



**RELIABILITY FIRST**

April 1, 2026

To: ReliabilityFirst Compliance Contacts  
 Subject: RF Compliance Program Update Letter – April 2026

## **REMINDER! NERC Reliability Standards Effective April 1, 2026**

- **CIP-003-9** [Cyber Security – Security Management Controls](#) | [Implementation Plan](#)
- **MOD-026-2** [Verification and Validation of Dynamic Models and Data](#) | [Implementation Plan](#)
- **MOD-033-3** [Steady-State and Dynamic System Model Validation](#) | [Implementation Plan](#)
- **TPL-008-1** [Transmission System Planning Performance Requirements for Extreme Temperature Events](#) | [Implementation Plan](#)

**REMINDER** - If any of the above-mentioned standard versions is included in an active Coordinated Functional Registration (CFR) agreement, the respective CFR agreement(s) must be revised to include the updated versions of the Standards and Requirements. Any changes or updates to existing CFR agreements and respective division of compliance responsibilities must be made using the NERC CFR portal.

## **NEW! Register for ReliabilityFirst's CIP Workshop, May 4-7**



We invite you to join us **May 4–7** for the RF CIP Workshop, an in-person event focused on practical, risk-informed approaches to CIP implementation and compliance.

Last year's workshop drew more than 95 attendees and was near capacity, with strong engagement and valuable peer-to-peer networking throughout the week.

This year's agenda is designed to support entities at all levels of CIP maturity, whether you are new to CIP or looking to deepen technical and operational understanding:

- Monday afternoon begins with an optional CIP 101 session, covering the structure of the Electric Reliability Organization (NERC and the six Regions), an introduction to CIP, and electric system operations and planning fundamentals.
- Tuesday features multiple breakout tracks, including Low Impact, Physical Security, Internal Network Security Monitoring (INSM), and other timely topics.
- Tuesday evening includes a catered networking reception with peers, subject-matter experts, and RF staff.
- Wednesday kicks off with a keynote from DOE, followed by in-depth technical sessions, including INSM and an update from the NERC Cloud Standards Drafting Team.
- Thursday morning is reserved for an entity-only CIPC meeting.

One of the most valuable aspects of this workshop is the opportunity to connect directly with other utilities and RF staff—sharing lessons learned, challenges, and practical approaches you can take home.

Registration is now open. Register to secure your spot: <https://www.rffirst.org/event/cip-workshop/>

Who should attend: Compliance staff, cyber security and physical security subject matter experts, and others with CIP responsibilities at registered entities.

See the [RF Visitor Guide](#) for hotels and office location.

## **NEW! Emerging Large Loads Updates – Technical Conference, NERC Alert key findings, and more**

The presentations from the Emerging Large Loads Technical Conference held on February 24–25, 2026, at the Renaissance Arlington Capital View Hotel in Arlington, VA., are now available on the [NERC website](#).

NERC has also [posted a report](#) summarizing the key findings from the Level 2 Recommendation to Industry: [Large Load Interconnection, Study, Commissioning, and Operations](#) which was issued on September 9, 2025 to Distribution Providers (DP), Transmission Owners (TO), Transmission Planners (TP), Planning Coordinators (PC), Reliability Coordinators (RC), Resource Planners (RP), Transmission Operators (TOP), and Balancing Authorities (BA). The alert included five primary recommendations regarding TO interconnection requirements, TP and PC interconnection and system-wide studies, TO load commissioning, TO operating protocols, and long-term forecasting for TPs, RPs, and PCs.

Lastly, the Large Loads Working Group (LLWG) has released its [second white paper](#), Assessment of Gaps in Existing Practices, Requirements, and Reliability Standards for Emerging Large Loads. This white paper finds that the existing NERC Standards, as well as industry processes and requirements, are inadequate for the reliable integration of emerging large loads onto the bulk power system.

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## **NEW! TPL-008-1 Reliability Standard Audit Worksheet Correction**

NERC has determined that the recent errata update to the TPL-008-1 Reliability Standard Audit Worksheet ([RSAW](#)), posted on February 3, 2026, was issued in error. Specifically, the removal of the Transmission Planner function from Requirement R1 in the Applicability of Requirements table was incorrect. This error has been corrected, and the TPL-008-1 RSAW has been reverted back to the original version posted on September 8, 2025.

