market and displace it. In fact, if the market,

The CAISO's recommendations included in the Staff Report and its initial comments explained that in addition to constraints on the CCM, there will be significant market-based investment incentives in the spot prices for energy and ancillary services, including changing prices for ancillary services as

given increasing needs for renewable integration, valued the reliability support provided by the coal plant's capacity, e.g., the ability to provide regulation, then the CCM would be the most efficient mechanism to recover capacity payments needed to keep the plant available.

Another consideration is that other environmental policy initiatives will have substantial implications for RA procurement, such as the proceeding underway to examine retirement or repowering of generation units using once-through cooling, as discussed further below. How such various environmental regulatory drivers are integrated into the RA structure remains to be worked out and will benefit from a centralized market mechanism that provides transparent market-based price information.

The CAISO fully supports adopting an RA framework that will be effective in preserving state authority over RA and implementing state environmental policy in a timely manner and cost-effectively. Such a framework would include both the CPUC RA proceedings such as the LTPP as well as the CAISO-operated RA elements such as a CCM.

C. Arguments About Unjust And Unreasonable Cost Impacts Of A CCM Are Erroneous.

BTG and PG&E assert that a CCM will result in huge excess costs to consumers, based on the concept that paying a market clearing price to all RA capacity that clears the CCM will over-pay existing resources (and thus create a "wealth transfer" from consumers to suppliers) in comparison to a purely bilateral approach whereby LSEs can

the need for the services increases to support renewable integration, and for environmental compliance, such as possible greenhouse gas allowance markets under a cap-and-trade system.

pay the existing resources just enough to stay in business. This argument is erroneous in several ways.

First, the argument erroneously assumes that there is no consumer benefit to paying the clearing price to all capacity that clears, even if it enables existing resources to earn a return above their costs of staying in business. Although the approach advocated by these parties might appear cost-effective in the short run, it can easily result in an excessive amount of retirements by facilities that are unable to earn enough to invest in environmental upgrades or repowering. A good illustration of this is "oncethrough cooling," a power plant design feature that applies to roughly 21,000 MW of installed capacity within the CAISO balancing authority area and has recently been targeted as having significant adverse environmental impacts. Under a CCM where such capacity can earn the CCM clearing price, owners of these resources will be able to make economically efficient decisions whether to cease operating or invest in environmental upgrades in response to any policy initiatives to eliminate once-through cooling. Under the proposed bilateral approach to avoid paying a market clearing capacity price, these existing resources may have little or no choice but to exit the market, removing a potentially large amount of supply capacity which tends to be concentrated in load pockets and which could, if their revenues justified the investment, remain in operation with less ultimate environmental impact than developing alternative supply capacity for these areas.

Second, the argument assumes that it is feasible to realize substantial short-term consumer savings by paying existing resources less than new investment. This argument is analogous to the well-refuted argument that a "pay-as-bid" regime is

cheaper for buyers than a "pay-the-market-clearing-price" regime. It has been well established that in a pay-as-bid regime, bidding behavior changes as suppliers try to estimate what the market clearing price would be and incorporate that into their supply offers. This outcome will extend to the markets for environmental compliance. If there are no transparent market price signals on which suppliers can base their estimates, their estimates will be highly diverse, with no obvious relationship to each resource's underlying cost structure, and thus will blur any cost basis to a comparison among their offer prices. As a result, the purported cost savings to consumers will be eroded, and the process will not necessarily choose the most efficient resources. In contrast, a competitive market clearing price regime is known to provide strong incentives to suppliers to bid their lowest acceptable price to maximize their chance of being selected when they are assured that they will earn the clearing price. Alternatively, if a potential investor knows that a new facility will start to receive a much lower capacity price once its status changes from "new" to "existing" it will incorporate that expectation into its offer price prior to committing to constructing the new resource.

If there are transparent capacity price signals, there would likely be some convergence among suppliers' estimates of the expected clearing price, thus mitigating to some extent the problem of selecting less efficient resources over more efficient ones. But this would not do anything to achieve the cost savings that BTG and PG&E assert consumers would receive under a purely bilateral approach. Moreover, under a purely bilateral approach the CAISO will need to design and implement a permanent backstop procurement mechanism which would by default become the centralized

capacity pricing mechanism that sets a benchmark price for bilateral contracting for RA capacity.

