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November 6, 2006

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Secretary
Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission
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400 North Street
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RECEIVED
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PENNSYLVANIA PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION
HARRISBURG, PA

RE: Proposed Rulemaking for Revision of 52 Pa.
Code Chapter 57 Pertaining to Adding
Inspection and Maintenance Standards for
the Electric Distribution Companies
Docket No. L-00040167

Dear Secretary McNulty:

Enclosed are an original and fifteen (15) copies of the Comments of the Office of
Consumer Advocate, in the above-referenced proceeding.

Copies have been served to the parties of record as indicated on the enclosed
Certificate of Service.

Sincerely,

Tanya J. McCloskey
Senior Assistant Consumer Advocate
PA Attorney I.D. # 50044

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COMMISSION

Enclosures

cc: Parties of Record
Blaine Loper, Bureau of Conservation, Economics and Energy Planning
Elizabeth Barnes, Law Bureau (via e-mail)

BEFORE THE
PENNSYLVANIA PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION

Proposed Rulemaking for Revision :
of 52 Pa. Code Chapter 57 Pertaining to :
Adding Inspection and Maintenance : Docket No. L-00040167
Standards for the Electric Distribution :
Companies :

COMMENTS OF THE
OFFICE OF CONSUMER ADVOCATE

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Dated: November 6, 2006

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I. INTRODUCTION

On October 7, 2006, the Commission's Proposed Rulemaking for Revision of 52 Pa. Code Chapter 57 pertaining to adding Inspection and Maintenance Standards for the Electric Distribution Companies was published in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin* for comment. The Proposed Rulemaking reflects the Commission's review of Comments received in response to the Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (ANOPR) issued in 2004, and its review of the inspection and maintenance standards of other States. The OCA, as a commenter in the Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, had strongly urged the Commission to enact inspection, maintenance and repair standards to meet the requirements of Section 2802(20) of the Public Utility Code. 66 Pa.C.S. §2802(20). Section 2802(20) provides:

(20) Since continuing and ensuring the reliability of electric service depends on adequate generation and on conscientious inspection and maintenance of transmission and distribution systems, the independent system operator or its functional equivalent should set, and the commission shall set through regulations, inspection, maintenance, repair and replacement standards and enforce those standards.

66 Pa.C.S. §2802(20).

The approach taken by the Commission in its Proposed Rulemaking calls for the establishment of minimum standards for inspection of certain critical facilities with each utility then required to file a more detailed inspection and maintenance plan every two years. The Commission described the areas to be included in the more detailed plan as follows:

The plan shall detail a program for the maintenance of poles, wires, conduits or other fixtures, along public highways or streets for the transmission or distribution of electric current owned, operated, managed or controlled by such company, in such format as Commission staff shall prescribe. The plan shall include a program for the trimming of tree branches and limbs located in close proximity to overhead electric wires where the branches and limbs may cause damage to the electric wires. The plan shall also

include an inspection cycle of off-right of way trees and vegetation to curtail outages which may be caused by off-right-of-way vegetation.

* * *

The plans should include but not be limited to the following facilities: poles and towers, conductors, pad-mounted transformers, line reclosers, line capacitors, right-of-way vegetation control, off right-of-way vegetation control if seen to be a cause of outages, and substations.

Proposed Rulemaking Order, *slip op.* at 23-24. The Commission stated that it intends to either accept or reject each plan and that acceptance of the plan is conditioned upon the EDC meeting Commission-established reliability performance standards.

The OCA supports the Commission's determination to issue regulations governing standards for the inspection, maintenance and repair of the transmission and distribution systems. The use of a two-tiered approach that combines a broad set of minimum standards for critical facilities with the submission of individual transmission and distribution Maintenance Plans that reflect the unique aspects of the EDC's transmission and distribution systems will assist the Commission in ensuring that each EDC is providing safe and reliable service. The OCA continues to urge the Commission, however, to make clear that in establishing these minimum standards, the EDCs still must do more if required to maintain safe, adequate, reliable and reasonably continuous service. The Commission must also make clear that compliance with the minimum standards does not serve as a "safe haven" or defense if an EDC has failed to maintain adequate reliability.

