Ontario Energy Board | Commission de l'énergie de l'Ontario

Ontario

BY E-MAIL AND WEB POSTING

July 28, 2025

To: All Licensed Electricity Distributors
All Participants in Consultation Process EB-2021-0307
All Other Interested Parties

Re: Amendments to Reporting and Record-keeping Requirements (Reliability and Power Quality Review – File No.: EB-2021-0307)

The Ontario Energy Board (OEB) is amending its Reporting and Recordkeeping Requirements (RRR) for electricity distributors as part of its Reliability and Power Quality Review (RPQR) initiative. These changes aim to provide greater insight into distributor performance during severe weather events and improve visibility into customer interruptions caused by issues in the host distributor's distribution or transmission systems. The amendments will come into force on January 1, 2026.

The new RRRs align with and complement recent amendments to the Distribution System Code (DSC) that are related to customer communications during severe weather events. They will provide greater insight into distributor actions during such events and help to establish a baseline for evaluating distributor performance in communicating with customers and restoring service following major interruptions.

Key new requirements for distributors include:

- **Damage assessment timelines:** reporting how quickly distributor's assess damage to their systems during severe weather events, offering better insight into their restoration performance.
- **Extended service interruptions:** reporting on the number of customers experiencing prolonged interruptions – ranging from less than 24 hours to more than seven days – offering greater visibility into the customer impact from major events.
- **Customer Communications:** the need to maintain records of estimated restoration time communications and reporting on methods used to communicate with customers during severe weather events.

- **Supply Point Interruption reporting** –reporting on the cause and customer impacts due to Loss of Supply events. This enhanced reporting will improve coordination between distributors and promote greater consistency in reliability data across the sector.

These RRR amendments were developed in consultation with the RPQR Working Group, which was established to provide technical input and support in developing a comprehensive regulatory framework for reliability and power quality in the electricity sector.

A summary of the amendments, which are set out in Appendices A and B to this letter, follows.

A. Customer Restoration & Communication During Severe Weather Events

Effective May 5, 2025, the DSC set out minimum requirements for distributors in communicating with customers when there are widespread power interruptions in a distributor's service area caused by severe weather.

The OEB is establishing the following new Major Event Response Reporting requirements as the next step towards improving distribution sector resilience and responsiveness, and building a baseline of how effectively distributors are restoring service. These new requirements are not expected to distract distributors from their primary focus on the safe and rapid restoration of service during a major event, as reporting is not due until 60 days, or in exceptional cases, 90 days after the event concludes.

Time to Complete Damage Assessments

Section 4.9.2 of the DSC requires distributors to make available to customers an estimated time of restoration of service as quickly as possible and in any event no more than 4 hours after completion of a damage assessment. This requirement highlights the importance of conducting damage assessments as a critical first step in the restoration process. Timely damage assessments also serve as a key indicator of overall restoration performance.

To support this, the OEB will require distributors to report:

- The total number of damage assessments performed by the distributor during the course of an event;

- The percentage of assessments completed within specific time intervals after the interruption began.

This approach reflects input from distributor members of the RPQR Working Group, who emphasized that the time and effort required to complete a damage assessment can vary greatly depending on the specific circumstances of a weather event. They also noted that hazardous conditions may limit access to affected sites, further delaying assessment efforts.

The OEB recognizes that additional damage assessments may be necessary for the same interruption, particularly in response to newly discovered or evolving system issues. In such cases, each assessment should be counted separately, even if they pertain to the same interruption.

Distributors' Communication Methods

Section 4.9.4 of the DSC requires distributors to maintain at least one method of communicating with customers at all times during a severe weather event. The RPQR Working Group has noted that severe weather events can impair certain communication channels, particularly those dependent on electricity. As such, understanding how these different communication channels perform during severe weather events will inform the OEB and distributors about opportunities to improve severe weather resilience and responsiveness.

Distributors will be required to identify the method(s) they used when communicating with customers about a severe weather event, and to identify whether any of the communication method(s) used became unavailable during the event.

Event-Specific Reliability Indicators

In order to assess the impact of severe weather events on customers, distributors will be required to provide the System Average Interruption Duration Index (SAIDI), and System Average Interruption Frequency Index (SAIFI) for weather-related Major Events.

These reliability indices are key performance indicators that provide insight into the frequency and duration of power interruptions experienced by customers. The collection of this information will enhance regulatory oversight, providing a deeper understanding of the impacts of severe weather events and supporting the development of targeted, data-driven strategies to strengthen system reliability and enhance resilience against future disruptions.