A final point worth noting on this topic is that the absence of transparent markets provides opportunities for third-party intermediaries to capture a significant share of the consumer and producer surpluses that the bilateral proponents assert will be realized as savings to consumers. When centrally-clearing transparent markets are not available such intermediaries provide valuable "market-maker" services by reducing transaction costs for buyers and sellers, but they do so less efficiently than a CCM because each such intermediary controls only a portion of the market. Thus the bilateral versus CCM distinction can be viewed as a distinction between non-transparent, less efficient markets in which consumer and producer surpluses are captured by private market makers, versus transparent efficient markets where the surpluses are realized by the buyers and sellers. The result is that the purported cost savings from adopting a bilateral approach rather than a CCM has little chance of being realized by the consumers to any great extent.

D. A CCM Framework Is More Compatible With Direct Access Than The Other Proposals.

The BTG characterizes the CAISO as having an "inherent conflict between two of the CAISO's key recommendations," namely, the multi-year forward commitment of RA capacity, and the support for a framework that relies primarily on bilateral procurement by LSEs. The BTG asserts that there is an inconsistency of the CAISO's positions, stating that "ESPs are unlikely to engage in such procurement multiple years in advance given the uncertainty of their customer loads and, particularly if DA is reopened, the IOUs may be similarly reluctant." Such a dilemma would be problematic in a purely

bilateral, or bilateral plus CAISO backstop framework. But the BTG misses the essential point that this dilemma is solved by a CCM structure in which each LSE's obligation becomes binding on that LSE only at the end of the delivery month and is settled financially based on the LSE's actual load in that month. Under such a structure, each LSE, in conjunction with its regulatory authority, can decide how much (or how little) it wants to engage in bilateral procurement. The CCM will procure what is needed at the CAISO system level, and in each Local Capacity Area, and will also enforce other procurement constraints that may apply (such as a renewable quota) – all without having to attribute requirement to specific LSEs in advance of the delivery period. The CAISO believes that such an approach provides maximum flexibility to all, but especially to the smaller LSEs who may experience a significant share of their load migrating to another LSE.

The BTG goes on to state, "Even today, in the current bilateral RA framework with DA suspended, the IOUs do not fill their entire capacity portfolios multiple years in advance, and if a greater portion of their load becomes contestable, one would expect even less IOU long-term forward procurement." This argument is clearly more damaging to PG&E's proposal than to a CCM design, because PG&E argues against adopting a CCM and recommends retaining a purely bilateral framework, yet argues forcefully for a multi-year forward capacity commitment. In the next section the CAISO points out some of the difficulties in moving the current RA framework several years ahead of the delivery period, which PG&E does not address. Suffice it to say here that multi-year forward procurement requirements in a direct access context will likely be extremely burdensome to smaller ESPs absent a CCM.

On a related point, PG&E argues that if a CCM design is adopted it should include opt out provisions, through which LSEs who are fully self-provided may totally bypass the CCM and its settlement process and thereby avoid any associated cost allocation. The CAISO acknowledges the valid concern behind this PG&E recommendation, and fully supports the principle that all LSEs should appropriately accept the risks and costs associated with their own procurement decisions and should not be subject to risks or costs resulting from the actions of other LSEs. The CAISO has reservations about PG&E's proposed opt-out provisions as the best way to achieve this principle, and has described potentially severe unintended consequences of such an approach in its initial comments. The unintended consequences the CAISO identified in the initial comments had to do with the potential of the opt-out provisions to allow an LSE to avoid some portion of cost allocation for which it rightfully should be responsible, and the potential for a large volume of load opting out of the CCM to undermine the value of the CCM clearing price as a signal for new investment. In addition, the CAISO points out that to the extent that significant quantities of load opt out of the CCM, any CCM uplift charges that must be allocated to LSEs will fall on the relatively small remaining share of the load that was not able to opt out, which will result in high per-MWh charges to that load. Moreover, because of the likely aversion to extensive bilateral procurement by smaller LSEs as discussed above, it will tend to be these smaller LSEs that will then disproportionately bear any CCM uplift costs that may arise, for example, when the actual load in a given delivery month is less than the load on which that month's RA capacity procurement was based. As a consequence, allowing significant opt out capability from the CCM structure could reduce the benefits of the CCM in supporting a

more robust Direct Access environment. Given these complexities, the CAISO recommends that the best approach for the Commission to take would be to adopt the high-level principle stated above regarding fair and accurate allocation of costs to LSEs, and then allow the CCM design process to determine the best way to achieve that principle.

