ESCC
Electricity Subsector Coordinating Council

TALKING POINTS

Hurricane Maria Update

OCTOBER 3, 2017

Situation Overview

- Hurricane Maria caused widespread destruction to all infrastructure on Puerto Rico, including the energy grid.
- At this time, the response operations in Puerto Rico are focused primarily on the distribution of commodities such as food, water, and fuel for temporary power at critical facilities, as well as improving security, removing debris, and clearing roads.
- As these operations bring some stability to Puerto Rico, efforts will begin to shift to long-term recovery and the restoration of critical infrastructure.
- While power has been restored to some areas of San Juan and critical facilities, including the airport, marine terminal, and more than a dozen hospitals, nearly 95 percent of all customers in Puerto Rico are without power.

Facts You Should Know Today

- The Puerto Rico Electric Power Authority (PREPA) has hired Whitefish Energy Holdings to serve as the primary contractor for its power restoration efforts.
- Whitefish has 35 years of experience in transformer manufacturing and construction for the electric power industry and provides a full suite of engineering, manufacturing, and construction services. Its parent company is COMTRAFO Brazil.
- Both PREPA and Whitefish are coordinating closely with the American Public Power Association (APPA), the Electricity Subsector Coordinating Council (ESCC), FEMA, the Department of Energy, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE or the Corps). They have developed an initial plan for restoring critical portions of Puerto Rico's energy grid, including two key transmission lines and vital distribution circuits.
- As the Corps and Whitefish work closely with PREPA to ascertain specific resource needs—including crews, equipment, and materials—the U.S. electric power industry will be called on to support these efforts. The Corps of Engineers will provide logistical support, including moving equipment and crews onto the island and ensuring they have staging areas, meals, and security.
- As plans are developed for the longer-term restoration mission, additional resources may be needed. Because of the geographic challenges and the severity of damage, this long-term mission will be more difficult than any other restoration. It will involve rebuilding major portions of the transmission system and nearly all of the island's distribution system.
- The entire electric power industry stands ready to support the long-term recovery efforts in Puerto Rico.

- APPA and the ESCC will monitor the progress of this longer-term restoration mission and work closely with all industry mutual assistance networks to ensure that any additional worker and resource needs are addressed quickly.
- Unfortunately, because of the severe damage to homes and businesses on the island, many customers will not be able to receive power to their homes even after it has been restored.
- President Trump is traveling to Puerto Rico today to receive an on-the-ground briefing and see firsthand the destruction of the island caused by Hurricane Maria.
- Last week, the President announced that the federal government will cover all costs associated with critical life-saving and life-sustaining efforts in Puerto Rico over the next 180 days. This funding is vital for the initial recovery efforts, and we thank the President and FEMA for this leadership.
- Strong industry-government coordination and cross-sector cooperation will remain critical.
- We understand the hardships that being without power creates, and we are committed to support the people of Puerto Rico and their families during this historic and devastating event.

ABOUT THE ELECTRICITY SUBSECTOR COORDINATING COUNCIL

The ESCC serves as the principal liaison between leadership in the federal government and in the electric power sector, with the mission of coordinating efforts to prepare for national-level incidents or threats to critical infrastructure. Protecting the energy grid from threats that could impact national security and public safety is a responsibility shared by both the government and the electric power sector. The ESCC facilitates and supports policy- and public affairs-related activities and initiatives designed to enhance the reliability and resilience of the energy grid. These activities include all hazards, steady-state preparation, and emergency preparedness, response, and recovery for the nation's electricity sector.

More information is available at: http://www.electricitysubsector.org/