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BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Order Instituting Rulemaking on the Commission's own motion to consider alternative-fueled vehicle tariffs, infrastructure and policies to support California's greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals.

Rulemaking 09-08-009
(Filed August 20, 2009)

ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE'S RULING – PHASE 3

In accordance with Rule 7.3 of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure, this ruling provides additional guidance to the investor-owned utilities regarding their Phase 3 compliance obligations.

1. Background

The Commission initiated this rulemaking proceeding on August 24, 2009, as part of its efforts to ready the electric infrastructure for light-duty passenger plug-in hybrid electric vehicles and battery electric vehicles (collectively Electric Vehicles). The Commission issued two decisions in the proceeding – Decision (D.) 11-12-055 (the Phase 2 Decision) and D.11-07-029.

On July 28, 2011, the assigned Commissioner issued a scoping memo for Phase 3 of this proceeding. That scoping memo set forth instructions and deadlines for three compliance reports: the Notification Assessment Report, the Submetering Roadmap Report, and the Load Research Report. This ruling modifies the requirements for these compliance activities as described below.

2. Load Research Report

In order to support a rate design review in 2012, the Phase 2 Decision ordered the investor-owned utilities to develop a load research plan and submit it to the Commission on December 1, 2011. The Phase 2 Decision directed the utilities to develop a load research plan that would evaluate six load research elements:

1. Track and quantify all new load and associated upgrade costs in a manner that allows Electric Vehicle load and related costs to be broken out and specifically identified. This information shall be collected and stored in an accessible format useful to the Commission.
2. Evaluate how metering arrangements and rate design impact Electric Vehicle charging behavior.
3. To the extent relevant, determine whether participation in demand response programs impacts Electric Vehicle charging behavior.
4. Determine how charging arrangements, including metering options and alternative rate schedules impact charging behavior at multi-dwelling units.
5. Evaluate whether distribution costs are increased by different charging levels, i.e., Level 1, Level 2, and quick charging, in public locations.
6. Separately track costs associated with Electric Vehicle-related residential service facility upgrade costs and treated as “common facility costs” between the effective date of this decision and June 30, 2013, and propose a policy and procedural mechanism to address these residential upgrade costs going forward.¹

The utilities were also ordered to hold a workshop to discuss the plan and preliminary results on or before January 2012.

¹ Ordering Paragraph 6 of Decision 11-07-029.

The utilities submitted their Load Research Plan on December 1, 2011. In reviewing the plan, Energy Division suggests that the plan proposes a reasonable methodology for understanding the distribution impacts of electric vehicle adoption. However, based on Energy Division's advice, I find that the proposed plan does not adequately allow the utilities to understand the load impacts of electric vehicle charging. In particular, the plan does not adequately track data related to load research requirements #2, #3, #4, and #5 identified in the Commission's Phase 2 Decision.

Energy Division staff recommends that the metering data currently available to the utilities is unable to adequately measure Electric Vehicle load impacts. Collecting this data will require additional resources to meet this data requirement. For example, the plan does not provide a method for collecting Electric Vehicle-specific load in the case where a household is using a single meter tariff that does not separately track Electric Vehicle load. The plan also does not indicate how utilities would identify the level of charging equipment used (load research element #5). Utilities should consult with outside parties on the best methods to collect this data.

In order to accommodate this request, the deadline for holding a workshop on Load Research is extended to February 2012. The utilities are asked to work with Energy Division staff to schedule this workshop during February 2012. The workshop should review the utility load research proposal and solicit stakeholder feedback on ways to collect additional data needed to fully meet the requirements set forth in the Commission's Phase 2 Decision. The utilities are also directed to work with the Energy Division to refine their load research proposal to ensure that it meets the Commission's requirements.

3. Submetering Roadmap Report

The Commission's Phase 2 Decision directed the utilities to develop rules to accommodate customer-owned submeters. The Decision ordered the utilities to host a workshop on this topic before October 31, 2011. This workshop was held on October 27, 2011 in San Francisco. The Decision also ordered utilities to submit a roadmap report by December 31, 2011.

The roadmap report submitted by the utilities pursuant to the decision identified 17 use cases for submetering. The roadmap report is provided as Attachment A to this ruling. The roadmap report evaluated the feasibility of each of these cases to determine if they can be accommodated in the utility billing system. For those use cases that were deemed feasible, the joint utility proposal included proposed adoption dates.

The Commission set a deadline for completing a submetering protocol by July 31, 2012. Energy staff recommends that this deadline be changed, based on the substantial number of outstanding issues identified in the roadmap report. I concur. I ask parties to comment on this deadline and offer their suggestions on a revised deadline.

In its Phase 2 Decision, the Commission recognized submetering as a potential option for reducing customer infrastructure costs related to billing their electric vehicle load. To assist the Commission in evaluating the roadmap report, I ask parties to provide comment on the roadmap report. Parties should respond to the following questions related to the roadmap report and file these responses in comments:

1. Does the roadmap report adequately identify all the potential use cases for submetering?
2. Do you agree with the utilities assessment of the feasibility and cost-effectiveness of each of the use cases? In order to determine the benefits from submetering, how should the Commission assess potential demand for subtractive billing for Electric Vehicle load? Do the benefits of using each of these use case justify the cost of implementation? What information is missing to help the Commission evaluate the costs and benefits of different use cases?
3. Which use cases should the Commission require the utilities to accommodate?
4. What deadline should the Commission set for the utilities completing a submetering protocol and tariff sheets for each of these use cases? Should short-term workarounds be made available for use cases that cannot be implemented in the short-term?
5. Submetering may provide additional benefits related to vehicle-based demand response or grid services that may be enabled in the future. How important is direct metering of vehicles to performing these future functionalities?

The roadmap report also raises questions specifically for the utilities. Energy Division staff finds that the report does not clearly articulate the costs associated with each option. In particular, the utilities do not identify specific cost drivers associated with upgrading the AMI network to handle submetering. Each of the utilities should answer the following questions related to the roadmap report. The utilities' responses to these questions should be filed with the Commission:

1. What was the basis for determining that some use cases are not cost-effective? Please share any quantitative analysis used to make this determination.
2. What specific electric tariff rule changes are required to implement the use case?

3. Page 14 of the report states that there is a need to clarify the Commission's role relative to the Department of Food and Agriculture. Given that Food and Agriculture has authority over non-utility owned meters, what specific issues require clarification?

Parties and utilities should submit their comments on the questions above, within 20 days from the release of this ruling. Reply comments should be submitted 10 days after the deadline for comments. In their reply comments, parties should also address the utilities' responses to the utility-specific questions.

IT IS RULED that:

1. The utilities should evaluate what resources are needed to complete a robust load research analysis that fully addresses the requirements set forth in the Phase 2 Decision.

2. The Joint Utilities Roadmap Report is entered into the evidentiary record on this proceeding.

3. Utilities shall file responses to the questions set forth in Section 3 above within 20 days of the date of this ruling. Parties are asked to file their comments on the Roadmap Report within 20 days of the date of this ruling. Reply comments are due 10 days following the deadline for comments.

4. Utilities shall file requests for extension of time as needed under Rule 16.6 as a result of the modified deadline initially set forth in Decision 11-12-029.

Dated January 31, 2012, at San Francisco, California.

/s/ REGINA DEANGELIS

Regina DeAngelis
Administrative Law Judge