

Expedited Interconnection Process - Subgroup to IIRG

Proposal

Disband the Expedited Interconnection Task Force in the TSRG and re-form within the IIRG to better reach consensus between Industry and EDCs. Current TSRG subgroup members will be given the option to become core members of the new subgroup. Conduct vote to assign one IIRG subgroup lead each from Industry group and EDC group.

Subgroup Mission

Enable an interconnection pathway for commercial projects that is truly Expedited for most applicants. Create more upfront predictability for project owners and developers that apply to the Expedited Process for interconnection. The information required to determine with high probability whether a project would qualify for the Expedited Process should be publicly and readily available based on updated eligibility criteria, including utility-specific standards that might apply.

Desired Outcomes

By June 2024, IIRG submits to the DPU a draft interconnection tariff incorporating IIRG recommendations regarding the Expedited Process. Adoption of new interconnection tariff by January 2025 results in improved queue speed and lower queue costs for projects that are deemed eligible for the Expedited Process.

Scope

This new IIRG subgroup will address Expedited interconnection processes - including key evaluation and decision criteria - as well as costs and timelines.

- Apply new tariff language and approaches included in the Simplified Process update to Expedited process (e.g., definition of “Export Capacity” and Limited Export methods)
- Identify and evaluate each EDC’s triggers that cause an Expedited project to require an Impact Study.
- Identify and evaluate each EDC’s triggers that cause an Expedited project to be included in a Group Study.
 - Should projects that are unlikely to change the Group Study outcome be included in the Group Study Process if they can interconnect safely and reliably in the interim without the expected upgrades?

- Can Group Studies be bifurcated, and can there be an “Expedited Group Study” that enables smaller projects to safely and reliably interconnect their facilities with only minor upgrades that can be constructed faster and at a lower cost, and that can also be utilized by the complementary Group Study upgrades eventually?
- Explore how to increase EDC’s size threshold for projects that can qualify for the Expedited Process, contingent on certain grid conditions ?
 - What are the grid conditions that determine size limitations?
 - What technologies (customer-owned, EDC-owned) can be used to overcome size limits?
- Explore how co-located ESS can be used to mitigate the factors that might otherwise trigger an Impact Study?
 - Can the EDCs evaluate an ESS without requiring an Impact Study?
 - Can the EDC’s explore the possibility of an Expedited ESS Study Process?
- Benchmark MA to expedited interconnection processes in other states with similarly high levels of DER penetration
- Break this overall scope down into monthly topics (sometimes more than one topic per month) to achieve the goal of reaching consensus update on tariff updates by June 2024.

The subgroup will move expeditiously on technical questions that arise, using policies in benchmark states, TSRG and/or third-party engineering firms as consultative resources.