

**BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

Order Instituting Rulemaking into the operation of interruptible load programs offered by Pacific Gas and Electric Company, San Diego Gas & Electric Company, and Southern California Edison Company and the effect of these programs on energy prices, other demand responsiveness programs, and the reliability of the electric system.

Rulemaking 00-10-002  
(Filed October 5, 2000)

Order Instituting Investigation into Implementation of Assembly Bill 970 Regarding the Identification of Electric Transmission and Distribution Constraints, Actions to Resolve Those Constraints, and Related Matters Affecting the Reliability of Electric Supply.

Investigation 00-11-001  
(Filed November 2, 2000)

**PRESIDING OFFICER AND ASSIGNED COMMISSIONER'S RULING  
ON VOLTAGE REDUCTION ISSUE**

This ruling transfers the voltage reduction issue from Investigation (I.) 00-11-001 to Rulemaking (R.) 00-10-002. It also sets a hearing and procedural schedule for further consideration of the issue.

**1. Transfer Issue**

On July 3, 2001, Governor Gray Davis asked that the Commission consider taking action to have electric utilities reduce distribution system voltage, thereby reducing peak demand, alleviating the current shortage of electricity, and

reducing the need for rolling blackouts. By Assigned Commissioner's Ruling (ACR) dated July 5, 2001, President Lynch directed that parties submit comments on this matter in I.00-11-001. By ACR dated July 17, 2001, President Lynch requested further information in I.00-11-001.

With the concurrence of President Lynch, effective immediately the issue is transferred to R.00-10-002.

## **2. Hearing and Schedule**

The Governor suggests Commission consideration of a 2.5% reduction in voltage. (Press Release PR01:319 dated July 3, 2001.) The July 5, 2001 ACR sought comments on the Governor's proposal. Comments were filed on July 10, 2001 by Pacific Gas & Electric Company (PG&E), Southern California Edison Company (SCE), and San Diego Gas & Electric Company (SDG&E).

The July 17, 2001 ACR invited parties to submit comments on utility proposals, allowed utilities to supplement their initial comments, and set a workshop for July 25, 2001. In response, comments were filed on July 23, 2001 by the California Energy Commission (CEC) and The Utility Reform Network (TURN), and supplemental comments were filed by PG&E. A workshop was held on July 25, 2001. Reply comments were filed on August 1, 2001 by SCE to the comments of TURN.

The ability of each utility to implement voltage reduction varies, and parties dispute the merits and feasibility of voltage reduction. The Commission needs more information before a statewide voltage reduction plan, if any, or a specific voltage reduction plan for each utility, if any, can be reasonably adopted and implemented. To accomplish this goal, the following actions will be taken.

First, official notice is proposed in R.00-10-002 of the documents filed on this subject in I.00-11-001. Those documents are identified in Attachment A. Parties may state objections, if any, to the taking of official notice at hearing.

Second, a formal hearing will be held. All parties wishing to be heard shall appear and present evidence and argument. Each party who has submitted a document identified in Attachment A shall bring two copies of that document to the hearing, and shall produce a witness to testify in support of, and answer cross-examination questions on, the document. Absent objections, these documents will be identified and received as evidence.

Further, respondent utilities shall, and other parties may, serve proposed direct testimony by October 1, 2001 to address the following items (to the extent the items are not already addressed in documents identified in Attachment A, or a utility or party wishes to provide additional information or recommendations):

1. Assuming the Commission will adopt a voltage reduction program, each respondent utility shall, and other parties may, propose a specific voltage reduction plan, and with respect to that plan shall discuss:
  - a. The benefits of reducing voltage levels;
  - b. The risks and costs of reducing voltage levels;
  - c. The effects on safety, reliability and customer service of reducing voltage levels;
  - d. Damage, if any, to customer equipment;
  - e. Other consequences, if any, of reducing voltage levels;
  - f. Whether or not minimum voltage at the customer meter during peak load conditions should be reduced to 110 volts;
  - g. The recommended tolerable and reasonable level of voltage reduction, if any, given consideration of safety, reliability, costs and benefits;
  - h. A reasonable schedule for implementation of any ordered reduction in voltage;
  - i. Specific proposed changes to any Tariff Rules which are believed necessary (e.g., Rules 2 and 14);

- j. Any other facts, expert opinion and specific recommendations the Commission should consider in determining whether or not to adopt and implement a voltage reduction program, and the specifics of any adopted program.
2. PG&E states that it already operates most of its distribution circuits at the lowest practical peak load voltage consistent with maintaining a minimum of 114 volts at the customer meter during peak load conditions. Further, PG&E states that it is modifying the rest of its system to accomplish this goal. PG&E shall state whether or not there are additional opportunities for PG&E to reduce voltage during non-peak times to save energy.
3. SCE and SDG&E shall state whether or not they are operating their distribution circuits in a manner to minimize voltage similar to that described by PG&E, and what, if any, opportunities exist to reduce voltage on their systems during both peak and non-peak times.
4. Each respondent utility shall, and other parties may, recommend whether or not the Commission should adopt any proposed program.