While the Commission's proposed rulemaking is a significant step in establishing inspection and maintenance standards, the OCA has identified some concerns with the Commission's proposed regulations. First, the OCA submits that the minimum standards set forth in Section 57.198(e) may be too limited to provide effective guidance to the EDCs and do

not adequately address the standards for corrective action. Second, the OCA is concerned that the Commission has not clearly discussed the impact of a Staff decision to accept an individual transmission and distribution maintenance plan. Third, the Commission, in determining not to utilize predetermined, mandatory payments or penalties for an initial failure to comply with the minimum inspection and maintenance standards should consider the approach proposed by the AFL-CIO in its Comments of February 8, 2005 for mandatory payments or penalties for failing to repair or replace defective or dangerous equipment within a stated period of time. AFL-CIO Comments of February 8, 2005 at 7-8. Additionally, the Commission should not foreclose the opportunity for predetermined, mandatory payments as an enforcement tool when there are repeated compliance failures. Finally, the OCA has some other miscellaneous concerns with wording and organization of some of the sections. As Appendix A, the OCA has attached a redlined version of Proposed Section 57.198 showing all of the OCA's suggested modifications.

Reliability is of critical importance to all consumers and all citizens in Pennsylvania. The Commission's role is to ensure the reliability of the electric distribution and transmission systems. The OCA submits that the Commission's proposed inspection and maintenance standards will allow the Commission to better meet its obligation, but some improvements are necessary to achieve the goals of more reliable service.

II. COMMENTS

A. Proposed Section 57.198(e) Should Provide A Broader, More Detailed Set of Inspection, Maintenance And Repair Standards.

1. Introduction

In proposed Section 57.198(e), the Commission sets forth inspection and maintenance intervals for vegetation management, pole inspections, overhead line inspections, and substation inspections. The time frames for the inspections largely follow those recommended by the AFL-CIO and the OCA. See, AFL-CIO Comments of February 9, 2005 at 5-7; OCA Comments of February 9, 2005 at 12-15. The OCA submits, however, that the form of inspection called for in the standards for pole inspections, overhead line inspections and substation inspections is either too undefined or too limited.¹ More detail is needed as to the type of inspection that should be conducted for each facility. Additionally, Section 57.198(e) does not specify the time frame for corrective actions upon the detection of any problems, except for one very narrow category of facility. Repair time frames should be specified in these minimum standards.

As the OCA noted in its Comments of February 9, 2005 to the ANOPR, there are at least three levels of inspection – patrol, detailed and intrusive. The patrol inspection is the simple, visual inspection where a worker looks with unaided vision, or with the help of binoculars, at the electric facilities and their surroundings. A patrol inspection can be conducted by walking, driving or flying by the facilities. This type of inspection can help to identify obvious structural problems and hazards, such as leaning poles, damaged equipment, vandalism, and the growth of vegetation. The second type of inspection, detailed inspection, is when individual pieces of equipment or facilities are examined both visually and through the use of

¹ As to the vegetation management cycle, the OCA agrees with the Commission's recommendation for a four-year treatment cycle for distribution facilities and a five year treatment cycle for transmission facilities.

routine diagnostic tests. In a detailed inspection, equipment may be opened, routine diagnostic tests are performed, and the condition is recorded. In the third type of inspection, intrusive inspection, more sophisticated diagnostic tools are utilized and all types of facilities are inspected.

The proposed regulations call mostly for the patrol type of inspection, or do not specify the type of inspection or test that should be performed. Proposed Section 57.198(e). The OCA submits that for critical facilities, such as poles, overhead lines and substations, it is not just the interval for inspection but the type or level of inspection combined with the time interval that is needed for reliability purposes. Section 57.198(e) should therefore specify the type of inspection for poles, overhead lines and substations. The OCA submits that for these facilities, the type of inspection should be more detailed than just a patrol type inspection.

Moreover, the proposed regulations do not address the necessity of corrective actions, or repairs, when the facilities are determined to be defective or dangerous upon inspection. The OCA submits that the regulations should also set forth time frames for corrective action to better ensure the systems critical to reliability are promptly treated.

The OCA will discuss these recommendations below, and includes proposed language in Appendix A.

