

WestConnect Data Protocol

Approved by the WestConnect Planning Management Committee 02-13-2019

Introduction

The WestConnect Regional Transmission Planning Process utilizes power flow and production cost model cases to initially identify regional reliability, economic, and public policy-driven transmission needs and further to evaluate projects proposed to mitigate those needs. The WestConnect Planning Management Committee (PMC) is the body responsible for administering the regional transmission planning process on behalf of the members of the WestConnect Planning Region, including public utility Transmission Owner (TO) members which use the WestConnect Regional Transmission Planning Process for compliance with Federal Energy Regulatory Commission Order No. 1000. Power flow and production cost model cases built by the Western Electricity Coordinating Council (WECC) are used as a starting point for the cases built and used by the WestConnect PMC to perform regional transmission planning for compliance with Order No. 1000.¹

Membership in the WestConnect Planning Region is open to a diverse group of entities, including members of WECC who independently submit data to WECC for purposes of participating in WECC's activities. Members of the WestConnect Planning Region also include members of WECC who are not data submitters to WECC, as well as entities that are not WECC members at all. WECC is not a member of the WestConnect Planning Region, and neither WECC nor its staff have responsibility for Order No. 1000 compliance of the WestConnect public utility TO members. Similarly, the WestConnect Planning Region and its consultants charged with Order No. 1000 implementation do not serve as data submitters to WECC and have no responsibility to make data submissions to WECC on behalf of the region's members.

In developing this data protocol, the WestConnect Planning Region seeks to provide greater clarity to:

- The general categories of planning data that are considered within the WestConnect Regional Transmission Planning Process,
- WestConnect's role in collecting and managing such data, and
- How stakeholders interested in participating in the WestConnect Regional Transmission Planning Process may seek access to data generated by WestConnect.

In addition, this protocol provides greater clarity to how WestConnect will handle inquiries from third parties interested in WestConnect data (specifically, changes made by WestConnect to WECC cases) for purposes other than participating in the WestConnect Regional Transmission Planning Process.

WestConnect Regional Planning Models

The WestConnect Planning Subcommittee, under the direction of the PMC, develops regional power flow and production cost models that are used to perform the technical studies outlined in the WestConnect Regional Study Plan for a given planning cycle. Cases from WECC are used as seed cases

¹ Tenth-year power flow base cases produced by WECC are used as the starting point for the WestConnect regional power flow models and the WECC Anchor Data Set is used as the starting point for the WestConnect regional production cost model.

for the regional models and they include the systems of all WECC TOs, including WestConnect Transmission Owner with Load Serving Obligations (TOLSO) Members.

At a minimum, the data collected and used to develop the regional planning models reflects enacted public policies and consists of load forecasts, existing and incremental resources, resource retirements, and the existing and planned transmission topology for a given planning horizon. This data is first derived from data contained within the most recently available WECC models. Through the Regional Transmission Planning Process, WestConnect TOLSO Members and non-TOLSO Members review the data contained within WECC seed cases selected for use in a given WestConnect planning cycle, and update or supplement the data, as needed, according to the description of the regional models outlined in the WestConnect Regional Study Plan for a given planning cycle. WestConnect TO members, at their discretion, may or may not submit to WECC the updated or supplemental information they have provided for use in developing the regional planning models. As such, data of a WECC member participating in the WestConnect Planning Region, as represented in the WestConnect regional planning models, may not align with a given data submittal made by that member to WECC. Reasons for this difference may include differences in model descriptions (e.g. model year, season, loading conditions, public policy assumptions, other study assumptions) or differences in the timing of model development efforts.²

Additional information regarding the WestConnect regional planning models can be found in the [WestConnect Business Practice Manual](#).

Access to WestConnect Regional Planning Models

Q. How does a stakeholder seeking to participate in the WestConnect Regional Transmission Planning Process seek access to WestConnect’s regional planning models?

