

Electricity Sub-Sector Coordinating Council Charter

Purpose and Scope

The Electricity Subsector Coordinating Council (ESCC) serves as the principal liaison between the electric sector and the federal government for coordinating efforts to prepare for and respond to national-level disasters or threats to critical infrastructure.

In this role, the ESCC facilitates an industry-government partnership that supports policy-related initiatives to improve the security and resilience of the electric power sector. The scope of these activities includes physical security, cybersecurity, and emergency preparedness for electric infrastructure across North America. To support these efforts, the ESCC convenes senior industry representatives, Administration officials, and other stakeholders, to carry out the role of the Sector Coordinating Council (SCC) for the electricity subsector as established in the National Infrastructure Protection Plan (NIPP).

The ESCC is a non-advocacy, self-governed organization, and participation by its constituencies is voluntary. The ESCC is not regulated by any federal agency. The ESCC coordinates with the federal government primarily through the Energy Government Coordinating Council (EGCC), which is led by the Department of Energy (DOE), the industry's Sector Risk Management Agency. The ESCC may coordinate with other federal agencies as needed.

Primary Objectives

Aligned with the energy sector vision and goals, as established in the NIPP for the electricity subsector, the primary objectives of the ESCC are to:

- (1) Coordinate with electric sector stakeholders, the EGCC, other government partners, and other Sector Coordinating Councils to jointly identify electric sector priorities;
- (2) Support collective efforts to strengthen the sector's security and resilience posture, as well as national security;
- (3) Facilitate the identification and sharing of tools and technologies that enable a stronger security and resilience posture, and inform their development and implementation; and
- (4) Promote unity of effort and unity of message across the sector in preparation for, during, and in response to events of national significance.

To carry out these objectives, the ESCC will:

- Communicate ESCC activities, information, and developments in a timely manner to all partners and stakeholders.
- Provide input to the federal government about the risks, benefits, and potential implications to the electric sector of policies and programs.
- Leverage the ESCC's asset owner-operator members' understanding of current electric sector hazards and risks to inform industry and government mitigation efforts for the future of the electric system.
- Promote coordination and two-way communication between the federal government and the ESCC about physical and cyber threats, vulnerabilities, incidents, and potential protective or mitigation measures.
- Partner with the federal government to facilitate the research, development, and deployment of government tools, technologies, and capabilities related to the ESCC objectives and priorities.
- Coordinate with the Electricity Information Sharing and Analysis Center (E-ISAC).
- Support federal government efforts to share timely and actionable unclassified and classified information and encourage appropriate declassification or limited access to such information.

Membership and Governance Structure

The ESCC consists of CEO-level representatives of the asset owners and operators of the North American electric grid, which may include generation, transmission, and distribution assets from all ownership categories, and their trade associations.

The federal utilities, specifically the four Power Marketing Administrators (PMA), may participate in the activities of the ESCC, at the discretion of the ESCC and DOE.

Officers: The ESCC shall be led by three co-chairs.

The three co-chairs shall be members of each of the asset owner classes represented by American Public Power Association (APPA), Edison Electric Institute (EEI), and National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA). One co-chair will be appointed by the CEO of each respective trade association and the appointments shall be reviewed by the appointing entity every two years. The co-chairs shall jointly preside over all meetings of the members. The co-chairs may establish an advisory group of sector representative ESCC members or staff as deemed appropriate.

Executive Committee: The ESCC will include a committee made up of the three co-chairs and the CEO's of American Public Power Association (APPA), Edison Electric Institute (EEI), and National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) that will serve to develop topics and efforts for the ESCC to address among its members and the sector at-large.

Subcommittees: The Executive Committee may form subcommittees, working groups, tiger teams, or other bodies to address projects, priorities, or strategic efforts so long as the issue is not currently being, or cannot be, addressed by more appropriate organizations (including trade organizations) and one or more of the following criteria apply: Are national level disasters or threats to critical national electricity infrastructure that could cause a national level impact or impact the resilience of the electricity infrastructure; require engagement with senior levels of the federal government; require CEO level engagement or leadership; are national in scope (Regional issues will be considered only in the event that they affect national security or have the potential for a national response level response).

The subcommittees may include Advisors, as deemed appropriate by the Executive Committee members, and will maintain Statements of Work to outline clear goals and deliverables together with sunset dates.

Secretariat: The Secretariat shall be composed of designated staff from APPA, EEI, and NRECA. The Secretariat is responsible for facilitating coordination between the ESCC, the E-ISAC, the federal government, and other stakeholders to advance ESCC objectives and priorities. The Secretariat also will support communication of ESCC activities, information, and developments to its respective members and throughout the electric sector.

Membership: The ESCC shall have 27 members composed of:

- The Executive Committee (6 members)
- Twenty one additional CEO-level executives representing the memberships of the asset owner classes from APPA (3 members), EEI (12 members), NRECA (3 members), the American Clean Power Association (1 member), and Electricity Canada (2 members) respectively.

The CEO of each trade association shall be responsible for the appointment of the CEO-level executives designated to represent their respective memberships. There are no limits on the term that a member of the ESCC may serve. In the case of a vacancy on the ESCC, the CEO of the member trade association representing the asset owner class for the vacant seat shall appoint a new member.

The ESCC will function as a body representing the views of the owners and operators of the nation's electricity infrastructure. To the extent views among members vary, members are encouraged to express divergent concerns and perspectives.

Advisors: The ESCC may establish subgroups as appropriate and/or consult and coordinate with energy sector organizations, as well as organizations that support the energy sector or another critical infrastructure sector. This includes representatives who play a critical role in electric sector reliability, markets and power supply from all generating resources that contribute to our Nation’s energy security and assurance including, but not limited to: the North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC); regional transmission operators and independent system operators; oil, natural gas, nuclear, and renewable fuel providers; critical manufacturers and suppliers; and other stakeholders as deemed necessary by the ESCC. The inclusion of cross-sector stakeholders is intended to inform the ESCC’s objectives and priorities by providing additional perspectives and expertise on energy sector interdependencies, potential threats and mitigation strategies, or other critical issues. Additional advisors will be non-voting.

Meetings

The ESCC will meet at least once a year. ESCC meetings will be noticed to members in writing (electronic transmittal is acceptable) ten (10) or more business days in advance if possible. The ESCC co-chairs may call a meeting on short notice to prepare for or respond to an event of national significance. ESCC subgroups may meet as needed. Meetings may take place in a virtual environment if necessary.

Approval

The Executive Committee shall approve the charter and then submit it to the Department of Energy for affirmation that the Sector Coordinating Council is reflective of the sector.

Approved on