



AER authorisation of software changes by AEMO

Stakeholder submissions invited on rule change request

The Australian Energy Market Commission (AEMC) has commenced consultation under an expedited process on a rule change request from the AER which seeks to provide AEMO with greater flexibility in relation to the manner in which it makes software changes.

Details of the rule change request

Under the National Electricity Rules (NER), the Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO) is required to obtain authorisation from the Australian Energy Regulator (AER) for any changes to its computer software required for the operation of the national electricity market (NEM).

The AER has reviewed its obligation under the NER and reached the view that authorising each of AEMO's software changes would be of little value, given the software change process currently established in AEMO's IT Change Management Procedures Manual.

The rule change request seeks to amend the NER to remove this obligation, and proposes that a new obligation be placed in the NER under which AEMO would be required to undertake software changes in accordance with its IT Change Management Procedures Manual.

The AER considers that the rule would serve to codify the existing practice, which would become more streamlined and benefit all market participants as a result.

Expedited process

The AER has requested that the rule change request be treated as a non-controversial rule under section 96 of the National Electricity Law (NEL). This process allows request that are perceived to be 'non-controversial' to be considered within a shorter timeframe. Under the NEL, a non-controversial rule is defined as a rule that is unlikely to have a significant effect on the NEM.

Under an expedited process, no draft rule determination is published and the AEMC has six weeks from the initiation of the rule change process to publish a final rule determination.

Consultation process

The AEMC has now initiated the consultation process on this rule change request. To facilitate stakeholder submissions, the AEMC has published a consultation paper. The AEMC intends to expedite the rule change proposal on the grounds that it considers the proposal to be non-controversial, subject to consideration of any written objections.

The rule change request and consultation paper are available to view on the AEMC's website.

Objections to the expedited process must be submitted no later than 7 November 2013.

Submissions on the rule change request and consultation paper are due by no later than 5pm on 21 November 2013.

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