### **Background**

An RSAW is a guide provided by the ERO Enterprise (collectively NERC and Regional Entities) that describes types of evidence registered entities may use to demonstrate compliance with a Reliability Standard. RSAWs also include information regarding how the ERO Enterprise may assess that evidence. RSAWs do not require specific evidence to be provided, and they are not intended to require a single, exclusive approach to assessing compliance with a Reliability Standard.

## **NEW! NERC Episode 9 of “Currently Compliant” Available**

[Episode 9](#) focuses on the topic of Inherent Risk Assessments (IRA) and the Entity Risk Profile Questionnaire (ERPQ). Regional Entities send these questionnaires to registered entities during an IRA. The questionnaires were updated in Align Release 7.6 deployed March 21, 2026. Specifically, the Risk Factor Questionnaire (RFQ) was integrated into the ERPQ, facilitating one questionnaire for entities to complete. Additionally, many questions were revised for clarity and to better inform the Regional Entities of necessary information to perform risk assessments. To better understand what this means for industry and how it informs IRAs, this episode breaks down what the risk assessment is and how the data acquired from the questionnaires help the Regional Entities understand each registered entity’s inherent risk to the bulk power system.

## **NEW! ALIGN Release Notes Posted**

Align Release 7.6.0 successfully deployed on March 21, 2026. This deployment included modifications, such as integrating the Risk Factor Questionnaire into the Entity Risk Profile Questionnaire and other questionnaire updates; adding Category 2 data fields for upcoming Generator Owner (GO2) and Generator Operator (GOP2) Quick Links Align and SEL Resources Align or SEL IT Support Contact Standards, Compliance, and Enforcement Bulletin | March 23–29, 2026 registrations; fixing various bugs throughout several modules; adding new data objects to Reporting universe and updating recipients for some notification emails. The Align Release Notes 7.6.0 provide the specific changes and indicate the users affected as well as if any training materials were

modified. These details are documented in the Align Release Notes 7.6.0, published on March 21, 2026, and can be found on the [Align and SEL webpage](#) under the "Release Materials" section.

## **REMINDER! Align Deactivating Inactive Accounts in 2026**

Starting in 2026 (Quarter 2), the ERO Enterprise will implement a bi-weekly automatic review of inactive user accounts in the Align production environment. In support of access management and security hygiene, if a user account is found to be inactive for five quarters, it will be deactivated in the system. Prior to any user deactivation, Align users with more than 90 days of inactivity in the system will be notified via email on the following schedule:

- After 90 days of inactivity
- After 225 days of inactivity
- After 420 days of inactivity
- After 434 days of inactivity
- After 449 days of inactivity

All Align users are encouraged to regularly log into Align and avoid deactivation when the automatic review begins later in 2026. When the automatic review happens for the first time, any user accounts that have been inactive for five quarters will be disabled immediately without notification. Any users with inactivity ranging from 90 days to five quarters of inactivity will receive an email with the automatic reviews beginning next year. To avoid this potential impact to your account, please ensure you routinely access the Align system.



## **Category 2 Generator Owner and Generator Operator Non-BES IBR Update**

Phase 3 of the IBR Initiative is nearly over with RF Registration finalizing its reviews of registration documentation received from the entities in final preparation for registrations to begin. New functionality has been added to CORES to facilitate the registration of the new Category 1 and Category 2 IBRs. The new IBR Category 1 and Category 2 functional scopes can now be properly applied and designated as such in the registration record in CORES. [NERC's IBR Registration Initiative Q4 2025 Update](#) showcases progress made, highlights key activities in Legal, Registration, Standards, Stakeholder Outreach, and E-ISAC Engagements, and provides available resources.

RF Registration is always available for individual conference calls to assist our entities with these registrations and/or answer any questions pertaining to their respective Category 1 or Category 2 GO and GOP registrations, or the registration process. If you would like to set up a meeting or require further clarification regarding your respective registration(s), please email Beth Smail at [beth.smail@rfirst.org](mailto:beth.smail@rfirst.org).



