Certification Notification & Preliminary Questionnaire

The NERC Organization Certification Process, detailed in [Appendix 5A of the NERC Rules of Procedure](https://www.nerc.com/AboutNERC/Pages/Rules-of-Procedure.aspx), serves to ensure that the entity initially applying to be a Balancing Authority (BA), Reliability Coordinator (RC), or Transmission Operator (TOP) has the tools, processes, training, and procedures in place to operate reliably. Such an entity will demonstrate the ability to remain compliant with all of the NERC Reliability Standards applicable to the function(s) for which it wishes to perform by undergoing a Full Certification.

A Certification Review will be conducted when an already operating and certified RC, BA, or TOP makes certain changes. The decision to certify changes to an already operating and certified Registered Entity is a collaborative decision between the affected Regional Entity(ies) and NERC. NERC has the final authority regarding the decision. Items that are to be considered for a Certification Review include one or more of the following non-exhaustive list of changes from an entity’s prior certification assessments.

1. Changes to Registered Entity’s footprint\* (including de-certification changes to existing JRO/CFR assignments or sub-set list of requirements)
	1. The review of changes to an already registered and operational Entity’s footprint is primarily concerned with ensuring the gaining functional entity has the tools, training, and security in place to reliably operate with new responsibilities. Changes to an entity’s footprint can be characterized by new metered boundaries associated with the integration or dis-association of existing electrical areas of the BPS (Reliability Coordinator Area, Transmission Operator Area, or Balancing Authority Area).
2. Relocation of the Control Center
	1. Fundamental to the reliable operation of the interconnected transmission network are the control centers that continuously monitor, assess, and control the generation and transmission power flows on the BES. Of interest are impacts to the functionality provided within these facilities for continued reliable operations of the BES that affect:
		* