Lesson Learned
Potential Interruption to Gas Supply/Identification of Critical Loads

Primary Interest Groups
Generator Owners
Generator Operators
Transmission Owners
Transmission Operators
Balancing Authorities
Distribution Providers

Problem Statement: Regional force majeure events during the February 2011 Southwest Cold Weather Event caused the possible curtailment of firm natural gas supplies to Company’s natural gas fired generating facilities.

Details: Extremely cold temperatures and increased loads across the south caused rolling blackouts. As a result, some natural gas compressor stations and gas processing plants in a neighboring region were affected by these regional blackouts. These blackouts, and issues resulting in restarting the gas compressor and processing facilities after the blackouts, combined with regional supply freeze-offs, caused the interstate and intrastate natural gas pipeline transportation suppliers to notify the electric company that they might not be able to meet scheduled firm deliveries of natural gas, which in turn could have affected the amount of generation available to serve load.

Due to this notice, the electric company made plans for potential redispatch to maximize available generation and for potential fuel switching, and began implementing steps of its Emergency Operations Plan. These steps included:

- Loading all available generating capacity,
- Determining status of adjacent BA’s for potential assistance,
- Informing the Reliability Coordinator (RC) and adjacent Balancing Authorities (BA’s) of system status,
- Reducing load through public appeals and curtailment of interruptible loads,
- Declaration of Energy Emergency through its RC.

Through these steps, as well as the use of alternative fuels, the electric company was able to carry all firm load and the required level of operating reserves.

Corrective Actions: No corrective actions identified

Lesson Learned: The interdependency between electric emergency operating procedures and natural gas generation fuel deliveries should be considered in the emergency operating plans of the Region and neighboring balancing authorities. Load shedding may occur at anytime during the year, so it is important that gas suppliers to all BES generation be identified as critical loads because the suppliers may serve generation outside the BA area serving the gas supplier.
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This Lesson Learned was prepared by the SPP Registered Entity that experienced the event. Company specific identifiers were removed to maintain confidentiality.