

**ATTACHMENT K**  
**REGIONAL SYSTEM PLANNING PROCESS**

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## 1. Overview

This Attachment describes the regional system planning process conducted by the ISO, as well as the coordination with transmission-owning entities in, or other entities interconnected to, the New England Transmission System and neighboring systems to ensure the reliability of the New England Transmission System and compliance with national and regional planning standards, criteria and procedures, while accounting for market performance and economic, environmental and other considerations, as may be agreed upon from time to time. The New England Transmission System is comprised of PTF, Non-PTF, OTF and MTF within the New England Control Area that is under the ISO's operational authority or control pursuant to the ISO Tariff and/or various transmission operating agreements. This Attachment describes the regional system planning process for the PTF conducted by the ISO pursuant to its responsibilities defined in the Tariff, the various transmission operating agreements and this Attachment. Additional details regarding the regional system planning process are also provided in the ISO New England Planning Procedures and ISO New England Operating Procedures, which are available on the ISO's website.

The ISO shall conduct the regional system planning process for the PTF in coordination with the transmission-owning entities in, or other entities interconnected to, the New England Transmission System and neighboring systems, consistent with the rights and

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obligations defined in the Tariff, applicable transmission operating agreements and this Attachment. As described in this Attachment’s Section 6 and Appendix 1, entitled “Attachment K - Local System Planning Process”, the PTOs are responsible for the Local System Planning (“LSP”) process for the Non-PTF in the New England Transmission System. As also described in Section 6, and pursuant to the Tariff and/or transmission operating agreements, the OTOs and MTOs are required to participate in the ISO’s regional system planning process for reliability purposes and to perform and/or support studies of the impact of regional system planning projects on their respective OTF and MTF.

The regional system planning process described in this Attachment provides for the ISO to undertake assessments of the needs of the PTF system on a systemwide or specific area basis. These assessments shall be referred to as Needs Assessments, as described in Section 4.1 of this Attachment. The ISO shall incorporate market responses that have met the criteria specified in Section 4.2(a) of this Attachment into the Needs Assessments or the Regional System Plan (“RSP”), described below. Where market responses incorporated into the Needs Assessments do not eliminate or address the needs identified by the ISO in Needs Assessments or the RSP, the ISO shall develop or evaluate, pursuant to Section 4.2(b) of this Attachment, regulated transmission solutions proposed in response to the needs identified by the ISO.

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Pursuant to Sections 3 and 7 of this Attachment, the ISO shall develop the RSP for approval by the ISO Board of Directors following stakeholder input through the Planning Advisory Committee established pursuant to Section 2 of this Attachment. The RSP is a compilation of the regional system planning process activities conducted by the ISO during a given year. The RSP shall address needs of the PTF system determined by the ISO through Needs Assessments initiated and updated on an ongoing basis by the ISO to:

- (i) account for changes in the PTF system conditions;
- (ii) ensure reliability of the PTF system;
- (iii) comply with national and regional planning standards, criteria and procedures; and
- (iv) account for market performance and economic, environmental and other considerations as may be agreed upon from time to time.

As more fully described in Section 3 of this Attachment, the RSP shall identify:

- (i) PTF system reliability and market efficiency needs,
- (ii) the requirements and characteristics of the types of resources that may satisfy PTF system reliability and market efficiency needs to provide stakeholders an opportunity to develop and propose efficient market responses to meet the needs identified in Needs Assessments; and
- (iii) regulated transmission solutions to meet the needs identified in Needs Assessments where market responses do not address such needs or additional transmission infrastructure may be required to comply with national and regional planning standards, criteria and procedures or provide market efficiency benefits in accordance with Attachment N of this OATT.

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In addition, the RSP shall also provide information on a broad variety of power system requirements that serves as input for reviewing the design of the markets and the overall economic performance of the system. The RSP shall also describe the coordination of the ISO's regional system plans with regional, local and inter-area planning activities.

Pursuant to Section 3.6 of this Attachment, the ISO shall also develop, maintain and post on its website a cumulative list reflecting the regulated transmission solutions proposed in response to Needs Assessments (the "RSP Project List"). The RSP Project List shall be a cumulative representation of the regional transmission planning expansion efforts ongoing in New England.

## **2. Planning Advisory Committee**

### **2.1 Establishment**

A Planning Advisory Committee shall be established by the ISO to perform the functions set forth in Section 2.2 of this Attachment. It shall have a Chair and Secretary, who shall be appointed by the chief executive officer of the ISO or his or her designee. Before appointing an individual to the position of the Chair or Secretary, the ISO shall notify the Planning Advisory Committee of the proposed assignment and, consistent with its personnel practices, provide any other information about the individual reasonably requested by the Planning Advisory Committee. The chief executive officer of the ISO or his or her designee shall

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consider the input of the members of the Planning Advisory Committee in selecting, removing or replacing such officers. The Planning Advisory Committee shall be advisory only and shall have no formal voting protocol.

The ISO may form subcommittees that, at the discretion of the ISO, may report to the Planning Advisory Committee.

## **2.2 Role of Planning Advisory Committee**

The Planning Advisory Committee may provide input and feedback to the ISO concerning the regional system planning process, including the development of and review of Needs Assessments, the conduct of Solutions Studies, the development of the RSP, and updates to the RSP Project List. Specifically, the Planning Advisory Committee serves to review and provide input and comment on: (i) the development of the RSP, (ii) assumptions for studies, (iii) the results of Needs Assessments and Solutions Studies, and (iv) potential market responses to the needs identified by the ISO in a Needs Assessment or the RSP. The Planning Advisory Committee, with the assistance of and in coordination with the ISO, serves also to identify and prioritize requests for Economic Studies to be performed by the ISO, and provides input and feedback to the ISO concerning the conduct of Economic Studies, including the criteria and assumptions for such studies. Based on input and feedback provided by the Planning Advisory



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Committee to the ISO, the ISO shall refer to the appropriate NEPOOL technical committees, including but not limited to, the Markets, Reliability and Transmission Committees, issues and concerns identified by the Planning Advisory Committee for further investigation and consideration of potential changes to rules and procedures.

