

## Major Event Day: Alectra Utilities - Horizon Utilities Rate Zone, March 8, 2017

### RRR 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. Distributor responses are identified in the text boxes 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.

#### **Prior to the Major Event**

1. **Did the distributor have any prior warning that the Major Event would occur? (Yes/No)**

No.

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? If so, please give a brief description of arrangements.**

N/A

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- 3. If the distributor did have prior warning, did the distributor issue any media announcements to the public warning of possible outages resulting from the pending Major Event? If so, through what channels?**

N/A

- 4. Did the distributor train its staff on the response plans for a Major Event? If so, please give a brief description of the training process.**

Yes. Alectra Inc. has a Corporate Emergency Plan supported by individual Emergency Plans for each of its four rate zones including the Horizon Utilities rate zone covering the Hamilton and St. Catharine's service areas. The Emergency Plan is based on the Incident Management System (IMS) and requires training exercises to be conducted on an annual basis. Each exercise must be debriefed and critiqued, and a brief written summary of the debriefing is distributed to all staff participating in the exercise. Training of Alectra system controllers (and others as required) is performed on a regular basis, and continual review of the Emergency Plan is performed.

- 5. Did the distributor have third party mutual assistance agreements in place prior to the Major Event? If so, who were the third parties (i.e., other distributors, private contractors)?**

Yes. Private contractors assisted with repairs during and after the storm.

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### During the Major Event

**1. Please explain why this event was considered by the distributor to be a Major Event.**

Strong winds impacting the Hamilton and St. Catharines service areas commenced at 11:06am. The strong winds continued through the remainder of the day and were the root cause of the majority of outages. The total customer minutes of interruptions experienced on March 8, 2017 due to outages that started on the same day exceeded the Major Event Day threshold of 1.84 million customer minutes.

**2. Was the IEEE Standard 1366 used to identify the scope of the Major Event? If not, why not?**

Yes.

**3. Please identify the Cause of Interruption for the Major Event as per the table in section 2.1.4.2.5.**

3. Tree Contacts - Customer interruptions caused by faults resulting from tree contact with energized circuits.

5. Defective Equipment - Customer interruptions resulting from distributor equipment failures due to deterioration from age, incorrect maintenance, or imminent failures detected by maintenance.

6. Adverse Weather - Customer interruptions resulting from rain, ice storms, snow, winds, extreme temperatures, freezing rain, frost, or other extreme weather conditions (exclusive of Code 3 and Code 4 events).

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4. **Were there any declarations by government authorities, regulators or the grid operator of an emergency state of operation in relation to the Major Event?**

No.

5. **When did the Major Event begin?**

**Date:** March 8, 2017

**Time (For Example HH:MM AM):** 11:06 AM

6. **What percentage of on-call distributor staff was available at the start of the Major Event and utilized during the Major Event?**

All field staff were available at the start of the Major Event. As the event continued into the evening hours, 100% dedicated On-Call staff, additional support staff, and private contractors continued with the restoration effort.

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- 7. Did the distributor issue any estimated times of restoration (ETR) to the public during the Major Event? If so, through what channels?**

Yes.

1. ETRs were published on Horizon Utilities' website, in addition to an outage map.
2. Alectra Utilities' Corporate Communications teams issued ETR notices for each outage that occurred during the extreme weather event via Twitter, that included a link to Horizon Utilities' website. Any responses to customers' messages via Twitter also included ETRs.

- 8. If the distributor did issue ETRs, at what date and time did the distributor issue its first ETR to the public?**

11:07 AM March 8, 2017

- 9. Did the distributor issue any updated ETRs to the public? If so, how many and at what dates and times were they issued?**

Yes, there were 33 ETRs issued regarding various outages throughout the event. The dates and times of issuance were:

March 8, 2017: 11:07, 11:13, 11:15, 11:33, 11:36, 11:37, 12:05, 12:06, 12:09, 12:20, 13:12, 13:26, 13:48, 14:00, 14:19, 15:10, 15:52, 16:06, 17:10, 18:39, 19:05, 20:26, 20:56, 20:58, 21:23, 21:26, 22:38

March 9, 2017: 00:01, 00:02, 02:46, 02:55, 07:19, 09:23

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- 10. Did the distributor inform customers about the options for contacting the distributor to receive more details about outage/restoration efforts? If so, please describe how this was achieved.**

Yes. Social media messages via Twitter are published with a link to Horizon Utilities' website which includes an outage map and ETRs for the Hamilton and St. Catharines service areas. Alectra Utilities' Corporate Communications teams responded to each customer message via Twitter and provided ETRs, outage updates and methods for contacting the LDC.

- 11. Did the distributor issue press releases, hold press conferences or send information to customers through social media notification? If so, how many times and what was the general content?**

Yes. Information was sent to customers through social media notification 200+ times. Approximately 200-300 tweets and direct messages were posted/responded to. The general content of the messages was: a link to Horizon Utilities' website, ETRs, outage updates and methods for contacting the LDC.

- 12. What percentage of customer calls were dealt with by the distributor's IVR system (if available) versus a live representative?**

0%

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- 13. Did the distributor provide information about the Major Event on its website? If so, how many times during the Major Event was the website updated?**

Yes. The website was updated 53 times.

- 14. Was there any point in time when the website was inaccessible? If so, what percentage of the total outage time was the website inaccessible?**

No.

- 15. How many customers were interrupted during the Major Event? What percentage of the distributor's total customer base did the interrupted customers represent?**

29,369 customers were interrupted during the major event, representing 12% of the customer base in the Horizon Utilities rate zone and approximately 3% of the customer base for Alectra Utilities Corporation.

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**16. How many hours did it take to restore 90% of the customers who were interrupted?**

9 hours.

**17. Was any distributed generation used to supply load during the Major Event? (Yes/No)**

No.

**18. Were there any outages associated with Loss of Supply during the Major Event? If so, please report on the duration and frequency of Loss of Supply outages.**

No.

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**19. In responding to the Major Event, did the distributor utilize assistance through a third party mutual assistance agreement?**

No.

**20. Did the distributor run out of any needed equipment or materials during the Major Event? If so, please describe the shortages.**

No.

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### After the Major Event

- 1. What steps, if any, are being taken to be prepared for or mitigate such Major Events in the future (i.e., staff training, process improvements, system upgrades)?**

Alectra Utilities is taking steps, as follows:

- 1) Providing contingency training to staff regarding backup power supplies for automated switches.
- 2) Improving the damage assessment process, prioritization of response strategy, and improving communications to field staff are future strategies in development.
- 3) Implementing programming changes to increase website response time for customers accessing outage information for the Hamilton and St. Catharines service areas.
- 4) Revising 3rd party call centre service provider training to address gaps that became apparent since this was the first MED for which the service provider was on call.

- 2. What lessons did the distributor learn in responding to the Major Event that will be useful in responding to the next Major Event?**

- 1) New Emergency Plan activation levels will be implemented to improve communication between field staff, Control Room and management.
- 2) An Outage Information Coordinator will be used during the next event to ensure consistent outage information across all channels.
- 3) Real time updates from the 3rd party call centre service provider are required; overflow calls from the service provider should be redirected to Alectra Utilities' customer service agents.
- 4) Minimize crews working through the night to ensure full staffing during the day when it is safer and more productive.

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3. Did the distributor survey its customers after the Major Event to determine the customers' opinions of how effective the distributor was in responding to the Major Event? If so, please describe the results.

No.

**Additional Information**

In addition to responding the questions above, distributors may provide supplemental information to the OEB in an attachment.

**Attachment provided (Yes/No):** No attachment provided.