E. PG&E's Recommendation To Conduct A Single-Issue Proceeding To Decide The Time Horizon For A Multi-Year Forward Modification To Today's Ra Framework Underestimates The Difficulty Of The Problem.

PG&E suggests that a Commission proceeding to decide a single issue – the optimal time horizon for the multi-year forward RA capacity commitment process – is all that is needed to implement their proposal. This suggestion apparently assumes that the rest of the current RA rules and procedures can simply be shifted in time with little additional modification. This view leaves out several important and controversial issues, however, which must be addressed in order to implement a bilateral RA approach on a multi-year forward commitment horizon. The CAISO expects, for example, that it will be difficult to resolve issues such as how to determine each LSE's multi-year forward procurement obligation, what portion of an LSE's total load plus planning reserve margin must be procured five, four or three years ahead of delivery, what triggers will be used for either granting waivers from requirements or penalizing procurement shortfalls, and what penalty prices will be assessed when they are triggered. These issues can be expected to be particularly difficult to resolve in a context where an expansion of the Direct Access program may unfold over the next several years, which will subject each LSE's five-year forward load forecast to a high degree of uncertainty. Even with the proposed electronic bulletin board, the burden is still on the individual LSEs and

suppliers to trade efficiently – a transaction cost challenge that will surely be profitable to third-party intermediaries.

There are many factors to be considered regarding the requirement that will be necessary in the forward timeframe. First, utilizing the bilateral model, there must be a method for LSEs to handle over- and under-procurement. Once the forward commitment is made, LSEs will need a method to adjust their requirements and their capacity holdings given load forecast revisions. An appropriate backstop mechanism must be developed, as discussed above. Another consideration is the possible difficulty faced by Direct Access and smaller LSEs to meet their requirements which may lead to significant inefficiency. For example if a small LSE's requirement is 2 MW in the future period, they may have difficulty procuring a quantity so small as a reasonable price. Finally, some of the RA counting rules may need to be revisited. To illustrate this point, the annual counting rules for wind are based on an average of the last three years. This type of scenario, as it is, probably would not fit into the proposed four- or five-year ahead time-frame scheme.

A multi-year forward commitment based on requiring exact quantities of RA capacity from each LSE will be more administratively cumbersome than an aggregate control area requirement plus local requirements necessary for the CCM. It will take more complex administrative processes and more resources to track individual LSE requirements in a forward timeframe than it would to work with an aggregate requirement that sets the demand in a CCM, and it will be more difficult for each LSE. Additionally this task will necessarily be divided between jurisdictional and non-jurisdictional entities.

F. The Commission Does Not Need To Fully Specify A Backstop Mechanism In Its Long Term RA Framework Decision.

PG&E argues that it is essential to protect against circumstances where a "market failure" leads to unanticipated regulatory intervention, thus undermining the climate of certainty for investors that the long-term RA framework is intended to create. In this regard PG&E recommends ex ante (1) specifying regulators' expectations of what constitutes market success, (2) defining what would constitute a market failure, and (3) specifying what backstop actions would be taken when such market failure occurs. In this regard PG&E appears mainly to view market failure as the failure of the primary CCM auction to procure the required amounts of RA capacity.

The CAISO shares PG&E's sense of importance regarding stable market rules for the investment climate and the potential for unexpected regulatory intervention to disrupt that stability. The CAISO does not, however, support PG&E's proposal to fully articulate the three items noted above as a precondition to starting the CCM. Moreover, the CAISO believes that the problem of market failure in the form of under-procurement is possibly a greater concern in the bilateral framework than in the CCM framework, because each LSE's complete compliance with its multi-year forward requirements will depend on numerous factors including, inter alia, penalties for any shortfall, formulas for allocation of backstop procurement costs, and the liquidity of the Direct Access market. Unless the multi-year forward LSE requirements are for 100 percent of each LSE's load forecast plus planning reserve margin, and there are sufficiently strong incentives to fully meet these requirements, the likelihood of a procurement shortfall in this time frame and the need to resort to backstop action will be high.

Fundamentally, the CAISO believes that issues of appropriate backstop actions should be discussed further in the context of the comprehensive CCM design process, and should not and need not be decided by the Commission in the instant proceeding. That said, there are a few concerns that must be carefully weighed. First, in the context of a CCM, if the market design lays out a precise definition of market failure and specifies clear actions or procedures to follow when market failure occurs, those elements will form the basis of economic decisions by suppliers whether or not to participate in the CCM. Thus, the CAISO is concerned that by fully specifying these elements ex ante, it may be equivalent to offering two alternative markets for sellers to choose between, and may in turn undermine the incentives to participate in the CCM.

Second, in the context of a bilateral approach, and particularly a multi-year forward bilateral approach, the extent to which LSEs meet their forward procurement requirements will depend to a great degree on their financial incentives to do so, or equivalently, the penalties they will face for any shortfall in forward procurement. As noted earlier, setting such penalties is one of the thornier challenges of extending the bilateral RA framework into a multi-year forward time horizon. In the present discussion, this question relates directly to PG&E's argument paraphrased above – how to specify market failure, and what actions to take when it occurs. Is it a market failure if the LSE determines that it would be less expensive to fall short of its forward procurement requirement and pay the associated penalty and its portion of the backstop charges than it would be to contract bilaterally for the full amount of its requirement? Is it a market failure if the aggregate LSE procurement shortfall and hence the quantity

procured through the CAISO backstop mechanism exceeds a certain percentage of the total requirement at the system level or in a local area?

In summary, the questions of market success or failure, and the appropriate backstop actions to take in the event of such a failure, have their counterparts in the bilateral framework as well as the CCM framework. In either framework, a procurement shortfall is a procurement shortfall and must be addressed, but the CAISO believes the problem is more readily manageable in the CCM framework because, from the CCM perspective there are no LSE-specific shortfalls to be tracked and penalized, and no potential for market failure to be exacerbated by the settings of the under-procurement penalties.

G. The CAISO Urges the Commission to Make Threshold Decisions and Articulate Overarching Policy Goals to Initiate Design and Development of a CCM Structure, and Not to Make Specific CCM Design Decisions in This Proceeding.

As a conclusion to these Reply Comments, the CAISO emphasizes its recommendation that the Commission make the key threshold decisions necessary to adopt a multi-year forward RA commitment framework based on a CCM, and to articulate the high-level state policy goals that such a framework must achieve. Such a decision would affirm the Commission's intent to provide a meaningful role for competitive market-based infrastructure investment in supply and demand resources, and would initiate the subsequent detailed CCM design process, which would then adopt the stated policy goals as guiding principles for the effort.

Consistent with the above, the CAISO further recommends that the Commission refrain from deciding the details of the CCM design. The CAISO recognizes that following such a threshold decision, there will be issues that remain unanswered and

perhaps new ones that will arise, some of which should be addressed in a subsequent Commission proceeding as well as many other issues of CCM design that should be addressed through the CAISO stakeholder process. The CAISO believes that these two processes can be conducted in parallel after the Commission provides its policy direction. However, if the Commission adopts a CCM and at the same time specifies design details of that CCM ex ante, the CAISO is concerned that this will make it more difficult to approach CCM design from a whole-system perspective, and to specify the various design details in an optimal manner that achieves the best comprehensive, internally consistent and workable long-term RA structure. The CAISO is particularly concerned about certain elements of Staff Recommendation 1, on which the CAISO commented in the previous round of comments (see, in particular, pp. 13-23). Although Staff Recommendation 1 was presented as a centralized capacity market approach, several of its elements – including the 90 percent forward procurement and CCM optout requirement on the IOUs, and the ex post PER deduction applying only to capacity that clears the CCM, among others – have the potential to undermine the ability of the CCM to achieve the objective of attracting market-based investment based on accurate, transparent price signals. The CAISO therefore recommends that the Commission not establish Staff Recommendation 1 or its specific components as a basis for initiating discussion in subsequent activities on CCM design.

III. CONCLUSION

For the foregoing reasons, the CAISO respectfully requests that the Commission adopt the CAISO's positions and recommendations in this matter, and establish a long-term RA framework, including a multi-year forward capacity commitment process and CCM structure, consistent with the discussion in these comments.

Respectfully submitted,

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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that on March 14, 2008, I served, by electronic mail and United States Mail, a copy of Reply Comments of The California Independent System Operator on Staff Recommendations on Capacity Market Structure on all parties in Docket Number R.05-12-013.

DATED at Folsom, California on March 14, 2008.

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