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

Order Instituting Rulemaking to  
Modernize the Electric Grid for a High  
Distributed Energy Resources Future.

Rulemaking 21-06-017

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGES' RULING  
SEEKING ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FROM  
INVESTOR-OWNED UTILITIES ON THEIR  
DISTRIBUTION PLANNING PROCESS**

The Ruling addresses Track 1, Phase 1 issues in this proceeding.

The Ruling requires the three large electric investor-owned utilities (IOUs)<sup>1</sup> to respond to questions on their Distribution Planning Processes (DPP). Within 30 days of the date of issuance of the Ruling, each IOU shall file and serve their answers to the questions listed in Attachment 1 of this Ruling.

The California Public Utilities Commission (Commission or CPUC) initiated this Rulemaking (R.) 21-06-017) in July 2021 to prepare the electric grid for a high number of distributed energy resources (DERs), including those specific to transportation electrification and as defined in Assembly Bill (AB) 327 (Perea, 2013) and Public Utilities (Pub. Util.) Code Section 769.1.<sup>2</sup> The Commission launched R.21-06-017 to address the continuing actions from R.14-08-013 and R.14-10-003 and also to study the impacts of high penetrations of

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<sup>1</sup> Three large IOUs are Pacific Gas & Electric Company, San Diego Gas & Electric Company, and Southern California Edison Company.

<sup>2</sup> All further references to "Section" and "Code" in this assigned Commissioner's Scoping Memo and Ruling are references to Sections of the Pub. Util. Code unless otherwise noted.

DERs on the grid and identify strategies for planning and forecasting distribution system investments necessary to support a large number of DERs on the grid in the future, which we now refer to as a High DER Grid future.

On November 15, 2021, an Assigned Commissioner's Scoping Memo and Ruling (Scoping Memo) identified issues in this proceeding divided into three distinct Tracks. The three tracks are Track 1- Distribution Planning Process (DPP) and Data Improvements; Track 2- Distribution System Operator (DSO) Roles and Responsibilities; and Track- 3 Smart Inverter Operationalization and Grid Modernization Planning. The issues in Tracks 1 and 3 will be conducted in two phases. The Scoping Memo also identified near-term tasks under Track 1, Phase 1 of the proceeding.

Per the Scoping Memo Track 1, Phase 1, it is within the scope of the proceeding to ask for information and clarity on whether the current electric DPP is adequate for selecting and deploying both traditional distribution infrastructure and DER solutions to meet grid requirements and minimize utility customer costs accurately. For a High DER future, electrification is one of many drivers determining how IOUs need to plan the system.

IOUs must look at all drivers in an integrated manner, beyond just the load impacts, such as local engagement and planning, climate change, wildfire risk, resiliency, reliability, aging infrastructure, customer demographics, equity, and geographic characteristics. Therefore, the Commission needs to understand each IOU's comprehensive, holistic, and engineering approach in investment planning for the High DER Grid future.

Consistent with the goals and objectives of this proceeding, the Commission is posing additional questions to the IOUs about their electric distribution planning processes. The questions in Attachment 1 of the Ruling

inquire about the need to identify barriers and opportunities that equitably affect the distribution of costs; therefore, before the Commission considers any further changes and improvements to the IOUs' DPP, we first need to examine the existing processes.

Within 30 days of the issuance of this Ruling, each of the three large electric IOUs shall file and serve their answers to questions in Attachment 1 of this Ruling.

**IT IS RULED** that within 30 days of the issuance date of this Ruling, Pacific Gas & Electric Company, San Diego Gas & Electric Company, and Southern California Edison Company shall each file and serve answers to questions in Attachment 1 of the Ruling.

Dated March 9, 2023, at San Francisco, California.

/s/ MANISHA LAKHANPAL

Manisha Lakhanpal  
Administrative Law Judge

/s/ KELLY A HYMES

Kelly A. Hymes  
Administrative Law Judge