

STATE OF VERMONT
PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION

CASE NO. 23-0834-INV

INVESTIGATION INTO THE PERFORMANCE OF THE
VERMONT ELECTRIC UTILITIES DURING THE
WINTER OF 2022-2023 ON THE DELIVERY
OF ELECTRICITY IN VERMONT

September 22, 2023
1:30 p.m.

Via videoconference

Workshop held before the Vermont Public
Utility Commission, via GoToMeeting, on September 22,
2023, beginning at 1:30 p.m.

P R E S E N T

COMMISSION MEMBERS: Anthony Z. Roisman, Chairman
Margaret Cheney
J. Riley Allen

STAFF: Mary Jo Krolewski, Utilities
Analyst
Dan Burke, Staff Attorney

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1 So I think a lot of great things came
2 out of these discussions so far. And I just have to
3 say at least this commission staff person really does
4 appreciate all the work that the Vermont utilities do
5 do. And we recognize you face some very difficult
6 situations out there just given the nature of
7 Vermont. And your territories are all somewhat
8 unique, and we do recognize that.

9 I think Commissioner Allen wanted to
10 say something.

11 COMMISSIONER ALLEN: Well, you know, I
12 think this is a two-way street. I mean we are all in
13 this together. And it's important from my
14 perspective to know if there are kind of specific
15 asks of, you know, the regulatory side, so certainly
16 of the commission or of the Department or the things
17 that come to mind.

18 And I don't want to put people on the
19 spot now, but in any follow-up comments if there are
20 things that we need to be thinking about differently,
21 and working on, that would be great to have a heads
22 up. If there is something you want to put out there
23 right now, I would certainly welcome that as well.

24 MS. KROLEWSKI: Yeah. And just to add
25 to that, some of you did file some responses to our

1 questions, but we certainly are kind of looking
2 forward to everyone filing a written response and
3 making suggestions as well beyond our -- beyond the
4 questions we have asked or just points that you think
5 would be helpful for the commission to consider. So
6 just wanted to make that clear too.

7 And I think Bill Jordan had a question.
8 Or -- something to say.

9 MR. JORDAN: Yes. It's more of a
10 comment. I thought this was a great discussion
11 today. And I just wanted to mention sort of all at
12 once three obvious trends that everybody is seeing,
13 but I just wanted to sort of put it all together.
14 The first one is that trees are getting taller.
15 Vermont is 70 to 80 percent forested. Every year the
16 trees are growing 6 inches or two or three feet. As
17 time goes on there are more and more trees that are
18 tall enough outside the right of way to fall on to
19 the lines within the right of way.

20 The second trend is that storms --
21 severe storms seem to be getting more frequent. And
22 so putting those two together, the likelihood of
23 outages, especially for overhead construction seems
24 to be increasing.

25 And then the other trend is that we

1 seem to be becoming more and more dependent upon
2 electricity especially now with phones that are over
3 fiberoptic instead of the old copper lines and people
4 working from home. And so the consequence of outages
5 is also increasing in my mind.

6 And so it seems like we are in
7 challenging times, and as Commissioner Allen said, we
8 are all in this together. And we all have to be
9 thinking outside the box. Business as usual isn't
10 necessarily going to work. And so we just need to be
11 continually innovative to solve these issues and keep
12 the power on for customers who depend upon it.
13 That's all I wanted to mention.

14 MS. KROLEWSKI: Okay. Not sure if
15 anybody else has any closing thoughts. I don't want
16 to hold people here too long.

17 I think what we will do is we will set
18 a deadline for responses by commission scheduling
19 order, I think, might be the best way to just make
20 sure that everybody knows -- everybody is aware of
21 that. But it would probably be, you know, three to
22 four weeks out is my guess, but we will formalize
23 that.

24 I don't know if anybody else has any
25 closing thoughts at this point.

1 (No response)

2 MS. KROLEWSKI: Okay. Great. Well
3 again, really appreciate the whole discussion, and I
4 thought it was really helpful and informative. And
5 yeah, I think Bill Jordan made some great points, and
6 yeah, we are -- definitely just need to keep thinking
7 ahead at the future.

8 So thanks a lot. And I think we are
9 adjourned.

10 (Whereupon, the proceeding was
11 adjourned at 4:25 p.m.)
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