### **2.3 Membership**

Any entity, including State regulators or agencies and, if in existence, a Regional State Committee or similarly situated entity, as specified in Attachment N of the OATT, may designate a member to the Planning Advisory Committee by providing written notice to the Secretary of that Committee identifying the name of the entity represented by the member and the member's name, address, telephone number, facsimile number and electronic mail address. The entity may remove or replace such member at any time by written notice to the Secretary of the Planning Advisory Committee.

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## 2.4 Procedures

### (a) Notice of Meetings

Prior to the beginning of each year, the ISO shall list on the ISO Calendar, which is available on the ISO's website, the proposed meeting dates for the Planning Advisory Committee for each month of the year. Prior to a Planning Advisory Committee meeting, the ISO shall provide notice to the Planning Advisory Committee by electronic email with the date, time, format for the meeting (*i.e.*, in person or teleconference), and the purpose for the meeting.

### (b) Frequency of Meetings

Meetings of the Planning Advisory Committee shall be held as frequently as necessary to serve the purposes stated in Section 2.2 of this Attachment and as further specified elsewhere in this Attachment, generally expected to be no less than four (4) times per year.

### (c) Availability of Meeting Materials

The ISO shall post materials for Planning Advisory Committee meetings on the Planning Advisory Committee section on the ISO's website prior to meetings. The materials for the Planning Advisory Committee meetings shall be made available to the members of the Planning Advisory

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Committee subject to protections warranted by confidentiality requirements of the ISO New England Information Policy set forth in Attachment D of the ISO Tariff and Critical Energy Infrastructure Information (“CEII”) policy as further described in Section 2.4(d) of this Attachment.

**(d) Access to Planning-Related Materials that Contain CEII**

CEII is defined as specific engineering, vulnerability, or detailed design information about proposed or existing critical infrastructure (physical or virtual) that:

- (i) Relates details about the production, generation, transportation, transmission, or distribution of energy;
- (ii) Could be useful to a person in planning an attack on critical infrastructure;
- (iii) Is exempt from mandatory disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. 552; and
- (iv) Does not simply give the location of critical infrastructure.

CEII pertains to existing and proposed system and assets, whether physical or virtual, the incapacity or destruction of which would negatively affect security, economic security, public health or safety, or any combination of those matters. CEII does not include information that is otherwise publicly available. Simplified maps and general information

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on engineering, vulnerability, or design that relate to production, generation, transportation, transmission or distribution of energy shall not constitute CEII.

Planning-related materials determined to be CEII will be posted on the ISO's password-protected website. To obtain access to planning-related materials determined to be CEII, the entity seeking to obtain such access must contact the ISO's Customer Service department. Authorized Market Participants or their representatives, such as consultants, are bound by the ISO New England Information Policy and will be able to access CEII materials through the ISO's password-protected website. State and federal governmental agency employees and their consultants will be able to access such materials through the ISO's password-protected website upon submittal of a signed non-disclosure agreement, which is available on the ISO's website. Personnel of the ERO, NPCC, other regional transmission organizations or independent system operators, and transmission owners from neighboring regions will be able to access CEII materials pursuant to governing agreements, rules and protocols. All external requests by other persons for planning-related materials determined to be CEII shall be recorded and tracked by ISO's Customer Services staff. Such requestors

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will be able to obtain access to CEII documents filed with the Commission pursuant to the Commission's regulations governing access to CEII. To the extent a requestor seeks access to planning-related material that is not filed with the Commission, such requestor shall comply with the requirements provided in the CEII procedures of the ISO, available on the ISO's website, prior to receiving access to CEII information. Upon compliance with the ISO's CEII procedures, the ISO shall grant the requestor access to the planning-related CEII document through direct distribution or access to the ISO password-protected website.

## **2.5 Local System Planning Process**

The LSP process described in Appendix 1 to this Attachment applies to the transmission system planning for the Non-PTF in the New England Transmission System. The PTOs will utilize interested members of the Planning Advisory Committee for advisory stakeholder input in the LSP process that will meet, as needed, at the conclusion of, or independent of, scheduled Planning Advisory Committee meetings. The LSP meeting agenda and meeting materials will be developed by representatives of the pertinent PTOs and PTO representatives will chair the LSP meeting. The ISO will post the LSP agenda and materials for LSP

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meetings of the Planning Advisory Committee in the same manner that such information is posted for the meetings on the regional system planning process.

### **3. RSP: Principles, Scope, and Contents**

#### **3.1 Description of RSP**

The ISO shall develop the RSP based on periodic comprehensive assessments (conducted not less than every third year) of the PTF systemwide needs to maintain the reliability of the New England Transmission System while accounting for market efficiency, economic, environmental and other considerations, as agreed upon from time to time. The ISO shall update the RSP to reflect the results of ongoing Needs Assessments conducted pursuant to Section 4.1 of this Attachment. The RSP shall also account for projected improvements to the PTF that are needed to maintain system reliability in accordance with national and regional standards and the operation of efficient markets under a set of planning assumptions.

The RSP shall, among other things:

- (i) describe, in a consolidated manner, the assessment of the PTF system needs, the results of such assessments, and the projected improvements;
- (ii) provide the projected annual and peak demands for electric energy for a five- to ten-year horizon, the needs for resources over this period and how such resources are expected to be provided;

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- (iii) specify the physical characteristics of the physical solutions that can meet the needs defined in the Needs Assessments and include information on market responses that can address them; and
  - (iv) provide sufficient information to allow Market Participants to assess the quantity, general locations, operating characteristics and required availability criteria of the type of incremental supply or demand-side resources, or merchant transmission projects, that would satisfy the identified needs or that may serve to modify, offset or defer proposed regulated transmission upgrades.

The RSP shall also include a description of proposed regulated transmission solutions that, based on the Solutions Studies described in Section 4.2 of this Attachment, may meet the needs identified in the Needs Assessments. To this end, as further described in Section 3.6 below, the ISO shall develop and maintain a RSP Project List, a cumulative listing of proposed regulated transmission solutions classified, to the extent known, as Reliability Transmission Upgrades and Market Efficiency Transmission Upgrades that may meet those needs. The RSP shall also provide reasons for any new regulated transmission solutions or Transmission Upgrades included in the Project List, any change in status of a regulated transmission solution or Transmission Upgrade in the Project List, or for any removal of regulated transmission solutions or Transmission Upgrades from the Project List that are known as of that time.

Each RSP shall be built upon the previous year's RSP.