A. WestConnect’s regional planning models contain confidential information and Critical Energy Infrastructure Information (CEII), and as such, the models are protected under the [WestConnect Non-Disclosure Agreement](#). Any person desiring access to WestConnect regional planning models for the purpose of participating in the WestConnect Regional Transmission Planning Process will have to execute the WestConnect Non-Disclosure Agreement. In addition, because the WestConnect models use as their starting point certain WECC cases, the WestConnect Non-Disclosure Agreement requires that the signatory also be a signatory to the WECC Confidentiality Agreement. Please contact the WestConnect region’s Project Manager representative, Heidi Pacini (heidi@pacenergies.com), for assistance in executing the WestConnect Non-Disclosure Agreement.

² The timing of data submissions made to WECC may differ from the timing of data submissions made to WestConnect, and a WestConnect TO member may make changes to its planning assumptions as part of its local planning efforts in the time between those data submission windows.

Q. How does an adjacent Western Planning Region seek access to WestConnect's regional planning models?

A. WestConnect's Regional Transmission Planning Process provides for interregional coordination under the provisions of the Open Access Transmission Tariffs of the WestConnect public utility TO members. Those interregional coordination tariff provisions expressly contemplate that Relevant Planning Regions will reconcile assumptions when performing an interregional cost allocation of a project selected in the regional transmission plans of more than one Western Planning Region (WPR).³

A WPR who desires access to WestConnect's regional planning models, or data contained within them, for the purpose of implementing an interregional cost allocation under the Order No. 1000 tariffs of the relevant planning regions will have to execute the WestConnect Non-Disclosure Agreement. Please contact the WestConnect region's Project Manager representative, Heidi Pacini (heidi@pacenergies.com), for assistance in executing the WestConnect Non-Disclosure Agreement.

To the extent a WPR desires access to WestConnect's regional planning models, or data contained within them, that is not for the purpose of implementing the Order No. 1000 tariffs' regional or interregional planning requirements (i.e., not for the purpose of participating in the WestConnect Regional Transmission Planning Process), the WPR should contact the WestConnect region's Project Manager representative, Heidi Pacini (heidi@pacenergies.com) to explain the request.⁴ The requesting WPR should indicate the purpose for which data access is sought and identify the data protections that are in place within its own region to protect the WestConnect members' data. The WPR should also state whether it does or will provide reciprocal data access to WestConnect, upon request. The WestConnect Project Manager representative will confer with the relevant WestConnect data owners in order to respond to the request.

Q. How are requests for access to WestConnect's regional planning models, or data contained within them, from WECC staff handled?

A. Some, but not all, of the members of the WestConnect Planning Region are members of WECC and some, but not all, WestConnect members are data submitters to WECC. Data submitters to WECC have obligations to WECC with respect to the quality and accuracy of the data they provide to WECC. There are operational and compliance implications in this regard. Understandably, members of the WestConnect Planning Region that are data submitters to WECC retain their individual responsibility and authority to be the data submitter of their own data to WECC.

The WestConnect regional planning models are comprised of individual load, resource, transmission and economic modeling data that has initially been provided by members of WECC for inclusion in the WECC power flow or production cost models that are used as a starting point for the WestConnect planning models, or it has subsequently been provided by WestConnect members for inclusion in the regional models during the regional model development effort. In its entirety, this data is solely under the purview of the individual entity that provided the data to either WECC or WestConnect for inclusion in

³ Western Planning Regions include the California Independent System Operator, ColumbiaGrid, Northern Tier Transmission Group and WestConnect.

⁴ Where an adjacent planning region is interacting with the WestConnect planning region for the purpose of implementing an interregional cost allocation under the Order No. 1000 tariffs of the relevant planning regions, then it is considered to be for the purpose of participating in the WestConnect Regional Transmission Planning Process.

the respective models. The WestConnect PMC is not a registered entity with the North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC) and has no authority to submit data of its TO members to WECC, NERC or others. To the extent a representative of WestConnect receives a request from WECC staff for data managed or derived through the WestConnect Regional Transmission Planning Process, WestConnect will refer WECC to the appropriate data owners, and also inform the relevant data owners of the request from WECC.

WECC Models

Data of WestConnect TO members contained within WECC power flow or production cost models is solely under the purview of the individual entity that provided the data to WECC. Requests for access to the WECC models should be directed to WECC. Questions regarding the data of WestConnect TO members as represented in WECC power flow or production cost models should be directed to the respective TO contact shown in Appendix A.