Number of Customers Experiencing Extended Service Interruptions

Current reporting focuses primarily on the overall restoration timeline, requiring distributors to report the number of hours required to restore power to 90% of affected customers. While this metric offers a high-level view of event duration, it does not fully

reflect the experience of customers who remain without power for extended periods. As part of the Major Event Response reporting, distributors will be required to provide additional information regarding the number of customers who experience extended service interruptions of specified durations.

Record-keeping: Communication of Estimated Time of Restoration

The DSC requires distributors to make an estimated time of restoration available to customers as quickly as possible, and in any event no more than four hours after completion of a damage assessment.

While the OEB does not intend to require distributors to report detailed timelines for the issuance of estimated time(s) of restoration, it will require distributors to maintain records of these communications. These records may be reviewed to assess distributors' adherence to the DSC requirements, as well as to identify trends related to the timing of these communications.

B. Reporting of Loss of Supply Events

As noted in the OEB's letter dated November 30, 2021 there are gaps in the information collected regarding Loss of Supply events. Distributors currently record these interruptions under cause code number 2, as outlined in the table to section 2.1.4.2.5 of the RRR. These interruptions are excluded from the distributors' performance scorecard and their root causes are not captured. Further, transmitters, host distributors, and embedded distributors can have differing views about what qualifies as a Loss of Supply event.

In November 2022, the OEB amended the RRR to improve the consistency and quality of reliability data. These amendments included clarifications on what constitutes a Loss of Supply event and introduced two sub-cause codes: Loss of Supply Transmission and Loss of Supply Distribution. While these changes have improved consistency, further detail is needed to clarify responsibilities and enhance the accuracy of reporting.

Hydro One Networks Inc., as the host distributor for most of the embedded distributors in Ontario, has been leading a phased implementation of Distribution Supply Point Interruption reporting. Each phase has integrated more distributors to collaboratively develop and refine processes for data collection and validation. The final phase, which will incorporate the remaining embedded distributors, is expected to be completed by the end of 2025.

Building on the results of this work, the OEB is now incorporating the Distribution Supply Point Interruption reporting requirements to the RRR, with full implementation beginning

on January 1, 2026. The first reports covering the Loss of Supply interruptions throughout 2026 are to be submitted to the OEB by April 30, 2027.

Under the new requirements, two reports will be submitted:

- **Embedded Distributor Report**: For each sustained interruption determined to be caused by a Loss of Supply, embedded distributors must report detailed information specified in Appendix B to this letter, including the number of customers impacted by a loss of supply.
- **Host Distributor Report**: Host distributors must report supply point interruptions affecting embedded distributors based on their own system data and the information provided by the embedded distributor.

These reports will improve the accuracy and consistency of reliability data and completion of the reports will require collaboration between host and embedded distributors. By increasing information sharing, the reporting will help identify opportunities for reliability-focused investments and deepen understanding of reliability issues affecting end-use customers.

The OEB acknowledges that discrepancies may arise between host and embedded distributor reports due to technical limitations, such as the availability of interruption identification and management systems. In such cases, the embedded distributor and the host distributor are required to document these discrepancies in their reporting.

If you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact Industry Relations at IndustryRelations@oeb.ca. The OEB's toll free number is 1-888-632-6273.

Sincerely,

Brian Hewson
Vice President, Consumer Protection & Industry Performance

Attachments:
Appendix A – Amendments to Sections 2.1.4.2.10 and 2.3 of the Electricity Reporting and Record-keeping Requirements
Appendix B – Amendments to Section 2.1.4.2 of the Electricity Reporting and Record-keeping Requirements

APPENDIX A

Amendments to Section 2.1.4.2.10 and Section 2.3 of the Electricity Reporting and Record-keeping Requirements

July 28, 2025

I. Effective January 1, 2026, section 2.1.4.2.10 of the Electricity Reporting and Record-keeping Requirements is amended as follows (red underlined text indicates proposed additions and red strikethrough text indicates proposed deletions):

2.1.4.2.10 Major Event Response Reporting

When a distributor determines an outage was caused by a Major Event, it shall file a report with the OEB that outlines the distributor's response to the Major Event, including answers to all of the questions set out below.

A distributor shall file this report with the OEB within 60 days of the end of the Major Event unless there are exceptional circumstances, in which case the report can be filed within 90 days of the end of the Major Event. The distributor shall also post this report on its website at the same time it is filed with the OEB.

Please note that, except Loss of Supply events, a Major Event shall meet all of the criteria listed under the first, second and fourth paragraph of the Major Event definition written under the RRR 2.1.4.2.

Prior to the Major Event

1. Did the distributor have any prior warning that the Major Event would occur?
2. If the distributor did have prior warning, did the distributor arrange to have extra employees on duty or on standby prior to the Major Event beginning?
3. If the distributor did have prior warning, did the distributor issue any ~~media announcements~~ alert to the public warning of possible outages resulting from the pending Major Event?
4. Did the distributor train its staff on the response plans to prepare for this type of Major Event?