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### **3.2 Baseline of RSP**

The RSP shall account for: (i) all projects that have met milestones, including market responses and regulated transmission solutions (e.g., planned demand-side projects, generation and transmission projects, Merchant Transmission Facilities, and Elective Transmission Upgrades) as determined by the ISO, in collaboration with the Planning Advisory Committee, pursuant to Sections 4.1 and 4.2 of this Attachment; and (ii) the requirements for system operation and restoration services, not including the development of a system operations or restoration plan, which is outside the scope of the regional system planning process.

### **3.3 RSP Planning Horizon and Parameters**

The RSP shall be based on a five- to ten-year planning horizon, and reflect five- to ten-year capacity and load forecasts.

The RSP shall conform to: Good Utility Practice; applicable Commission compliance requirements related to the regional system planning process; applicable reliability principles, guidelines, criteria, rules, procedures and standards of the ERO, NPCC, and any of their successors; planning criteria adopted and/or developed by the ISO; Transmission Owner criteria, rules, standards, guides and policies developed by the Transmission Owner for its facilities consistent with the ISO planning criteria, the applicable criteria of the



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ERO and NPCC; local transmission planning criteria; and the ISO New England Planning Procedures and ISO New England Operating Procedures, as they may be amended from time to time (collectively, the “Planning and Reliability Criteria”).

### **3.4 Other RSP Principles**

The RSP shall be designed and implemented to: (i) avoid unnecessary duplication of facilities; (ii) identify facilities that are necessary to meet Planning and Reliability Criteria; (iii) avoid the imposition of unreasonable costs upon any Transmission Owner, Transmission Customer or other user of a transmission facility; (iv) take into account the legal and contractual rights and obligations of the Transmission Owners and the transmission-related legal and contractual rights and obligations of any other entity; (v) provide for coordination with existing transmission systems and with appropriate inter-area and local expansion plans; and (vi) properly coordinate with market responses, including, but not limited to generation, merchant transmission and demand-side responses.

### **3.5 Market Responses in RSP**

Market responses shall include investments in resources (*e.g.*, demand-side projects, generation and distributed generation) and Merchant Transmission Facilities, and shall be evaluated by the ISO, in consultation with the Planning Advisory Committee, pursuant to Sections 4.2(a) and 7 of this Attachment.

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In developing the RSP, the ISO shall account for market responses: (i) proposed by Market Participants as addressing needs (and any critical time constraints for addressing such needs) identified in a RSP or Needs Assessment, developed pursuant to Section 4.1 of this Attachment; and (ii) that have proved to be viable by meeting the criteria specified in Section 4.2(a) of this Attachment, as applicable.

Specifically, market responses that are identified to the ISO and are determined by the ISO, in consultation with the Planning Advisory Committee, to be sufficient to alleviate the need for a particular regulated transmission solution or Transmission Upgrade, based on the criteria specified in the pertinent Needs Assessment or RSP, and are judged by the ISO to be achievable within the required time period, shall be reflected in the next RSP and/or in a new or updated Needs Assessment. That particular regulated transmission solution or Transmission Upgrade may continue to be included in the appropriate category on the RSP Project List (as described in Section 3.6 below), subject to the ISO having the flexibility to indicate that the project should proceed at a later date or it may be removed if it is determined to be no longer needed. If the market response does not fully address the defined needs, or if additional transmission infrastructure is required to facilitate the efficient operation of the market, the

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RSP shall also include that particular regulated transmission solution or Transmission Upgrade, subject to the ISO having the flexibility to indicate that the Transmission Upgrade or regulated transmission solution should proceed at a later date and be modified, if necessary.

### **3.6 The RSP Project List**

#### **(a) Elements of the RSP Project List**

The RSP Project List shall identify regulated transmission solutions proposed in response to the needs identified in a RSP or Needs Assessments conducted pursuant to Section 4.1 of this Attachment. The RSP Project List shall identify the proposed regulated transmission solutions separately as either a Reliability Transmission Upgrade or a Market Efficiency Transmission Upgrade.

Within each category of the RSP Project List, the following subcategories will be utilized to indicate the status of each proposed regulated transmission solution in the evaluation process. These subcategories include: (i) Concept; (ii) Proposed; (iii) Planned; (iv) Under Construction; and (v) In-Service.

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“Concept” shall include a transmission project that is being considered by its proponent as a potential solution to meet a need identified by the ISO in a Needs Assessment or the RSP, but for which there is little or no analysis available to support the transmission project.

“Proposed” shall include a regulated transmission solution that (i) has been proposed in response to a specific need identified by the ISO in a Needs Assessment or the RSP and (ii) has been evaluated or further defined and developed in a Solutions Study, as specified in Section 4.2(b) of this Attachment, such that there is significant analysis that supports a determination by the ISO, as communicated to the Planning Advisory Committee, that the proposed regulated transmission solution would likely meet the need identified by the ISO in a Needs Assessment or the RSP, but has not received approval by the ISO under Section I.3.9 of the Tariff.

“Planned” shall include a Transmission Upgrade that has been approved by the ISO under Section I.3.9 of the Tariff.

“Under Construction” shall include a Transmission Upgrade that has received the approvals required under the Tariff and engineering and construction is underway.

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“In Service” shall include a Transmission Upgrade that has been placed in commercial operation.

Each proposed regulated transmission solution or Transmission Upgrade shall also be cross-referenced to the specific systemwide or area needs identified in a Needs Assessment or RSP.

For completeness, the RSP Project List shall also include transmission facilities (as determined under the ISO interconnection process specified in this OATT) to be built to accommodate new generation, merchant transmission, and elective transmission interconnections that have satisfied the requirements of this OATT.

**(b) Periodic Updating of RSP Project List**

The RSP Project List will be updated by the ISO periodically by adding, removing or revising regulated transmission solutions or Transmission Upgrades in consultation with the Planning Advisory Committee and, as appropriate, the Reliability Committee.

Updating of the RSP Project List shall be considered an update of the RSP to be reflected in the next RSP, as appropriate, pursuant to Section 3.1 of this Attachment.