2. Proposed Section 57.198(e) Inspection Standards For Poles, Overhead Lines, and Substations Should Require More Detailed Inspection Of These Facilities For The Required Intervals.

In Section 57.198(e), the Commission sets forth inspection intervals, but as written, it appears as if the inspections for most of the listed facilities are for the limited, patrol type inspections, not the detailed or intrusive inspections that might be necessary. Specifically,

for distribution poles, transmission lines, distribution lines, and overhead distribution transformers, only visual inspection is called for in the proposed standards. The OCA submits that visual inspection alone may be insufficient.

By way of example, in its Comments of February 9, 2005 on the ANOPR, the OCA recommended the following with regard to wood poles:

- **Wood poles:** Detailed inspection once every ten years with an intrusive inspection of those poles identified as having potential problems through the detailed inspection.

OCA Comments of February 9, 2005 at 14. Similarly, the AFL-CIO recommended both a minimum inspection cycle and specific type of testing for wood poles. The AFL-CIO recommended the following with regard to pole inspections:

The statewide minimum inspection cycle for distribution poles should be ten years. Pole inspections should include drill tests at and below ground level, a shell test, visual inspection for holes or other evidence of insect infestation, a visual inspection for evidence of unauthorized backfilling or excavation near the pole, visual inspection for signs of lightening strikes, and a load calculation.

AFL-CIO Comments of February 8, 2005 at 5. In contrast, the proposed regulations provide:

(2) *Pole inspections.* Distribution poles shall be visually inspected every 10 years.

Proposed Section 57.189(e)(2). As can be seen, a visual inspection only every ten years does not provide the more detailed analysis of pole integrity recommended by the OCA or the AFL-CIO on a ten year cycle.

A similar concern exists for overhead line inspections, substation inspections and transformer inspections. The proposed regulations require only a visual inspection of these facilities. See, Proposed Section 57.189(e)(3) and (e)(4). The Commission standards on reclosers do appear to call for testing on an annual basis. See, Proposed Section 57.189(e)(4).

The OCA submits that the minimum standards should set forth both the type of inspection called for and the interval for inspection. For most facilities, a more detailed form of inspection other than a visual inspection should be required. In its Comments of February 9, 2005, the OCA recommended the following inspection cycle, and types of inspections, for certain key facilities and equipment:

- **Transmission and distribution substations:** Annual detailed inspections that include inspection by infrared scanning.
- **Substation transformers supplying transmission lines:** Annual intrusive inspection.
- **Substation transformers supplying distribution lines:** Intrusive inspection every two years that includes bushing testing, dissolved gas analysis and other testing.
- **Transmission Lines and all attached equipment:** Annual detailed inspection that includes visual inspection and infrared scanning.
- **Distribution Lines and all attached equipment (transformers, switching/protective devices, reclosers, regulators/capacitors):** Patrol inspection once every two years and a detailed inspection once every five years.
- **Wood poles:** Detailed inspection once every ten years with an intrusive inspection of those poles identified as having potential problems through the detailed inspection.

OCA Comments of February 9, 2005 at 13-14. The AFL-CIO also recommended standards that specified more detailed inspections for certain critical facilities in its Comments at pages 5-7.

The OCA recommends that the Commission expand Sections 57.189(e)(2), (e)(3) and (e)(4) to reflect the recommendations of the OCA and AFL-CIO regarding the type of inspection to be conducted on the specified cycle.. The OCA has attached a redlined version of the proposed regulations as Appendix A reflecting the OCA's suggested modifications. The

modifications provide more detail on the type of inspection based on the prior Comments of the OCA and AFL-CIO.

3. Proposed Sections 57.198(e)(2), (e)(3), and (e)(4) Should Specify Time Frames For Repair Or Corrective Action.

In addition to minimum standards for inspection and maintenance, the OCA recommended in its Comments of February 9, 2005 that the Commission establish standards for corrective action when the inspection detects a problem with critical equipment and facilities. OCA Comments of February 9, 2005 at 15-17. The only reference to an interval for a corrective action is in Proposed Section 57.198(e)(3) and appears to reference only problems related to the transmission and distribution lines. The OCA submits that the regulations should provide appropriate time frames for corrective action of other key facilities as well. Without such a standard, the inspection alone may not serve to ensure reliable operation of the system.

