

Southern California Edison

WSD-011 – Resolution implementing the requirements of Public Utilities Code Sections 8389(d)(1), (2) and (4) related to catastrophic wildfire caused by electrical corporations subject to the Commission’s regulatory authority

DATA REQUEST SET CalAdvocates - SCE - 2021 WMP - 09

To: Cal Advocates
Prepared by: Kyle Ferree
Job Title: Senior Advisor
Received Date: 3/4/2021

Response Date: 3/9/2021

Question 014:

The following questions relate to the use of live field observers (LFO) immediately prior to and during a PSPS event.

In its 2021 WMP, SCE states that:

SCE considers the National Weather Service Wind Advisory levels (defined as 31 mph sustained wind speed and 46 mph gust wind speed) and the 99th percentile of historical wind speeds in the area to set activation thresholds.

However, in a response to the Acton Town Council’s discovery request, SCE states that:

After determining the modified multiplier, we must determine if it’s to be applied to the circuit’s “Wind/Gust Threshold” or its “99th Percentile” threshold. The “Wind/Gust Threshold” is determined by historical wind-related outages and the “99th Percentile” threshold is determined by the 99th percentile of historical wind speeds recorded for the circuit.

Is the Wind/Gust Threshold the same as SCE’s use of NWS Wind Advisory level of 31 mph (sustained) and 46 mph (gust)? If not, explain which criteria SCE currently uses.

Response to Question 014:

In almost all cases, SCE uses the lower of the NWS Wind Advisory level of 31 mph (sustained) and 46 mph (gust) or a circuit’s 99th percentile wind speed to perform PSPS notifications and Incident Management Team activation.

However, roughly a dozen SCE distribution circuits have outage-informed thresholds that are marginally lower than the NWS Wind Advisory level of 31 mph (sustained) and 46 mph (gust). These circuits have sustained concerning historical outages at wind speeds lower than the NWS Wind Advisory level and have had their threshold capped until completed maintenance has demonstrated the ability for each circuit to sustain higher wind speeds.

An example of this treatment was seen on the Shovel circuit in Acton in 2020. SCE was able to raise Shovel’s outage-informed threshold of 25 mph (sustained) or 40 mph (gust) to the NWS Wind Advisory level. This occurred in late 2020 after confirming that key outstanding maintenance was completed and that the circuit was able to withstand NWS Wind Advisory level wind speeds without mechanical failure.