During the Major Event

1. Please identify the main contributing Cause of the Major Event as per the table in section 2.1.4.2.5 of the Electricity Reporting and Record Keeping Requirements. Please provide a brief description of the event ~~(i.e. what happened)~~. If the event was caused by weather conditions, please specify the type of weather involved – such as high winds, freezing rain, tornadoes, ice storms, blizzards, heavy rainfall, flooding, or lightning storms.

2. Was the IEEE Standard 1366 used to derive the threshold for the Major Event?
3. When did the Major Event begin (date and time)?
4. If the Major Event was not caused by adverse weather, did the distributor issue any information about this Major Event, such as estimated times of restoration, to the public during the Major Event? If yes, please provide a brief description of the information. If no, please explain.
5. How many customers were interrupted during the Major Event? What percentage of the distributor's total customer base did the interrupted customers represent?
6. How many hours did it take to restore 90% of the customers who were interrupted?
7. How many customers experienced service interruptions lasting less than 24 hours?
8. How many customers experienced service interruptions lasting between 24 and 48 hours?
9. How many customers experienced service interruptions lasting between 48 and 96 hours?
10. How many customers experienced service interruptions lasting between 96 and 168 hours?
11. How many customers experienced service interruptions lasting over 168 hours?
12. Were there any outages associated with Loss of Supply during the Major Event? If yes, please report on the duration and frequency of the Loss of Supply outages.
13. In responding to the Major Event, did the distributor utilize assistance through a third party mutual assistance agreement with other utilities? If yes, please provide the name of the utilities who provided the assistance?
14. Did the distributor run out of any needed equipment or materials during the Major Event? If yes, please describe the shortages.
15. Provide the following characteristics of the Major Event:
    i. Total number of feeders interrupted during the course of the event
    ii. The maximum number of customers that were concurrently without power at any point during the event.
16. What is the total number of damage assessments performed by the distributor during the course of the event?

17. What percentage of damage assessments were completed:
    i. Within 4 hours after the interruption began
    ii. Within 8 hours after the interruption began
    iii. Within 12 hours after the interruption began
    iv. Over 12 hours after the interruption began
18. What communication methods were used to inform customers during the Major Event? Select all that apply:
    - Distributor's website
    - Social media
    - Email
    - Text message
    - Telephone line
    - Radio broadcast
    - Other (please specify)
19. During the Major Event, did any of the communication methods used become unavailable? If so, identify which one(s).
20. Provide SAIDI and SAIFI values for this Major Event.

After the Major Event

1. What actions, if any, will be taken to be prepared for, or mitigate, such Major Events in the future?

II. Effective January 1, 2026, section 2.3 of the the Electricity Reporting and Record-keeping Requirements is amended by adding the following new section 2.3.15:

2.3.15 *A distributor shall maintain and provide at such times as may be requested by the Board records of all communications with customers that include estimated times of restoration as required by section 4.9.2 of the Distribution System Code, including the date and time of each communication, the method of communication used, and the number of customers to whom each estimated time of restoration applied.*

APPENDIX B

Amendments to Section 2.1.4.2 of the Electricity Reporting and Record-keeping Requirements

July 28, 2025

Effective January 1, 2026, section 2.1.4.2 of the Electricity Reporting and Record-keeping Requirements is amended by adding the following new section 2.1.4.2.13:

2.1.4.2.13 Distribution Supply Point Interruption Reporting

Embedded distributors shall report the following for each sustained distribution supply point interruption caused by a Loss of Supply (cause code "2, Loss of Supply" in the table to section 2.1.4.2.5) during the year:

- Name of the host distributor
- Name of feeder
- Name of the Distribution Supply Point
- Date and time of the interruption
- Number of customers whose service was interrupted
- Interruption duration (hours)
- Location of the fault that triggered the interruption
- Root cause of the interruption, as identified by the host distributor.

Host distributors shall report the following for each interruption that resulted in a sustained supply point interruption affecting an embedded distributor:

- Name of the Distribution Supply Point
- Name of the embedded distributor
- Name of feeder
- Date and time of the interruption
- Interruption duration (hours)
- Root cause of the interruption

For the purposes of implementing this reporting requirement, embedded distributors shall communicate with their host distributor in order to confirm the nature and root cause of the event.

If the host distributor is unable to confirm whether the cause was upstream interruption, and the embedded distributor choose to classify the interruption as a "Loss of Supply", it shall report the interruption under this section. However, the embedded distributor shall note the discrepancy in the report.