### **IMPORTANT REMINDER – UPDATE COMPLIANCE CONTACT INFORMATION in CORES**

Registered entities are expected to review and update their compliance contacts information as changes occur. Updating compliance contact information is critical to ensure that our contact data remains fresh, accurate and is current always. **Please verify and update as necessary the names, addresses, phone numbers (cell) and email addresses for your Compliance Contacts (PCC/ACC/PCO) in the ERO Portal/CORES system.**



### **NEW! Monthly Technical Talk with RF Call**

#### **April 2026 Technical Talk with RF**

ReliabilityFirst (RF) offers a regularly scheduled monthly call to provide entities and stakeholders with a forum for addressing topics and questions relevant to reliability, resilience and security.

While RF Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) will provide presentations and updates, they will not address entity-specific questions and issues. These types of questions can be handled offline by using the RF [Assist Visit program](#). If you have any questions, please reach out to Mike Hughes, Entity Engagement Manager, 216-503-0617.

## Event Information

April 2026 Technical Talk with RF

Monday, April 20, 2026, 2-3:30 p.m. ET

Join link:

<https://reliabilityfirst.webex.com/reliabilityfirst/j.php?MTID=m479ffce153d2a9a04064e0b279e78314>

Meeting number: 2312 142 6103

Meeting password: 0123456 (0123456 when dialing from a phone or video system)

Join by phone: 1-650-479-3207 Call-in toll number (US/Canada)

Access code: 231 214 26103

## Agenda

### **New NERC Reliability Standards applicable to Inverter-Based Resources: What to know**

Greg Sorenson, Principal Technical Auditor, Operations & Planning Compliance Monitoring, RF

PRC-028, PRC-029, and PRC-030 are three new NERC Reliability Standards applicable to inverter-based resources (IBRs) aimed to help address risks to the Bulk Electric System around event analysis and ride-through capabilities. Greg will provide an overview of these standards and discuss their implementation.

### **NERC Modernization of Standards Processes and Procedures update**

Soo Jin Kim, VP, Standards and Registration, NERC, and Alison Oswald, Manager of Standards Development, NERC

Soo Jin Kim and Alison Oswald will provide an update on the current phase of the [Modernization of Standards Processes and Procedures \(MSPP\) Initiative](#). This phase will advance the implementation of recommendations released by the MSPP Task Force in late January 2026 and accepted by the NERC Board of Trustees in February 2026.

The MSPP Initiative was initially launched in 2025 to transform the current Reliability Standard development processes to more effectively and efficiently develop Reliability Standards to meet the

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speed at which risks to the bulk power system emerge.

## **IMPORTANT! NERC Registration and Certification Information**

### **Notification of Additional Changes in Registration Status**

Section 501.1.3.5 of NERC's Rules of Procedure requires the **registered entity to notify NERC through its corresponding Regional Entity of any changes in registration, ownership, corporate structure, or similar matters that affect the entity's responsibilities with respect to the Reliability Standards.** Failure to notify NERC through its corresponding Regional Entity will not relieve the registered entity from any responsibility to comply with the Reliability Standards or liability for any penalties or sanctions associated with failing to comply with such standards. **RF requests that registered entities provide RF Registration with 30-60 days advance notice of any such changes impacting NERC Registration.** Contact Beth Smail, Senior Analyst, Registration and Entity Services, with any questions at [beth.smail@first.org](mailto:beth.smail@first.org).

## **IMPORTANT! NERC Alert System Registration**

NERC's Alert System is the tool used to disseminate information that is critical to ensuring the reliability of the BPS in North America. NERC distributes alerts broadly to owners, operators, and users of the BPS utilizing the listing of the NCR. Entities registered with NERC are required to provide and maintain up-to-date compliance and cyber security contacts.

As a separate part of the NERC registration process and inclusion on the NCR, please contact NERC via email at [NERC.Alert@nerc.net](mailto:NERC.Alert@nerc.net) to register or revise your listing for the NERC Alert System. Alternatively, you may call the NERC Alerts Hotline at 404.446.9797 to speak with someone. Each registered entity identified in the NCR is required to notify NERC Alert of any corrections, revisions, deletions, changes in ownership, corporate structure, or similar matters that affect the registered entity's responsibilities with respect to the Reliability Standards.

