



California Public Utilities Commission
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MEDIA ADVISORY

Docket #: R.18-03-011

CPUC ISSUES PROPOSALS ON RESILIENCY PLANNING FOR COMMUNICATIONS COMPANIES

SAN FRANCISCO, March 6, 2020 - California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) President Marybel Batjer today issued proposals for maintaining resilient and dependable communications networks during catastrophic events that will better aid emergency responders and ensure the public's ability to reliably communicate and receive critical information.

CPUC President Batjer's Assigned Commissioner's Ruling solicits responses from parties to the CPUC's Emergency Disaster Relief proceeding on the question of whether the CPUC should require communications service providers to deploy backup power at key facilities across the state, given the reach and impact of possible emergencies such as earthquakes, floods, wildfires, and utility Public Safety Power Shut-off events. The Ruling also solicits responses from parties on whether the CPUC should adopt rules mandating communications providers share the location of critical facilities with emergency responders, fulfill additional requirements for disaster preparedness, and be required to report communications outages to the CPUC during a disaster.

"In times of disaster, Californians rely on their phones and the Internet, whether wireline or wireless, to receive emergency notifications, access evacuation and outage maps, contact family and friends, and reach emergency responders. Without access to these critical services, the people of this state cannot receive and act on vital information that can keep them safe in an emergency," said President Batjer.



The proposals issued today are an effort to develop a uniform and structured approach for ensuring communications providers are meeting every facet of their responsibility to provide safe and reliable service to Californians in future disasters. The proposals cover three overarching areas of concern:

1. **Ensuring Resiliency in Communications Provider Networks:** Proposes that providers have on-site emergency backup power to support all essential communications equipment necessary to maintain service for a minimum of 72 hours immediately following a power outage. Service must be sufficient to maintain access for all customers to 911 service, to receive emergency notifications, and to access web browsing for emergency notices.
2. **Critical Facility Location Information Sharing:** Proposes that providers annually submit to the CPUC GIS information with the specific location of network facilities and backhaul routes. The CPUC would share this information with state and local emergency responders ahead of a disaster to improve their situational awareness, plan fire lines, defend these vital facilities against wildfire damage, and aid in restoration where damage occurs. Further, knowing the location of cell sites, including whether sites are operational, will enhance the ability of emergency responders to effectively target the distribution of emergency alerts.
3. **Emergency Operations Plans:** Proposes that providers submit Emergency Operations Plans to the CPUC and that the plans are shared with the relevant emergency responders. Additionally, proposes providers take necessary steps to prepare for a disaster and communicate critical outage information to emergency responders and the public in times of disaster.

The Assigned Commissioner's Ruling with the proposals is available at <http://docs.cpuc.ca.gov/SearchRes.aspx?docformat=ALL&docid=328685793>.

Comments by parties on the proposals are due on March 27, 2020, and reply comments are due April 3, 2020.

Members of the public can submit comments on the Docket Card for the proceeding at <https://bit.ly/2PNplhm>.



The CPUC regulates services and utilities, protects consumers, safeguards the environment, and assures Californians' access to safe and reliable utility infrastructure and services. For more information on the CPUC, please visit www.cpuc.ca.gov.

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