Information Document
Voice Communications
ID #2018-006R

Information Documents are not authoritative. Information Documents are for information purposes only and are intended to provide guidance. In the event of any discrepancy between an Information Document and any Authoritative Document(s)[1] in effect, the Authoritative Document(s) governs.

1 Purpose

This Information Document relates to the following Authoritative Document:

- Section 502.17 of the ISO rules, *Voice Communications.*

The purpose of this Information Document is to provide clarity to Section 502.17 of the ISO rules, *Voice Communications*.

2 Meaning of Control Room

For the purposes of Section 502.17, a control room is a location where an operator has direct control over a generating unit or facility. For direct control, the control room must be local to the generating unit or facility, and should not depend on external commercial communications to operate and control the generating unit or facility.

3 Control Room and Control Centres

The ISO expects control centres which control generating units to meet the voice communication requirements for the total amount of generation they control. Control rooms for individual generating units or facilities are to meet the voice communication requirements based on the size of the individual generating unit or facility. Communication between a control room and control centre are expected to, at a minimum, meet the requirements of the control room.

4 Automatic Forwarding of Primary Direct Access Telephone Connection

Subsection 4(2) addresses the need for automatic forwarding to another number if the primary number is busy or otherwise not available. The intent of this requirement is for the forwarding to another number to achieve the same result as if the primary number had been answered. As such, the ISO encourages market participants to use any forwarding number that will be answered by a person who is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and is able to take or initiate immediate action, as appropriate.

5 No Common Single Point of Failure

Subsections 4(3) and 5(2) provide that no common single point of failure is to exist between the primary and backup voice communication systems. This includes the phones and all supporting equipment (routers/switches/etc.) within the market participant's facilities, and the telecommunication infrastructure and network of service providers. For example, common points of failure exist between a land line and a wireless voice connection from the same service provider which more than likely share the same telecommunications infrastructure, and certainly the same network. Another example of a common point of failure is the same telecommunication infrastructure shared by two separate service providers based on a use agreement (like Telus and Bell who share rural networks).

6 No Other Backup Option is Feasible

Subsections 4(4) and 5(3) address the situation where no feasible back up option exists. In general, no feasible backup option exists if no valid backup voice communication option is presented in Table 1 or 2. This would suggest a region does not have additional independent service providers, all utility

[1] "Authoritative Documents" is the general name given by the AESO to categories of documents made by the AESO under the authority of the *Electric Utilities Act* and associated regulations, and that contain binding legal requirements for either market participants or the AESO, or both. AESO Authoritative Documents include: the ISO rules, the Alberta reliability standards, and the ISO tariff.

telecommunication infrastructure is unreachable without additional towers or long fibre deployment, and/or the utility telecommunication infrastructure doesn't have enough capacity.

When an exception is provided, the ISO expects the market participant to still attempt to obtain the most robust backup. As examples, using a classic voice circuit and a VOIP data circuit, using separate service providers even though some infrastructure is shared, and still using independent hardware within the market participant's facility.

The ISO recommends that market participants review exceptions at least every 5 years to see if an independent alternative has been developed and can be implemented.

The ISO expects market participants to provide the following information in order to receive an exception:

- Reason for the requested exception and options explored.
- Geographic location of facilities.
- Geographic location of telecom options (proposed and not feasible).
- Description of proposed design including all redundancy.
- Description of potential future plans.

7 Distributed Energy Resources Voice Requirements

While no voice requirements are defined for distributed energy resources between market participants, the ISO recommends that all distributed energy resources have, at a minimum, a primary voice communication system with the connected operator of an electric distribution system. An operator defines the voice communication requirements for distributed energy resources connecting to their system. In some instances where an anti-islanding scheme or other protection measure is required by the operator of a transmission facility, then additional voice communication requirements to that operator may also exist.

Revision History

Posting Date	Description of Changes