



**RELIABILITY FIRST**

Feb. 6, 2026

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

## **NEW! NERC Publishes ERO Enterprise Guide for Internal Controls**

NERC has posted the [ERO Enterprise Guide for Internal Controls document](#) on the Compliance Guidance web page. The ERO Enterprise Guide for Internal Controls describes the ERO Enterprise approach for understanding, assessing, and monitoring internal controls as part of the overall risk-based compliance monitoring and enforcement process.

## **NEW! NERC Publishes Version 8 of the ERO CMEP Manual**

NERC has published Version 8 of the ERO Enterprise Compliance Monitoring and Enforcement [Manual](#).

## **NEW! NERC Posts New Incident Review**

NERC has published a [new incident review](#) examining the risks and challenges posed by the increasing integration of voltage-sensitive large loads. The review focuses on crypto-mining facilities and explores the response of these facilities to voltage depressions during normally cleared transmission system faults. The review summarizes observed voltage-sensitive crypto load-reduction behavior, restoration characteristics, and key technical considerations related to ride-through performance, protection schemes, and cooling systems. These considerations are essential for ensuring the continued stability and reliability of the Bulk Electric System as the integration of such loads expands.

## **NEW! Large Loads Action Plan 2025 Q4 Update Posted**

An increasing number of large commercial and industrial loads are rapidly connecting to the bulk power system. These emerging large loads—data centers (including cryptocurrency and artificial intelligence applications), hydrogen fuel plants, and others—may pose risks to the reliability of the bulk power system.

To understand the implications of large loads and identify effective pathways for their integration, NERC has implemented several actions. The [fourth quarter Large Loads Action Plan](#) update is part of

a series of planned efforts to inform, educate, and collaborate with stakeholders on this emerging issue. The update includes information on a draft Reliability Guideline, an upcoming white paper, a commenting timeline for a Level 2 alert, and more.

## **NEW! NERC Releases CIP Roadmap**

In collaboration with Regional Entities and subject matter experts, NERC developed [the CIP Roadmap](#) to assess existing CIP standards, evaluate emerging risks, identify gaps in current protections, and chart a risk-informed path forward. The Roadmap identifies practical security measures to reduce risk across multiple threat areas as well as near- and intermediate-term recommendations to ensure the CIP framework remains adaptive and effective as the grid continues to transform.

## **NEW! NERC 2025 Long-Term Reliability Assessment Released**

[NERC's 2025 Long-Term Reliability Assessment](#) (LTRA) spotlights intensifying resource adequacy risks throughout the North American bulk power system over the next 10 years. Summer peak demand is forecast to grow by 224 GW, a more than 69% increase over the 2024 LTRA forecast with new data centers for artificial intelligence and the digital economy accounting for most of the projected increase. Winter demand growth continues to outpace summer demand growth with 246 GW of growth forecast over the next 10 years, reflecting the evolution of electricity usage. Uncertainty and lag in the pace of new resource additions are driving heightened concerns that industry will not be able to keep up with rapidly increasing demand.

## **NEW! ALIGN PDS Templates Available**

The ERO Enterprise recently published templates to support entities preparing responses specific to Periodic Data Submittals (PDS). The templates can be found on the [Align and SEL](#) page under the new Align Templates section. There are currently 10 templates for each of the region-driven and event-driven (created by entity users) PDS requests. Entities can use these templates to prepare PDS responses, such as data specific to the questions asked in the Align form as well as the required spreadsheet associated with requirement(s) that is submitted to the ERO Secure Evidence Locker. If you have questions about preparing information for a PDS request, please contact your Regional Entity.

## **NEW! Updated Registered Entity SEL Portal Guide & Training Posted**

On January 9, 2026, the ERO Enterprise published an updated Registered Entity SEL Portal Guide. This updated guide has been updated with feedback received as well as other lessons learned for tips and tricks to ensure successful uploads. The updated guide is located on the [Align and SEL](#) page under the "Align and SEL Entity User Guides" section.

Additionally, on January 12, 2026, the ERO Enterprise published a training webinar reviewing the functional changes that were made in Align as part of Align Release 7.5. This includes updates to the layout of the Audits and Spot Checks module, acknowledging receipt of Audit RFI, and Requesting an extension on an Audit RFI (Request for Information). The training is located on the Align and SEL page under the "Training and Webinars" section.

## **NEW! Support Ticketing System Launched January 30**

NERC has launched a new support ticketing system—Assist Me! ERO—to improve how tickets are submitted, tracked, and resolved across the ERO Enterprise and support NERC's ongoing efforts to improve the user experience. The new system replaced the current platform on Friday, January 30. ERO Enterprise users will be able to access the system using their existing login credentials. Training sessions for ticket managers and short user demonstrations for all other portal users will be available by email announcement.

## **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

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 has started 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 is in the final stretch of registering identified Category 2 Generator Owners and Generator Operators. If you have any Category 1 or Category 2 GO or GOP IBRs pending registration, please make sure that you have provided RF with all of the information listed below that is required to register your entity appropriately.** Here is a list of the required documentation needed in order for RF to accurately register these GO and GOP IBRs:

- RF Registration Form (available from [RF's Registration webpage](#))
- Properly completed ERO GO/GOP Asset Verification Form (submitted in Excel format) available from [RF Registration webpage](#)
- Fully executed Generator Interconnection Service Agreement
- Fully executed Operating Agreement (between the GO and GOP, or third-party fulfilling GO and/or GOP compliance obligations), if applicable
- Operating One-Line Diagrams depicting the generation resource (i.e., synchronous generator, individual inverters, etc.) through the “collector system” and generator interconnection Facilities to the point of interconnection with the Transmission Owner (TO) (including the TO’s Station Diagram depicting the actual point of interconnection)
- IBRs – Manufacturer Inverter Data Specification Sheets

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).

## IBR Registration Milestones

### Phase 2: May 2024–May 2025

- Complete Rules of Procedure revisions and approvals
- Commence Category 2 GO and GOP candidate outreach and education (e.g., through trade organizations)

### Phase 2: May 2024–May 2025

- Complete identification of Category 2 GO and GOP candidates
- Continue Category 2 GO and GOP candidate outreach and education (e.g., quarterly updates, webinars, workshops, etc.)

### Phase 3: May 2025–May 2026

- Complete registration of Category 2 GO and GOP candidates thereafter subject to applicable NERC Reliability Standards
- Conduct specific Category 2 GO and GOP outreach and education (e.g., quarterly updates, webinars, workshops, etc.)

For the latest information and updates, or to find the resource documents related to the IBR Initiative, check out our webpage dedicated to the [Inverter-Based Resource \(IBR\) Registration Initiative](#), which serves as a one-stop-shop resource to everything related to the IBR initiative.



### **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

**There is no monthly Technical Talk with RF this month. We hope to see you at our Internal Controls workshop and/or ERO Women's Leadership conference!**

## 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@rfirst.org](mailto:beth.smail@rfirst.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](#).

If you are unable to resolve the issue on your own, place a ticket using the NERC Helpdesk Ticket Submission System: [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-003-9	Cyber Security – Security Management Controls	April 1, 2026
TPL-008-1	Transmission System Planning Performance Requirements for Extreme Temperature Events	April 1, 2026
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
CIP-015-1	Cyber Security – Internal Network Security Monitoring	Oct. 1, 2028

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

### **Periodic Data Submittals Due in February 2026 - None**

### **Periodic Data Submittals Due in March 2026**

03/31/2026	PRC-023-6	GO, TO, DP, PA/PC	PRC-023-6 - Transmission Relay Loadability – Annual Data Submittal - Align Data Submittal
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