Proposed rebuttal testimony shall be served by October 5, 2001. Parties shall verify proposed direct and rebuttal testimony, and shall include the verification with the served proposed testimony. (Rule 2.4 of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure.)

Formal hearing shall be held in the Commission Courtroom at 9:30 a.m. on October 11, 2001. Parties shall bring no less than two copies of proposed direct and rebuttal testimony to hearing. Opening briefs shall be filed and served by October 17, 2001, and reply briefs shall be filed and served by October 22, 2001. The schedule is summarized in Attachment B.

Parties to I.00-11-001 who filed documents listed in Attachment A are already parties to Phase 2 of R.00-10-002, and need not file another appearance. Other appearances in I.00-11-001, however, and other persons who wish to

become parties in Phase 2 of R.00-10-002 at this time, shall appear at hearing and seek appearance status. Persons may also seek inclusion on the Phase 2 service list at any time using other methods (e.g., motions; appearance at subsequent hearing; letter for state service or information only status).

To the fullest extent possible, parties shall use the same outline for direct testimony, rebuttal testimony, opening briefs, and reply briefs. Parties shall use their best efforts to agree on the outline(s). Parties shall bring any unresolved disputes regarding the outline(s) to the attention of the Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) sufficiently before documents are due to allow a reasonable opportunity for resolution.

All pleadings (e.g., proposed direct testimony, proposed rebuttal testimony, opening brief, reply brief) shall be served by electronic mail no later than 5:00 p.m. on the date service is to be performed. Paper copies need not be served, with limited exceptions noted below. Up to, and including, the date of hearing (October 11, 2001), service shall be on the service list for Phase 2 of R.00-10-002, and also the service list for I.00-11-001. After the date of hearing (after October 11, 2001), service shall be only on the Phase 2 service list.

Proposed testimony shall not be filed. Electronic service does not eliminate Commission rules for filing of documents which must be filed (e.g., opening briefs, reply briefs). Documents that are to be filed must comply with Rule 2 of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure (e.g., Rule 2.5 requires an original and four copies once the official service list is established).

Parties shall use the most current service list and electronic mail addresses for each service. The most current list may be obtained from either the

Commission's Process Office or the Commission's web page.<sup>1</sup> The burden is on each party to ensure that current and accurate electronic mail addresses are on the Commission's service list, just as parties must do for postal service addresses. This is accomplished by parties notifying the Commission's Process Office of corrections or changes. Parties should make reasonable efforts to ensure service is performed and completed, but need not undertake exceptional efforts to accomplish service if the electronic mail copy is returned undelivered. Parties should, however, perform regular mail paper service of pleadings when the electronic mail is returned undelivered.

Finally, in addition to electronic mail service, four paper copies must also be served: one each on Jonathan Lakritz, ALJ Burton Mattson, ALJ Michael Galvin, and Ed Quan in Energy Division. Each paper copy shall, to the extent feasible and reasonable, be served so that it is delivered to the Commission on the day it is served.

Public necessity requires proposing a shortened comment period on the proposed decision. Rotating outages remain possible at any time. Rotating outages may cause significant harm to public health or welfare. The adoption of a reasonable voltage reduction plan will reduce the probability of rotating outages, or reduce their frequency and duration. As a result, the public interest

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<sup>1</sup> There are many ways to accomplish tasks on the Commission's new web page. One method to obtain the most current service list is as follows: click on <http://www.cpuc.ca.gov>; on the left side of the page click on "proceedings;" on the right side of the next page click on "service lists;" scroll down to "R0010002 Phase 2 list" and "I0011001 list;" click on the "Phase 2 list" or "list" for I.0011001; click on "download the comma-delimited file;" copy the e-mail addresses in Column D; paste the e-mail addresses into an electronic note.

in the Commission adopting a decision before expiration of the 30-day review and comment period outweighs the public interest in a full 30-day period for public review and comment. Parties may address the proposed reduction in the comment period on the proposed decision at hearing, and in opening and reply briefs, and shall address the minimum number of days they believe necessary for comments on the proposed decision.