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(c) **RSP Project List Updating Procedures and Criteria**

As part of the periodic updating of the RSP Project List, the ISO: (i) shall modify (in accordance with the provisions of this Attachment) regulated transmission solutions or Transmission Upgrades to reflect changes to the PTF system configurations, including ongoing investments by Market Participants or other stakeholders; (ii) may add to and classify accordingly, regulated transmission solutions; and (iii) may remove from the RSP Project List regulated transmission solutions or Transmission Upgrades previously identified in the RSP Project List if the ISO determines that the need for the proposed regulated transmission solution or the approved Transmission Upgrade no longer exists or is no longer feasible. With regard to (iii) above, this may include a removal of a regulated transmission solution or Transmission Upgrade because a market response meeting the need reaches the maturity specified in Section 4.2(a) of this Attachment and has been determined, pursuant to Section 4.2(a) of this Attachment, to meet the need described in the pertinent Needs Assessment or RSP. In doing so, the ISO shall consult with and consider the input from the Planning Advisory Committee and, as appropriate, the Reliability Committee.

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If a regulated transmission solution or Transmission Upgrade is removed from the RSP Project List by the ISO, the entity responsible for the construction of the regulated transmission solution or Transmission Upgrade shall be reimbursed for any costs prudently incurred or prudently committed to be incurred (plus a reasonable return on investment at existing FERC-approved ROE levels) in connection with the planning, designing, engineering, siting, permitting, procuring and other preparation for construction, and/or construction of the regulated transmission solution or Transmission Upgrade proposed for removal from the RSP Project List. The provisions of Schedule 12 of this OATT shall apply to any cost reimbursement under this Section. Prior to finalizing the RSP, the ISO shall provide the Planning Advisory Committee with written information explaining the reasons for any removal under this Section.

**(d) Posting of LSP Project Status**

Each PTO will be individually responsible for publicly posting and updating the status of its respective LSP and the transmission projects arising therefrom on its company website. The ISO's posting of the RSP Project Lists will include links to each PTO's specific LSP posting to be provided to the ISO by the PTOs.

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**4. Procedures for the Conduct of Needs Assessments, Treatment of Market Responses and Evaluation of Regulated Transmission Solutions**

**4.1 Needs Assessments**

On a regular and ongoing basis, the ISO, in coordination with the PTOs and the Planning Advisory Committee, shall conduct assessments (i.e., Needs Assessments) of the adequacy of the PTF system, as a whole or in part, to maintain the reliability of such facilities while promoting the operation of efficient wholesale electric markets in New England. A Needs Assessment shall analyze whether the PTF in the New England Transmission System: (i) meet applicable reliability standards; (ii) have adequate transfer capability to support local, regional, and inter-regional reliability; (iii) support the efficient operation of the wholesale electric markets; (iv) are sufficient to integrate new resources and loads on an aggregate or regional basis; or (v) otherwise examine various aspects of its performance and capability. A Needs Assessment shall also identify: (i) the location and nature of any potential problems with respect to the PTF and (ii) situations that significantly affect the reliable and efficient operation of the PTF along with any critical time constraints for addressing the needs of the PTF to facilitate the development of market responses and to initiate the pursuit of regulated transmission solutions.



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**(a) Triggers for Needs Assessments**

The ISO, in coordination with the PTOs and the Planning Advisory Committee, shall perform Needs Assessments, *inter alia*, if:

- (i) a need for additional transfer capability is identified by the ISO in its ongoing evaluation of the PTF's adequacy and performance;
- (ii) a need for additional transfer capability is identified as a result of an ERO and/or NPCC reliability assessment or more stringent publicly available local reliability criteria, if any;
- (iii) constraints or available transfer capability limitations that are identified possibly as a result of generation additions or retirements, evaluation of load forecasts or proposals for the addition of transmission facilities in the New England Control Area;
- (iv) as requested by a stakeholder pursuant to the provisions of Section 4.1(b) of this Attachment; or
- (v) as otherwise deemed appropriate by the ISO as warranting such an assessment.

**(b) Requests by Stakeholders for Needs Assessments for Economic Considerations**

The ISO's stakeholders may request the ISO to initiate a Needs Assessment to evaluate potential regulated transmission solutions or market responses or investments that could result in (i) a net reduction in total production cost to supply system load based on the factors specified in Attachment N of this OATT, (ii) reduced congestion, or (iii) the

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integration of new resources and/or loads on an aggregate or regional basis  
(an “Economic Study”).

Requests for Economic Studies shall be submitted, considered and  
prioritized as follows:

- (i) By no later than April 1 of each year, any stakeholder may submit to the ISO for public posting on the ISO’s website a request for an Economic Study.
- (ii) The ISO shall thereafter add any of its own proposals for Economic Studies. The ISO shall also develop a rough work scope and cost estimate for all requested Economic Studies, and develop preliminary prioritization based on the ISO’s perceived regional and/or, as coordinated with the applicable neighboring system, inter-area benefits to assist stakeholders in the prioritization of Economic Studies.
- (iii) By no later than May 1 of each year, the ISO shall provide the foregoing information to the Planning Advisory Committee, and a Planning Advisory Committee meeting shall be held at which Economic Study proponents will provide an explanation of their request.
- (iv) By no later than June 1 of each year, the ISO shall hold a meeting of the Planning Advisory Committee for the members of the Planning Advisory Committee to discuss, identify and prioritize, as further facilitated by the ISO’s preparation of a straw priority list to be further discussed at such meeting, up to three (3) Economic Studies (the costs of which will be recovered by the ISO pursuant to Section IV.A of the Tariff) to be performed by the ISO in a given year, taking into consideration their impact on the ISO budget and other priorities.

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- (v) The ISO and the Planning Advisory Committee may agree to hold additional meetings to further discuss and resolve any issue concerning the substance of the Economic Studies themselves and/or their prioritization.
  - (vi) If the Planning Advisory Committee, after discussions between the Planning Advisory Committee and ISO management, is not able to prioritize the Economic Studies to be performed by the ISO in a given year, any member of the Planning Advisory Committee must submit a request for Regional Planning Dispute Resolution Process pursuant to Section 12 of this Attachment, such request to be submitted no later than August 30, to resolve the issues concerning the substance of the Economic Studies themselves and/or their prioritization.
  - (vii) The ISO will issue a notice to the Planning Advisory Committee detailing the prioritization of the Economic Studies as identified by the Planning Advisory Committee or, if a request for Regional Planning Dispute Resolution Process is submitted pursuant to Section 4.1.(b)(vi), as determined through that Process.