At-A-Glance Contacts and Reference Chart on Data Protocol

Requests for (or questions related to) the categories of data outlined in the following tables will be handled by the WestConnect PMC Chair and WestConnect Project Manager in the manner set forth below.

In general, the WestConnect PMC may be contacted regarding the data of multiple WestConnect TO members when the data relates to what is contained within the regional planning models. Subsequent questions related to data contained within the regional planning models should be directed to the individual WestConnect TO member modeling leads. Data of WestConnect TO members contained within WECC power flow or production cost models should be directed to the individual members' WECC modeling representative.

Table 1: Protocol for Requests Related to the WestConnect Regional Planning Models for the Purpose of Participating in the WestConnect Regional Transmission Planning Process

Category of Data Request:	Refer Request To:	Conditions for Sharing of Data:
Regional Power Flow Models	WestConnect PMC Chair , WestConnect Project Manager	Executed WestConnect NDA Executed WECC NDA
Regional Production Cost Model	WestConnect PMC Chair , WestConnect Project Manager	Executed WestConnect NDA Executed WECC NDA

*Table 2: Protocol for Requests Related to Load, Resource, Transmission or Economic Modeling Data Access **Not** for the Purpose of Participating in the WestConnect Regional Transmission Planning Process*

Category of Data Request:	Refer Request To:	Conditions for Sharing of Data:
Data of a single WestConnect TO Member as contained within a WestConnect Regional Planning Model	See Appendix A for a list of WestConnect TO contacts.	There may be CEII protections, and/or appropriate restrictions limiting access to transmission function reviewers only, depending on the specific data sought. The requester is to communicate directly with the TO contact shown in Appendix A for such purposes.

Category of Data Request:	Refer Request To:	Conditions for Sharing of Data:
Data of multiple WestConnect TO Members as contained within a WestConnect Regional Planning Model	You may direct your request to the relevant TO contacts shown in Appendix A, or to the WestConnect Project Manager representative, Heidi Pacini (heidi@pacenergies.com), who will then facilitate communication with the relevant TO data owners.	There may be CEII protections and/or appropriate restrictions limiting access to transmission function reviewers only, depending on the specific data sought. The requester may communicate with the individual TO contacts shown in Appendix A, or the WestConnect Project Manager contact for such purposes.
WECC power flow model data	Contact the WECC SDWG ⁵ representative of the relevant Transmission Owner. Contact WECC to identify the appropriate representative.	Requester should contact the SDWG representative to identify the nature and purpose of its request and to seek information about any applicable confidentiality protections or restrictions.
WECC production cost model data	Contact the WECC PDWG ⁶ representative of the relevant Transmission Owner. Contact WECC to identify the appropriate representative.	Requester should contact the PDWG representative to identify the nature and purpose of its request and to seek information about any applicable confidentiality protections or restrictions.

⁵ WECC Reliability Assessment Committee [System Data Work Group](#)

⁶ WECC Reliability Assessment Committee [Production Cost Model Data Work Group](#)

Appendix A – WestConnect TO Data Contacts

TO Member	Contact Name	Contact Email
AEPCO	Boris Tumarin	btumarin@azgt.coop
APS	Chris Fecke-Stoudt	Christopher.FeckeStoudt@aps.com
BEPC	Matthew Stoltz	mstoltz@bepc.com
BHP	Wes Wingen	Wes.wingen@blackhillscorp.com
CSU	Cliff Berthelot	cberthelot@csu.org
EPE	Roberto Favela	roberto.favela@epelectric.com
IID	Sabrina Barber	sbarber@iid.com
LADWP	Faranak Sarbaz	Faranak.Sarbaz@ladwp.com
NVE	Alex Fratkin	afratkin@nvenergy.com
PNM	George Nail	george.nail@pnm.com
PRPA	Jeremy Brownrigg	brownriggj@prpa.org
SMUD	Janice Zewe	Janice.Zewe@smud.org
SRP	Justin Lee	Justin.Lee@srpnet.com
TANC	Phil Sanchez	psanchez@tanc.us
TEP	Todd Lichtas	tlichtas@Tep.com
TSGT	Ryan Hubbard	rhubbard@tristategt.org
WAPA	Roy Gearhart	rgearhar@wapa.gov
XCEL	Tom Green	Thomas.Green@xcelenergy.com