**IT IS RULED** that:

1. The voltage reduction issue is transferred from I.00-11-001 to R.00-10-002.
2. Official notice is proposed in R.00-10-002 of the documents identified in Attachment A that were filed in I.00-11-001. Parties may state objections at hearing.
3. A formal hearing shall be held in the Commission Courtroom at 9:30 a.m. on October 11, 2001. All parties wishing to be heard shall appear and present evidence and argument. Parties shall comply with the directions in the body of this ruling regarding hearing (e.g., bring two copies of documents, produce a witness to testify in support).
4. The schedule and issues stated in the ruling and Attachment B are adopted. All specific directions stated in the body of this ruling are adopted (e.g., parties serving and verifying proposed testimony, parties using the same outlines to the fullest extent possible).
5. Service of documents shall be by electronic mail, and shall be accomplished by 5:00 p.m. on the date service is to be performed. In addition to electronic service, a paper copy shall also be served on Jonathan Lakritz, ALJ Mattson, ALJ Galvin, and Ed Quan of the Energy Division.

6. Parties may address at formal hearing, in opening briefs and in reply briefs whether or not the comment period on the proposed decision should be reduced, and shall state the minimum number of days they believe necessary for filing comments on the proposed decision.



**ATTACHMENT A**

**OFFICIAL NOTICE OF DOCUMENTS IN RULEMAKING 00-10-002  
FROM INVESTIGATION 00-11-001  
ON VOLTAGE REDUCTION ISSUE**

Official notice is proposed in R.00-10-002 of the following documents filed in Investigation 00-11-001:

1. Comments of Pacific Gas and Electric Company in Response to July 5, 2001 Assigned Commissioner's Ruling (dated and filed July 10, 2001).
2. Comments of Southern California Edison Company (U-338-E) on the Proposed Conservation Voltage Reduction Program (dated and filed July 10, 2001).
3. Comments of San Diego Gas & Electric Company (U 902 E) on the Assigned Commissioner's Ruling dated July 5, 2001 (dated and filed July 10, 2001).
4. Comments of the California Energy Commission on the Assigned Commissioner's Ruling dated July 17, 2001 (dated July 20, 2001 and filed July 23, 2001).
5. Comments of The Utility Reform Network (TURN) on the Utility Proposals for Conservation Voltage Reduction (dated and filed July 23, 2001).
6. Supplemental Comments of Pacific Gas and Electric Company on Voltage Reduction (dated and filed July 23, 2001).
7. Reply Comments of Southern California Edison Company (U-338-E) on the Proposed Conservation Voltage Reduction Program (dated and filed August 1, 2001).

**(End of Attachment A.)**

**ATTACHMENT B**

**SCHEDULE IN R.00-10-002  
ON VOLTAGE REDUCTION ISSUE**

<b>DATE</b>	<b>EVENT</b>
October 1, 2001	Serve proposed direct testimony
October 5, 2001	Serve proposed rebuttal testimony
9:30 a.m. October 11, 2001	Formal Hearing
October 17, 2001	File and serve opening briefs
October 22, 2001	File and serve reply briefs
November 14, 2001	File and serve proposed decision (PD)
November 26, 2001	File and serve comments on PD
December 3, 2001	File and serve reply comments on PD
December 11, 2001	Commission decision

**(End of Attachment B.)**

**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

I certify that I have by electronic mail this day served a true copy of the original attached Presiding Officer and Assigned Commissioner's Ruling on Voltage Reduction Issue on all parties of record in this proceeding or their attorneys of record on the Phase 2 service list for R.00-10-002, and by electronic mail and regular postal service on the service list for I.00-11-001.

Dated September 21, 2001, at San Francisco, California.

/s/ MAUREEN S. LITTLE

Maureen S. Little

**N O T I C E**

Parties should notify the Process Office, Public Utilities Commission, 505 Van Ness Avenue, Room 2000, San Francisco, CA 94102, of any change of address to insure that they continue to receive documents. You must indicate the proceeding number on the service list on which your name appears.

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The Commission's policy is to schedule hearings (meetings, workshops, etc.) in locations that are accessible to people with disabilities. To verify that a particular location is accessible, call: Calendar Clerk (415) 703-1203.

If specialized accommodations for the disabled are needed, e.g., sign language interpreters, those making the arrangements must call the Public Advisor at (415) 703-2074, TTY 1-866-836-7825 or (415) 703-5282 at least three working days in advance of the event.