The foregoing timelines are subject to adjustment as determined by the ISO in coordination with the Planning Advisory Committee. The ISO will provide periodic updates on the status of Economic Studies to the Planning Advisory Committee.

Economic Study requests not within the three identified to be performed in a given year shall be treated in the same manner as a request for Elective Transmission Upgrade described in the OATT.

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**(c) Notice of Initiation of Needs Assessments**

Prior to its commencement, the ISO shall provide notice of the initiation of a Needs Assessment to the Planning Advisory Committee consistent with Section 2 of this Attachment.

**(d) Preparation of Needs Assessment**

Needs Assessments may examine resource adequacy, transmission adequacy, projected congestion levels and other relevant factors as may be agreed upon from time to time. Needs Assessments shall also consider the views, if any, of the Planning Advisory Committee, State regulators or agencies, a Regional State Committee, if in existence, the Market Advisor to the ISO Board of Directors, and the ISO Board of Directors. A corresponding assessment shall be performed by the PTOs to identify any needs relating to the Non-PTF transmission facilities (of whatever voltage) that could affect the provision of regional transmission service over the PTF.

**(e) Needs Assessment Study Groups**

For the development of the Needs Assessments, the ISO may form a targeted study group of representatives of affected stakeholders based on the scope of the particular Needs Assessment. Participation in such study

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groups is voluntary and is intended to provide an opportunity to affected stakeholders for early involvement in the regional system planning process. The ISO may form sub-working groups with limited participation due to ISO New England Information Policy/Code of Conduct and CEII constraints.

**(f) Input from the Planning Advisory Committee**

Meetings of the Planning Advisory Committee shall be convened to identify additional considerations relating to a Needs Assessment that were not identified in support of initiating the assessment, and to provide input on the Needs Assessment's scope, assumptions and procedures, consistent with the responsibilities of the Planning Advisory Committee as set forth in Section 2.2 of this Attachment.

**(g) Publication of Needs Assessment and Response Thereto**

The ISO shall report the results of Needs Assessments to the Planning Advisory Committee, subject to CEII constraints. Needs Assessments containing CEII will be posted on the ISO's password-protected website consistent with Section 2.4(d) of this Attachment. Needs Assessments will identify high-level functional requirements and characteristics for regulated transmission solutions and market responses that can meet the

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needs described in the assessment. The ISO will also present the Needs Assessments in appropriate market forums to facilitate market responses. Generally, following a Needs Assessment, the ISO will evaluate the adequacy of proposed regulated solutions by performing Solutions Studies, as described in Section 4.2 of this Attachment.

#### **4.2 Treatment of Market Responses and Evaluation of Regulated Transmission Solutions**

##### **(a) Treatment of Market Solutions in Needs Assessments**

The ISO shall reflect proposed market responses in the regional system planning process. Market responses may include, but are not limited to, resources (e.g., demand-side projects and distributed generation) and Merchant Transmission Facilities.

Specifically, the ISO shall incorporate or update information regarding resources in Needs Assessments that have been proposed and (i) have cleared in a Forward Capacity Auction pursuant to Market Rule 1 of the ISO Tariff, (ii) have been selected in, and are contractually bound by, a state-sponsored Request For Proposals, or (iii) have a financially binding obligation pursuant to a contract. With respect to (ii) or (iii) above, the proponent of the market response shall inform the ISO, in writing, of its

selection or its assumption of financially binding obligations, respectively.

The ISO shall incorporate or update information regarding a proposed Merchant Transmission Facility or Elective Transmission Upgrade in a Needs Assessment at a time after the studies corresponding to the Merchant Transmission Facility or Elective Transmission Upgrade are completed (including receipt of approval under Section I.3.9 of the Tariff) and a commercial operation date has been ascertained, with the exception of Elective Transmission Upgrades that are proposed in conjunction with the interconnection of a resource, which shall be considered at the same time as the proposed resource is considered in the Needs Assessment.

**(b) Evaluation and Development of Regulated Transmission Solutions in Solutions Studies**

The ISO, in coordination with the proponents of regulated transmission solutions and other interested or affected stakeholders, shall conduct or participate in studies (“Solutions Studies”) to evaluate whether proposed regulated transmission solutions meet the PTF system needs identified in Needs Assessments. The ISO, in coordination with affected stakeholders shall also identify regulated transmission projects for addressing the needs identified in Needs Assessments.

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The ISO may form ISO-led targeted study groups to conduct Solutions Studies. Such study groups will include representatives of the proponents of regulated transmission solutions and other interested or affected stakeholders. Through this process, the ISO may identify the most cost-effective and reliable solutions for the region that meets a need identified in a Needs Assessment. These solutions may differ from a transmission solution proposed by a transmission owner.

Proponents of regulated transmission proposals in response to Needs Assessments shall also identify any LSP plans that require coordination with their regulated transmission proposals addressing the PTF system needs.

**(c) Notice of Initiation of a Solutions Study**

The ISO shall provide notice of the initiation and scope of a Solutions Study to the Planning Advisory Committee.

**(d) Classification of Regulated Transmission Solutions**

As described in Section 3.1 and 3.6(a) of this Attachment, proposed regulated transmission solutions determined by the ISO, in consultation with the Planning Advisory Committee, to address needs identified in



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Needs Assessments shall be classified as either a Reliability Transmission Upgrade and/or a Market Efficiency Transmission Upgrade pursuant to the standards set forth in Attachment N of this OATT.

**(e) Inclusion of Results of Solutions Studies in the RSP**

The results of Solutions Studies will be reported to the Planning Advisory Committee and will, as appropriate, be reflected in the RSP and/or its Project List, as it is updated from time to time in accordance with this Attachment.

**5. Supply of Information and Data Required for Regional System Planning**

The Transmission Owners, Generator Owners, Transmission Customers, Market Participants and other entities requesting transmission or interconnection service or proposing the integration of facilities to PTF in the New England Transmission System or alternatives to such facilities, and stakeholders requesting a Needs Assessment pursuant to Section 4.1 of this Attachment, shall supply, as required by the Tariff, the Participants Agreement, MPSAs, applicable transmission operating agreements, and/or other existing agreements, protocols and procedures, or upon request by the ISO, and subject to required CEII and confidentiality protections as specified in Section 2.4 of this Attachment, any information (including cost estimates) and data that is reasonably required to prepare an RSP or to perform a Needs Assessment or Solutions Study.

