

North American Transmission Forum External Newsletter

January 2020

NATF Marks Tenth Anniversary as an Independent Corporation

Following the August 2003 blackout that impacted systems in the midwestern and northeastern United States and Ontario, Canada, several major transmission owners and operators met to discuss ways to improve reliability. Other organizations joined the original group to form the Transmission Owners and Operators Forum within the North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC) to “...improve the reliability and security of the bulk power system by facilitating the pursuit of operational excellence through a forum where transmission owners and operators can identify and exchange information on best practices for reliable operations, evaluate their own performances against those best practices, disseminate lessons learned from disturbances and near misses, and facilitate the utilization of such information in a timely manner, among other things.”

To promote increased candor and opportunities for peer challenge, members decided to become independent from NERC and, on January 1, 2010, began operating as the North American Transmission Forum, Inc., a nonprofit 501(c)(6) organization. Since 2010, the NATF has grown to over 160 members and affiliate organizations representing about 80% of the transmission circuit miles rated at 200 kV and above in the United States and Canada.

Today, the NATF is a leader in the electric transmission industry through its programs to enable member collaboration and information sharing for continuous improvement and its work—both independently and through numerous partnerships—to address emerging industry risks and challenges.

Cyber Security and Supply Chain Guidance Posted

The “NATF Transient Cyber Asset Guidance” and “NATF Vendor Remote Access Guidance” documents have been posted to the NATF [public website](#) for industry use.

“NATF Transient Cyber Asset Guidance” describes practices and provides examples of approaches for using transient cyber assets in compliance with CIP-010 R4. “NATF Vendor Remote Access Guidance” describes practices and provides examples for determining and disabling active vendor remote access sessions, which can serve as considerations and potential approaches for implementing the requirements in CIP-005-6 R2 parts 2.4 and 2.5.

Both documents have been submitted to NERC for consideration as Implementation Guidance as approaches to comply with the related standards.

Equipment Problem Coding Document Posted

The “NATF Equipment Problem Coding Process Reference Document” has been posted to the NATF [public website](#) for industry use.

The document provides a standard framework for coding the nature of field-observed equipment failures and problems of in-service equipment. Standardized recording of equipment issues enables better analysis and data sharing and maximizes the usefulness of historical data.

NATF Adds New Equipment-Sharing Program

RESTORE (Regional Equipment Sharing for Transmission Outage Restoration) is an agreement governing a voluntary initiative among certain electric transmission owners who desire to share spare transformers and other equipment for purposes of safeguarding against potential threats and risk of significant damage to the country's energy resources, including the electrical power grid. The approach is an extension of the well-established industry practice of mutual aid following a significant event. RESTORE is an optional, self-funding program now available to NATF members.

Workshops and Meetings

In addition to regular web conferences, NATF groups conduct periodic workshops and in-person meetings. Recent and upcoming activities include:

- Vegetation Management Workshop (October 2019)
- Human Performance Improvement Workshop (October 2019)
- EPM Substation Equipment and Asset Management Workshop (October 2019)
- System Operations and Operations Tools Workshop (October 2019)
- Board and Members Meeting (December 2019)
- NATF-EPRI-NERC Transmission Resiliency Summit (March 2020)

Redacted Operating Experience Reports

Since our last newsletter, we have posted five reports to our [public site](#) for members and other utilities to use internally and share with their contractors to help improve safety, reliability, and resiliency.

For more information about the NATF, please visit www.natf.net.