The OCA submits that the regulations should be broadened to include time frames for the repair of facilities. Both the OCA and AFL-CIO recommended repair time frames for various critical facilities. The OCA provided the following recommendations:

- **Transmission and distribution substations:** A component discovered through infrared scan to be more than 100 degrees centigrade above ambient temperature should be addressed within 30 days.
- **Substation transformers supplying transmission lines:** Deficiencies identified should be repaired or addressed within 30 days.
- **Substation transformers supplying distribution lines:** Deficiencies identified should be repaired or addressed within 60 days.
- **Transmission lines and all attached equipment:** A component discovered through infrared scan to be more than 100 degrees centigrade above ambient temperature should be addressed within 30 days.

- **Distribution lines and all attached equipment:** A component discovered through infrared scan to be more than 100 degrees centigrade above ambient temperature should be addressed within 30 days.
- **Wood Poles:** Poles with major deficiencies that considerably affect the strength of the pole should be replaced within 60 days.

OCA Comments on ANOPR at 16-17.

The OCA submits that for each form of critical facility, a time frame for repair should be specified by the Commission to ensure that problems that are detected are promptly addressed by the EDC. The EDC's individual plan will need to address repair intervals for many additional facilities that the utility maintains, but by specifying repair intervals for certain facilities critical for reliability, the regulations can promote reliable service. Appendix A shows the OCA's recommendations with regard to time frames for corrective action.

B. Proposed Sections 57.198(a) and (b) Should Be Further Clarified.

1. Proposed Section 57.198(a) Should Include Additional Plan Components.

In Proposed Sections 57.198(a) and (b), the Commission sets forth the requirements for an EDC's Inspection and Maintenance Plan. The OCA supports the Commission requirement that each EDC file an individualized plan that will assure compliance with the minimum standards and reflect EDC-specific programs that may need to be more stringent, or include additional components, to address unique circumstances within the individual service territory. An EDC-specific program may also need to change from year to year to address varying reliability performance and varying operating conditions, such as weather conditions, to assure that reliability is maintained. The proposed regulations allow for such changes and call for a filing of the plan every two years. This schedule will ensure that regular attention is given to the comprehensive inspection and maintenance plan.

The OCA submits that the Inspection and Maintenance Plan should be a comprehensive document that specifies any and all standards required for maintaining a safe and reliable system. While the proposed regulations broadly specify the system components that must be addressed by the Plan, the Commission should provide in more detail the types of inspection, maintenance and repair information it expects to see in the Plan. Additionally, the OCA submits that the Commission should ensure that the plan addresses emergency maintenance situations and the EDC's procedures for coordinating with other interconnected systems. In its Comments of February 9, 2005, the OCA provided examples of the type of information that should be included. The OCA suggested that the Maintenance Plan, for example, identify:

- Any and all applicable hardware standards and how they will be complied with;
- Any and all applicable operation standards and how they will be complied with;
- Routine maintenance requirements, including procedures such as inspections, equipment replacement, and operational tests;
- Emergency maintenance plans;
- Procedures for coordinating with other interconnected systems.

OCA Comments of February 9, 2005 at 10-11.

From the proposed regulations, the OCA is unable to determine if sufficient detail is being requested by the Commission for these plans. Clearly, however, the proposed regulations should require that emergency plans and procedures for coordinating with interconnected systems be included as a part of the Plan filing. The OCA provides language in Appendix A to include these items, as well as to identify other necessary components of a Plan.

2 The Commission Should Clarify The Effect of Acceptance Of The Plan

As Set Forth In Proposed Section 57.198(b).

In Proposed Section 57.198(b), the Commission proposes that it will accept or reject the EDC's inspection and maintenance plan within 90 days. If the Commission takes no action, the Plan is deemed accepted. Proposed Section 57.198(b)(2). If the Plan is rejected, in whole or in part, the EDC is to be notified of the deficiencies and directed to resubmit a revised plan or an explanation as to why the EDC does not agree that the Plan is deficient. Proposed Section 57.198(b)(3). It is not clear to the OCA the purpose of the Commission proposal to specifically accept the plans, or what the effect of such acceptance might be.