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## **6. Regional, Local and Inter-Area Coordination**

### **6.1 Regional Coordination**

The ISO shall conduct the regional system planning process for the PTF in coordination with the transmission-owning entities in, or other entities interconnected to, the New England Transmission System consistent with the rights and obligations defined in the ISO OATT, applicable transmission operating agreements or protocols, and/or this Attachment. Pursuant to Section II.49 of this OATT and Sections 3.02, 3.05 and 3.09 of the TOA, the ISO has operating authority or control over all PTF and Non-PTF within the New England Control Area, which are utilized for the provision of transmission service under this OATT. The ISO also has operating authority or control over the United States portions of the HVDC ties to Quebec and over Merchant Transmission Facilities and Other Transmission Facilities, pursuant to this OATT or applicable transmission operating agreements or protocols. The ISO, however, is not responsible for the planning of the Non-PTF, OTF and MTF. As provided in Section 6.2 and Appendix 1 of this Attachment, the PTOs are responsible for the planning of the Non-PTF and coordinating such planning efforts with the ISO. Pursuant to the OATT and/or applicable transmission operating agreements or protocols, the transmission owners of OTF and MTF are required to participate in

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the ISO's regional system planning process and perform and/or support studies of the impacts of regional system projects on their respective facilities.

## **6.2 Local Coordination**

The regional system planning process shall be conducted and the annual RSP shall be developed in coordination with the local system plans of the PTOs. In accordance with the TOA and OATT provisions identified in Section 6.1 of this Attachment, the PTOs have responsibility for planning Non-PTF. The PTOs conduct planning of Non-PTF using the LSP process outlined in Section 2.5 and Appendix 1 of this Attachment, in coordination with the ISO, other entities interconnected with the New England Transmission System, Transmission Customers and stakeholders, and in accordance with the provisions in the TOA, the OATT and the Planning and Reliability Criteria. The openness and transparency of the LSP process is intended to be consistent with the regional system planning process.

## **6.3 Inter-Area Coordination**

The regional system planning process shall be conducted and the annual RSP shall be developed in coordination with the similar plans of the surrounding ISOs/RTOs and Control Areas pursuant to the Northeastern ISO/RTO Planning Coordination Protocol and other agreements with neighboring systems and

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NPCC. Inter-area planning studies shall be conducted over as broad a region as feasible, including adjacent Canadian systems who are members of NPCC, or its successor organization, and, as appropriate, MAAC and Reliability First, or their successor organizations, the ISO shall convene periodic meetings of the Planning Advisory Committee, within the scope of its respective functions of Section 2 of this Attachment, to focus to provide input and feedback to the ISO concerning an Inter-area needs assessment and identification of potential market and regulated responses to the ISO's identification of inter-area needs.

## **7. Procedures for Development and Approval of the RSP**

### **7.1 Initiation of RSP**

Every year, the ISO shall initiate an effort to develop its annual RSP and solicit input on regional system needs for the RSP from the Planning Advisory Committee. The Planning Advisory Committee shall meet to perform its respective functions in connection with the preparation of the RSP, as specified in Section 2 of this Attachment.

### **7.2 Draft RSP; Public Meeting**

On or about August of each year, the ISO shall provide a draft of the RSP to the Planning Advisory Committee and input from that Committee shall be received and considered in preparing and revising subsequent drafts. The ISO shall post

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the draft RSP and provide notice to the Planning Advisory Committee of a meeting to review the draft RSP as specified in Section 2.2 of this Attachment.

On or about September of each year, the ISO shall issue a second draft of the RSP to be presented by the ISO staff to the ISO Board of Directors for approval. The draft RSP shall incorporate the results of any Needs Assessment, and corresponding Solutions Studies, performed since the last RSP was approved. A subcommittee of that Board shall hold a public meeting, at their discretion, to receive input directly and to discuss any proposed revisions to the RSP. The final recommended RSP shall be presented to the ISO Board of Directors no later than September 30 of each year and shall be acted on by the ISO Board of Directors within 60 days of receipt. The foregoing timeframes are subject to adjustment as determined by the ISO in coordination with the Planning Advisory Committee.

### **7.3 Action by the ISO Board of Directors on RSP; Request for Alternative Proposals**

#### **(a) Action by ISO Board of Directors on RSP**

The ISO Board of Directors may approve the recommended draft RSP as submitted, modify the RSP or remand all or any portion of it back with guidance for development of a revised recommendation. The Board of Directors may consider the RSP in executive session, and shall consider in

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its deliberations the views of the subcommittee of the Board of Directors reflecting the public meeting held pursuant to Section 7.2 of this Attachment. In considering whether to approve the draft RSP, the Board of Directors may, if it finds a proposed Reliability Benefit Upgrade not to be viable, or if no Reliability Benefit Upgrade has been proposed, direct the ISO staff to meet with the affected load serving entities and State entities in order to develop an interim solution. Should that effort fail, and as a last resort, the Board of Directors may direct the ISO to issue a Request For Alternative Proposal (“RFAP”), subject to the procedures described below, and may withhold approval of the draft RSP, or portions thereof, pending the results of that RFAP and any Commission action on any resulting jurisdictional contract or funding mechanism. The ISO shall provide a written explanation as to any subsequent changes or modification made in the final version of the RSP.

**(b) Requests For Alternative Proposals**

- (i) The RFAP shall seek generation, demand-side and merchant transmission alternatives that can be implemented rapidly and provide substantial reliability benefits over the period solicited in the RFAP, and normally will focus on an interim (“gap”) solution until an identified Reliability Transmission Upgrade has been placed in-service. The ISO will file a proposed RFAP with the Commission for approval at least 60 days prior to its issuance. The filing shall explain why the issuance of an RFAP is necessary.

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- (ii) The ISO staff shall provide the Board of Directors and subject to confidentiality requirements, the Planning Advisory Committee with an analysis of the alternatives offered in response to the RFAP, and provide a recommendation together with a funding mechanism reflecting input from the Planning Advisory Committee.
  - (iii) The ISO may enter into contracts awarded pursuant to an RFAP process, and/or propose a funding mechanism. Bidders that are awarded contracts through the RFAP process shall file those contracts with the Commission for approval of the rates to be charged thereunder to the extent that such contracts are for services that are jurisdictional to the Commission. The ISO shall file related or separate funding mechanisms with the Commission as well. All other contracts entered into pursuant to an RFAP shall be filed with the Commission for informational purposes.
  - (iv) The Board of Directors will reflect the results of the RFAP process in the approved RSP.

