##### June 4, 2024

**TO:** All Interested Parties

**FROM:** Caroline Trum, Director, Wholesale Electric Quadrant

**RE: WEQ/RMQ/WGQ Cybersecurity Activities**

On May 8, 2024, the WEQ Cybersecurity Subcommittee held an initial meeting to begin conducting its yearly review of the WEQ Business Practice Standards to evaluate the need for any modifications to meet changing market conditions or support cybersecurity-related activities by FERC and NERC. As part of this review, the subcommittee also assesses the NAESB Accreditation Requirements for Authorized Certificate Authorities (ACAs), which establish the technical requirements a certificate authority must meet to become certified as a NAESB ACA. The subcommittee participants have identified a number of areas to evaluate for potential impact to the WEQ Business Practice Standards, including NERC projects to develop revisions to the NERC Critical Infrastructure Protection (CIP) Reliability Standards and FERC action, such as Order No. 893 – Incentives for Advanced Cybersecurity Investment. Additionally, the participants reviewed and discussed the National Security Memorandum on Critical Infrastructure Security and Resilience and are monitoring several ongoing industry activities. These include efforts by the Certificate Authority/Browser (CA/B) Forum to consider increased security mechanisms for Public Key Infrastructure digital certificates. During the meeting, the participants made a preliminary determination to continue to monitor the identified efforts as no standard changes are likely needed at this time.

Later this year, the WGQ and RMQ plan to convene for their yearly reviews of the cybersecurity-related standards impacting the wholesale gas and retail markets, respectively. These proactive efforts include an include an evaluation of the data fields identified within standards and removal of legacy functionalities to help limit potential cybersecurity vulnerabilities as well as an assessment of the communication protocols and encryption methodologies referenced within the standards. The WGQ also reviews the minimum hardware and software components identified within its standards.

In addition to these yearly reviews, the 2024 WEQ Annual Plan includes an assignment to consider the development of business practice standards for cybersecurity disclosure policies to support industry implementation of any applicable regulations. Further, the WEQ and RMQ have a jointly assigned item to continue discussions regarding cybersecurity protections necessary to secure electronic communications between distributed energy resource (DER) aggregators, utilities, and system operators. This effort, initiated in October 2023, will reconvene following the completion of a standard contract for the sale and purchase of distribution services from DER aggregations, being developed a the request of the U.S. Department of Energy.