If, however, the Commission determines to accept the Plans, the Commission must make two things clear. First, the Commission must ensure that acceptance of the plan by the Commission can not be used by an EDC as an excuse or "safe haven" for service that is inadequate. Second, the Commission must ensure that acceptance of the Plan does not create any presumption that compliance with the Plan constitutes the provision of safe, adequate and reliable service. EDCs will need to exercise professional judgment based on factors such as weather, geography and changing technology each and every day to ensure safe, adequate, and reliable service.

C. The Use Of Predetermined, Mandatory Payments Or Penalties May Be Appropriate For Non-Compliance With Repair Standards And May Be A Useful Tool For Addressing Repeated Failures.

The Commission was not persuaded by the OCA's proposal for predetermined, mandatory payments or penalties related to non-compliance with the minimum inspection and maintenance standards. Proposed Rulemaking Order, *slip op.* at 25. While the Commission has not adopted a system of predetermined, mandatory payments or penalties for failure to comply

with the minimum inspection and maintenance standards, the Commission should consider the proposal of the AFL-CIO in its Comments of February 8, 2005 to include mandatory penalties for failure to comply with repair time frames for dangerous and defective equipment. The Commission also should not close the door to the use of predetermined, mandatory payments or penalties for repeated compliance failures.

In its Comments of February 8, 2005, the AFL-CIO drew a distinction between mandatory penalties for failure to meet inspection and maintenance standards and mandatory penalties for failure to meet repair time frames. AFL-CIO Comments of February 8, 2005 at 7-8. As the AFL-CIO notes, failing to repair dangerous or defective equipment can pose a danger to utility workers and the public. The AFL-CIO recommended the establishment of mandatory repair or replacement intervals and mandatory penalties for failure to meet these standards given the potential danger to workers and the public. The OCA supports this approach and urges the Commission to reconsider this issue.

Additionally, the OCA submits that the Commission should ensure that its Order does not foreclose the use of predetermined, mandatory penalties or payments, particularly where there are repeated failures by an EDC to comply with the minimum standards, its Plan, or its reliability benchmarks and standards. Following an enforcement action, new standards and requirements may be put in place for the EDC in such a circumstance. The possibility of predetermined, mandatory payments or penalties for failure to achieve these requirements may be an appropriate tool to encourage compliance with the outcome of any enforcement action.

D. Miscellaneous Issues

1. Proposed Section 57.198(d) Should Require That Records Be Maintained To Demonstrate Compliance With The EDC's Plan.

In proposed section 57.198(d), the Commission requires that the EDC maintain records of its inspection and maintenance activities sufficient to demonstrate compliance with the minimum standards set forth in proposed subsection 57.198(e). The OCA recommends that this section also require the maintenance of records to demonstrate compliance with the EDC's Plan. The Commission also has an interest in ensuring compliance with the procedures and protocols set forth in the individual plan. The OCA would recommend the following:

(d) An EDC shall maintain records of its inspection and maintenance activities sufficient to demonstrate compliance with its transmission and distribution facilities inspection, maintenance, repair and replacement programs as required by subsection (e) and to demonstrate compliance with its plan. The records shall be made available to the Commission upon request within 30 days.

This modification is reflected in Appendix A.

2. Proposed Section 57.198(e)(3) Should Be Broken Into Subsections Addressing Specific Components.

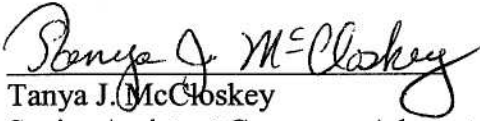
Proposed Section 57.198(e)(3) sets forth the minimum standards related to overhead lines. Since the term overhead lines can encompass several types of equipment, such as wires, transformers, reclosers and switches, proposed Section 57.198(e)(3) should be broken out into additional subsection for each type of equipment for ease of reference. The OCA would recommend the use of subsections that follow the AFL-CIO categories itemized on pages 5-7 of the AFL-CIO Comments of February 8, 2005. The subsections under overhead line inspections would include distribution lines, transmission lines, transformers, reclosers, and other critical systems. The OCA has shown the further delineation of these categories in Appendix A.