## **8. Obligations of PTOs to Build; PTOs' Obligations, Conditions and Rights**

In accordance with the TOA, PTOs designated by the ISO as the appropriate entities to construct and own or finance Transmission Upgrades included in the RSP shall construct and own or finance such facilities or enter into appropriate contracts to fulfill such obligations. In the event that a PTO: (i) does not construct or indicates in writing that it does not intend to construct a Transmission Upgrade included in the RSP; or (ii) demonstrates that it has failed (after making a good faith effort) to obtain necessary approvals or property rights under applicable law, the ISO shall promptly file with the Commission a report on the results of the planning process, which report shall include a report from the PTO responsible for the planning, design or construction of such

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Transmission Upgrade, in order to permit the Commission to determine what action, if any, it should take.

In connection with regional system planning, the ISO will not propose to impose on any PTO obligations or conditions that are inconsistent with the explicit provisions of the TOA or deprive any PTO of any of the rights set forth in the TOA.

Subject to necessary approvals and compliance with Section 2.06 of the TOA, nothing in this OATT shall affect the right of any PTO to expand or modify its transmission facilities in the New England Transmission System on its own initiative or in response to an order of an appropriate regulatory authority. Such expansions or modifications shall conform with: (a) Good Utility Practice; (b) applicable reliability principles, guidelines, criteria, rules, procedures and standards of national, regional, and local reliability councils that may be in existence; and (c) the ISO and relevant PTO criteria, rules, standards, guides and policies. The ISO reserves its right to challenge the permitting of such expansions or modifications.

## **9. Merchant Transmission Facilities**

### **9.1 General**

Subject to compliance with the requirements of the Tariff and any other applicable requirements with respect to the interconnection of bulk power



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facilities with the New England Transmission System, any entity shall have the right to propose and construct the addition of transmission facilities (“Merchant Transmission Facilities”), none of the costs of which shall be covered under the cost allocation provisions of this OATT. Any such Merchant Transmission Facilities shall be subject to the requirements of Section 9.2 of this Attachment. In performing studies in connection with the RSP, the prospect that proposed Merchant Transmission Facilities will be completed shall be accounted for as will the prospect that proposed generating units will be completed.

## **9.2 Operation and Integration**

All Merchant Transmission Facilities shall be subject to: (i) an agreement to transfer to the ISO operational control authority over any facilities which constitute part of the Merchant Transmission Facilities that are to be integrated with, or that will affect, the New England Transmission System; and (ii) taking such other action as may be required to make the facility available for use as part of the New England Transmission System.

## **9.3 Control and Coordination**

Until such time as a Merchant Transmission Owner has transferred operational control over its Merchant Transmission Facilities to the ISO pursuant to Section 9.2(i), all such Merchant Transmission Facilities shall be subject to the

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operational control, scheduling and maintenance coordination of the System

Operator in accordance with the Tariff.

**10. Cost Responsibility for Transmission Upgrades**

The cost responsibility for each upgrade, modification or addition to the transmission system in New England that is included with the status of “Planned” in the RSP Project List as defined in Section 3.6 of this Attachment shall be determined in accordance with Schedule 12 of this OATT.

**11. Allocation of ARRs**

The allocation of ARRs in connection with Transmission Upgrades is addressed in Section III.C.8 of the Tariff.

**12. Dispute Resolution Procedures**

**12.1 Objective**

Section 12 of this Attachment sets forth a dispute resolution process (the “Regional Planning Dispute Resolution Process”) through which regional transmission planning-related disputes may be resolved as expeditiously as possible.

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## 12.2 Confidential Information and CEII Protections

All information disclosed in the course of the Regional Planning Dispute Resolution Process shall be subject to the protection of confidential information and CEII consistent with the ISO New England Information Policy and CEII policy.

## 12.3 Eligible Parties

Any member of the Planning Advisory Committee that has been adversely affected by a Reviewable Determination, defined in Section 12.4(a) of this Attachment, with respect to the regional system planning process described in this Attachment is eligible to raise its dispute, as appropriate, under this Dispute Resolution Process (“Disputing Party”).

## 12.4 Scope

In order to ensure that the regional transmission planning process set forth under this Attachment moves expeditiously forward, the scope of issues that may be subject to the Regional Planning Dispute Resolution Process under this Section 12 shall be limited to certain key procedural and substantive decisions made by the ISO within its authority as specified in documents on file with the Commission. That is, decisions not subject to resolution within the jurisdiction of the Commission are not within the scope of the Regional Planning Dispute

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Resolution Process. Examples of matters not within the scope of the Regional Planning Dispute Resolution Process include planning to serve retail native load or state siting issues. Additionally, the Tariff already explicitly provides specific dispute resolution procedures for various matters. To this end, any matter regarding the review and approval of applications pursuant to Section I.3.9 of the Tariff, which is subject to the dispute resolution process under Section I.6 of the Tariff, shall not be within the scope of this Regional Planning Dispute Resolution Process. Similarly, any matter regarding Transmission Cost Allocation shall be governed by the dispute resolution process under Schedule 12 of the OATT, and shall be outside the scope of this Regional Planning Dispute Resolution Process.

**(a) Reviewable Determinations**

The determinations that may be subject to the Regional Planning Dispute Resolution Process under this Section 12 ("Reviewable Determinations") shall include certain procedural and substantive challenges that may arise at designated key decision points in the regional transmission planning process for PTF ("Key Decision Points"). Procedural challenges will be limited to whether or not the steps taken up to a Key Decision Point conform to the requirements set forth in this Attachment. Substantive challenges will be limited to whether or not a determination or conclusion

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rendered at a Key Decision Point was supported by adequate basis in fact.