**Remember to always keep your NERC Alert Contacts current and up-to-date at all times.**

## **E-ISAC Membership Registration**

It is important, and expected, that qualified registered entities will join the Electricity Information Sharing and Analysis Center (E-ISAC).<sup>1</sup> E-ISAC membership is available to qualified North American asset owners and operators (AOOs) and select partner organizations, and there is no cost to join. The

E-ISAC encourages individuals with cyber, physical, or operational technology security responsibilities to apply for membership on behalf of your organization. This individual will serve as a point of contact for E-ISAC security-related communications and will have access to emerging threat information and analysis.

Please complete the E-ISAC Membership application here: <https://www.eisac.com/portal>. You may also contact the E-ISAC at [memberservices@eisac.com](mailto:memberservices@eisac.com) with any questions.

<sup>[1]</sup> Created in 1999 and located in Washington, D.C., the E-ISAC is operated by NERC. The E-ISAC acts as the primary communications channel for industry members and partners to voluntarily exchange cyber and physical security threat information. E-ISAC security experts analyze this information to identify patterns and trends, providing industry with a detailed view of the threat landscape and advice on how to navigate it. Both NERC and the E-ISAC adhere to a strict [code of conduct](#) that reinforces the E-ISAC's organizational isolation from NERC's enforcement activities.



## Align Training Resources

The [NERC Align Project page](#) and FAQ document contain helpful information for registered entities. Self-service training resources provided for registered entity staff, including training videos and user guides, are available on the [NERC Training Site](#).

NERC's training site provides training and materials on a variety of topics for Align and other tools used by NERC, Regional Entity, and registered entity staff. Your Primary Compliance Contact is the designated Access Approver for Align for your company. Remember to check out NERC's Align project page or reach out to [AskAlign@NERC.net](mailto:AskAlign@NERC.net) for additional information.

## Align Violations Reporting

As a reminder, any new violation of a Reliability Standard identified by a registered entity should be immediately self-reported to RF via the ERO Align system. Contact [Shirley Ortiz](#), Senior Paralegal, at (216) 503-0674 with any questions concerning self-reports.

## Align support – ERO Help Desk Ticketing System

If users encounter any access or system problems with Align, CORES or any of the other NERC applications, first and foremost, try to resolve the issues yourself by using any one of the many self-service resources, guides and videos NERC has made available to you at [training.nerc.net](https://training.nerc.net).

If you are unable to resolve the issue on your own, place a ticket using the NERC Helpdesk Ticket Submission System: [support.nerc.net](https://support.nerc.net). The ERO Help Desk Ticketing System (Footprints) is available to registered entity users 24/7 and is monitored by the regions and NERC. We will do our best to address your questions, issues, and tickets as promptly as possible during normal business hours.

### Upcoming Standards Subject to Future Enforcement

CIP-012-2	Cyber Security – Communications between Control Centers	July 1, 2026
TOP-003-7	Transmission Operator and Balancing Authority Data and Information Specification and Collection	Oct. 1, 2026
PRC-024-4	Frequency and Voltage Protection Settings for Synchronous Generators, Type 1 and Type 2 Wind Resources, and Synchronous Condensers	Oct. 1, 2026
PRC-029-1	Frequency and Voltage Ride-through Requirements for Inverter-based Resources	Oct. 1, 2026
PRC-030-1	Unexpected Inverter-Based Resource Event Mitigation	Oct. 1, 2026
BAL-007-1	Near-term Energy Reliability Assessments	April 1, 2027
MOD-032-2	Data for Power System Modeling and Analysis	April 1, 2028
CIP-015-1	Cyber Security – Internal Network Security Monitoring	Oct. 1, 2028
IRO-010-6	Reliability Coordinator Data and Information Specification and Collection	April 1, 2029
TOP-003-8	Transmission Operator and Balancing Authority Data and Information Specification and Collection	April 1, 2029

Please refer to the [U.S. Effective Dates](#) page on the NERC website for additional detail.

### Periodic Data Submittals Due in April 2026

04/20/2026	FAC-003-5	GO, TO	FAC-003-5 - Transmission Vegetation Management: Q1, 2025 Vegetation Outage Reporting – <b>Align Data Submittal</b>
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### Periodic Data Submittals Due in May 2026

05/30/2026	PRC-004	GO, TO, DP	Protection System Misoperations – Section 1600 data request for Q1-2026 (Jan. 1 – March 31). <b>Submit in MIDAS portal</b>
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