Section 57.198(e)(3) also contains a sentence regarding the time frame for repair or replacement of facilities found to have problems. The sentence appears in the middle of the lengthy paragraph and appears to only set a repair time frame for problems detected during foot and aerial patrols of transmission and distribution lines. If the repair standard is to apply to problems found with all of the equipment type identified in Section 57.198(e)(3), it should be moved to the end of the paragraph. As noted in Section II.A.3, the OCA recommends that time frames for corrective actions be included throughout proposed Section 57.198(e). The OCA's recommendations are shown in Appendix A.

III. CONCLUSION

The OCA appreciates this opportunity to provide Comments on this important topic. Adequate inspection, maintenance and repair standards are essential to ensuring that customers receive safe, adequate, reliable and reasonably continuous service. The proposed regulations are a significant step, and with the further modifications provided by the OCA, should provide a solid foundation for ensuring that the reliability of the transmission and distribution system is maintained.

Respectfully submitted,


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DATED: November 6, 2006
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BEFORE THE
PENNSYLVANIA PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION

Proposed Rulemaking for Revision :
of 52 Pa. Code Chapter 57 Pertaining to :
Adding Inspection and Maintenance : Docket No. L-00040167
Standards for the Electric Distribution :
Companies :

APPENDIX A
TO THE
COMMENTS OF THE
OFFICE OF CONSUMER ADVOCATE

ANNEX A
TITLE 52. PUBLIC UTILITIES
Part 1. PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION
Subpart C. FIXED SERVICE UTILITIES
CHAPTER 57. ELECTRIC SERVICE

Subchapter N. ELECTRIC RELIABILITY STANDARDS

* * * * *

§57.192. Definitions.

The following words and terms, when used in this subchapter, have the following meanings, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

* * * * *

Rural area -- A rural place designated by the United States Bureau of Census as having a population of less than 5,000 and whose boundaries have been approved by the Secretary of the United States, Department of Transportation.

* * * * *

Urban area-- An urbanized area or an urban place designated by the United States Bureau of Census as having a population of 5,000 or more and whose boundaries have been approved by the Secretary of the United States, Department of Transportation.

* * * * *

§57.198. Inspection and maintenance standards.

(a) An EDC shall have a plan for the periodic inspection and maintenance of poles, overhead conductors and cables, wires, transformers, switching devices, protective devices, regulators, capacitors, substations and other facilities critical to maintaining an acceptable level of reliability, in a format the Commission prescribes. The plan should specify all applicable hardware standards, all applicable operation standards, routine maintenance requirements, emergency maintenance plans and procedures for coordinating with other interconnected systems. The Commission will review each plan and may issue orders to ensure compliance with this section. The Commission may require an EDC to submit an updated plan at any time containing information the Commission may prescribe.

(1) The plan shall be based on industry codes, national electric industry practices, manufacturers' recommendations, sound engineering judgment and past experience. The plan shall be divided into rural and urban areas. The plan shall

take into account the broad minimum inspection and maintenance intervals provided for in subsection (e).

(2) An EDC shall reduce the risk of future service interruptions by accounting for the age, condition, design and performance of system components and by providing adequate resources to maintain, repair, replace and upgrade the system.

(3) The plan shall include a program for the maintenance of minimum clearances of vegetation from the EDC's overhead transmission and distribution facilities sufficient to avoid contact under design-based conditions. The plan shall include a program for the trimming of tree branches and limbs located in close proximity to overhead electric wires when the branches and limbs may cause damage to the electric wires regardless of whether the trees in question are on or off of a right-of-way.

(4) The plan, or updates to the plan, shall form the basis of, and be consistent with, the EDC's inspection and maintenance goals and objectives included in subsequent annual and quarterly reliability reports filed with the Commission.

(b) On or before October 1, 2007, and every 2 years thereafter, an EDC shall submit its whole plan for the following calendar year to the Commission for review.

(1) Within 90 days, the Commission or its designee will accept or reject the plan.

(2) Absent action by the Commission or its designee to reject the plan within 90 days of the plan's submission to the Commission, or by January 1, whichever is later, the plan shall be deemed accepted. The acceptance shall be conditioned upon the EDC meeting Commission-established reliability performance standards.

(3) If the plan is rejected, in whole or in part, by the Commission or its designee, the EDC shall be notified of the plan's deficiencies and directed to resubmit a revised plan, or pertinent parts of the plan, addressing the identified deficiencies, or submit an explanation why the EDC believes its plan is not deficient.

(c) An EDC may request approval from the Commission for revising an approved plan. An EDC shall submit to the Commission, as an addendum to its quarterly reliability report, prospective and past revisions to its plan and a discussion of the reasons for the revisions. Within 90 days, the Commission or its designee will accept or reject the revisions to the plan.

(d) An EDC shall maintain records of its inspection and maintenance activities sufficient to demonstrate compliance with its transmission and distribution facilities inspection, maintenance, repair and replacement programs as required by subsection (e) and to demonstrate compliance with its plan. The records shall be made available to the Commission upon request within 30 days.

(e) An EDC shall maintain the following minimum inspection, ~~and maintenance,~~ and repair intervals standards:

(1) Vegetation management. The statewide minimum inspection and treatment cycles for vegetation management are 4 years for distribution facilities and 5 years for transmission facilities.

(2) Pole inspections and repair. Distribution poles shall ~~be visually~~ undergo a detailed inspection every 10 years that includes drill tests at and below ground level, a shell test, a load calculation, visual inspection for holes, evidence of insect infestation, evidence of unauthorized backfilling or excavation, lightening strikes and other problems. Poles with major deficiencies shall be replaced within 60 days.

(3) Overhead line inspections and repair.

(i) Transmission lines and all attached equipment shall be inspected aerially twice per year in the spring and fall. Transmission lines and all attached equipment shall be inspected on foot every 2 years and shall include infrared scanning. If problems are found that affect the integrity of the circuits, they shall be repaired or replaced within 30 days from discovery.

(ii) Distribution lines and all attached equipment shall be inspected by foot patrol a minimum of once per year and shall undergo a detailed inspection every five years that includes infrared scanning. If problems are found that affect the integrity of the circuits, they shall be repaired or replaced no later than 30 days from discovery.

(iii) Overhead distribution transformers shall be visually inspected annually as part of the distribution line inspection and the load on the transformer shall be calculated at least once every two years. If problems are found that affect the integrity of the equipment, they shall be repaired or replaced within 30 days from discovery.

(iv) Above-ground pad-mounted transformers and below-ground transformers shall be inspected on a 2-year cycle and the load on the transformer shall be calculated at least once every two years. If problems are found that affect the integrity of the equipment, they shall be repaired or replaced within 30 days from discovery.

(v) Reclosers shall be inspected and tested at least once per year. If problems are found that affect the integrity of the equipment, they shall be repaired or replaced within 30 days from discovery.

(vi) Other Critical Facilities shall be tested and inspected either annually or every two years. Switches shall be inspected and tested annually. Relays, sectionalizers, and vacuum switches shall be inspected and tested every two years. If problems are found that affect the integrity of the equipment, they shall be repaired or replaced within 30 days from discovery.

(4) Substation inspections and repair. Substation equipment, structures and hardware shall be inspected monthly. An inspection that includes infrared scanning shall be conducted annually. Substation circuit breakers should undergo operational testing at least once per year, diagnostic testing at least once every four years, and comprehensive inspection and maintenance on a four-year cycle. Deficiencies identified should be repaired or addressed within 30 days if serving transmission lines and within 60 days if serving distribution lines.

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

RE: Proposed Rulemaking for revision :
of 52 Pa. Code Chapter 57 Pertaining to :
Adding Inspection and Maintenance : Docket No. L-00040167
Standards for the Electric Distribution :
Companies :

I hereby certify that I have this day served a true copy of the foregoing document, Comments of the Office of Consumer Advocate, upon parties of record in this proceeding in accordance with the requirements of 52 Pa. Code § 1.54 (relating to service by a participant), in the manner and upon the persons listed below:

Dated this 6th day of November 2006.

SERVICE BY INTEROFFICE MAIL

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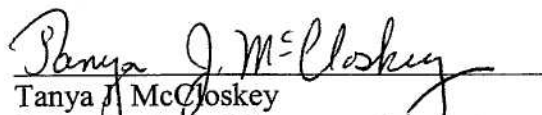
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