The Key Decision Points shall be limited to the following:

- (i) Results of a Needs Assessment conducted and communicated by the ISO to the Planning Advisory Committee as specified in Section 4.1 of this Attachment;
- (ii) Updates to the RSP Project List, including adding, removing or revising regulated transmission solutions included thereunder, as presented at the Planning Advisory Committee and as specified in Section 3.6 of this Attachment;
- (iii) Results of Solutions Studies conducted and communicated by the ISO to the Planning Advisory Committee as specified in Section 4.2 of this Attachment;
- (iv) Consideration of market responses in Needs Assessments as specified in Section 4.2 of this Attachment;
- (v) Substance of Economic Studies to be conducted by the ISO in a given year as specified in Section 4.1(b) of this Attachment; and
- (vi) Prioritization of Economic Studies to be performed in a given year where the Planning Advisory Committee is not able to prioritize them as specified in Section 4.1(b) of this Attachment.

**(b) Material Adverse Impact**

In order to prevail in a challenge to a procedural-based Reviewable Determination, the Disputing Party must show that the alleged procedural error had a material adverse impact on the determination or conclusion. In order to prevail in a challenge to a substantive-based Reviewable Determination, the Disputing Party must show that either (i) the

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determination is based on incorrect data or assumptions or (ii) incorrect analysis was performed by the ISO, and (iii) as a result the ISO made an incorrect decision or determination.

### **12.5 Notice and Comment**

A Disputing Party aggrieved by a Reviewable Determination shall have fifteen (15) calendar days upon learning of the Reviewable Determination following the ISO's presentation of such Reviewable Determination at the Planning Advisory Committee to request dispute resolution by giving notice to the ISO ("Request for Dispute Resolution"). A Request for Dispute Resolution shall be in writing and shall be addressed to the ISO's Chair of the Planning Advisory Committee and, as appropriate, the affected Transmission Owner. Within three (3) Business Days of the receipt by the ISO of a Request for Dispute Resolution, the ISO shall prepare and distribute to all members of the Planning Advisory Committee a notice of the Request for Dispute Resolution including, subject to the protection of Confidential Information and CEII, the specifics of the Request for Dispute Resolution and providing the name of an ISO representative to whom any comments may be sent. Any member of the Planning Advisory Committee may submit to the ISO's designated representative, on or before the tenth (10<sup>th</sup>) Business Day following the date the ISO distributes the notice of the Request for

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Dispute Resolution, written comments to the ISO with respect to the Request for Dispute Resolution. The party filing the Request for Dispute Resolution may respond to any such comments by submitting a written response to the ISO's designated representative and to the commenting party on or before the fifteenth (15<sup>th</sup>) Business Day following the date the ISO distributes the notice of the Request for Dispute Resolution. The ISO may, but is not required to, consider any written comments.

## **12.6 Dispute Resolution Procedures**

### **(a) Resolution Through the Planning Advisory Committee**

The Planning Advisory Committee shall discuss and resolve any dispute arising under this Attachment involving a Reviewable Determination, as defined in Section 12.4 of this Attachment, between and among the ISO, the Disputing Party, and, as appropriate, the affected Transmission Owner (collectively, "Parties") (excluding applications for rate changes or other changes to the Tariff, or to any Service Agreement entered into under the Tariff, which shall be presented directly to the Commission for resolution).

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**(b) Resolution Through Informal Negotiations**

To the extent that the Planning Advisory Committee is not able to resolve a dispute arising under this Attachment involving a Reviewable Determination, as defined in Section 12.4 of this Attachment, between and among the ISO, the Disputing Party, and, as appropriate, the affected Transmission Owner, such dispute shall be the subject of good-faith negotiations among the Parties. Each Party shall designate a fully authorized senior representative for resolution on an informal basis as promptly as practicable.

**(c) Resolution Through Alternative Dispute Resolution**

In the event the designated representatives are unable to resolve the dispute through informal negotiation within thirty (30) days, or such other period as the Parties may agree upon, by mutual agreement of the Parties, such dispute may be submitted to mediation or any other form of alternative dispute resolution upon the agreement of all Parties to participate in such mediation or other alternative dispute resolution process. Such form of alternative dispute resolution shall not include binding arbitration.



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If a Party identifies exigent circumstances reasonably requiring expedited resolution of the dispute, such Party may file a Complaint with the Commission or seek other appropriate redress before a court of competent jurisdiction.

### **12.7 Notice of Dispute Resolution Process Results**

Within three (3) Business Days following the resolution of a dispute pursuant to either Section 12.6(b) or Section 12.6(c) of this Attachment, the ISO shall distribute to the Planning Advisory Committee a document reflecting the resolution.

### **13. Rights Under The Federal Power Act**

Nothing in this Attachment shall restrict the rights of any party to file a Complaint with the Commission under relevant provisions of the Federal Power Act.

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Sheet Nos. 6275 - 6289 reserved for future use.

Sheet Nos. 6304 - 6399 reserved for future use.

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## ATTACHMENT N

### PROCEDURES FOR REGIONAL SYSTEM PLAN UPGRADES

#### I. INTRODUCTION

Pursuant to Part II.G of the ISO New England Open Access Transmission Tariff (the “Tariff”) (Sections II.46 – II.47 and Attachment K) and this Procedure, the ISO shall classify upgrades as Reliability Transmission Upgrades and Market Efficiency Transmission Upgrades during the Regional System Plan (“RSP”) process. Pursuant to established standards, that process is designed to collect and reflect broad input from all stakeholders through the Planning Advisory Committee (“PAC”). The PAC is composed of a wide variety of regional stakeholders, including Governance Participants (such as generator owners, marketers, load serving entities, merchant transmission owners and participating transmission owners), governmental representatives, public interest groups, state agencies (including those participating in the New England Conference of Public Utilities Commissioners), retail customers, representatives of local communities, and consultants. The PAC meets regularly throughout the year.

This procedure describes the standards used by the ISO to identify Reliability Transmission Upgrades and Market Efficiency Transmission Upgrades and the process for making such identifications pursuant to Part II.G of the Tariff.

The ISO may amend these standards and procedures from time to time, as appropriate, with input from the Reliability Committee and PAC.

#### II. STANDARDS FOR IDENTIFYING RELIABILITY TRANSMISSION UPGRADES AND MARKET EFFICIENCY TRANSMISSION UPGRADES

##### A. Identification of Reliability Transmission Upgrades

Reliability Transmission Upgrades are those upgrades necessary to ensure the continued reliability of the New England Transmission System based on applicable reliability standards. In applying the applicable reliability standards, some of the considerations that will be taken into account are as follows: