



Future Electric Utility Regulation Concept Papers Priority Topics

September 29, 2014

The following list of topics for the OE-funded *Future Electric Utility Regulation* series reflects both immediate and longer-term priorities of the Advisory Group at this time, based on a written survey, two group meetings and individual communications with members. LBNL will revisit priority topics with the Advisory Group before initiating additional papers in 2015.

Topics for Initial Concept Papers (contracting with authors Q1 FY15; drafts due Q2 FY15)

* indicates point-counterpoint topic

1. What functions does the electric system of the future need, and how can we find the best entities to perform those roles? What are the monopoly functions that preserve the public interest in a future with high levels of distributed energy resources (DER)?*
2. What distribution system structure—for example, independent distribution system operators vs. open network—best aligns with a high DER future?*

Priorities for Subsequent Concept Papers

3. How can state utility regulators foster competition for value-added electricity products and services while allowing utilities to play new roles?*
4. How can the utility grid, customers and society share in the value created by new DER technologies? *Interest in incorporating into other topics, instead of a stand-alone paper.*
5. What are the resource planning needs in a future with high levels of DERs and vibrant markets, and how should the planning process work?
6. Performance-based regulation: How should performance metrics be designed to align with public policy goals for DER, and how can performance be measured?
7. Evolutionary toolbox for COS regulation: Which tools work best for regulating utilities as they evolve into wires and services companies (e.g., forward test years, decoupling, shareholder incentives, multi-year rate plans, etc.)?*
8. What's the best way to recover utilities' fixed costs and meet policy goals and customer needs? * *Interest in combining with the "Evolutionary toolbox" topic, above.*
9. What value-added electricity services are consumer- and investor-owned utilities offering now, and what are the lessons learned, current issues and solutions?
10. How should distribution system services be unbundled and priced?*
11. What are the potential impacts of 111(d) standards, and how will these affect regulation of electric utilities (including multi-state utilities) and resource dispatch?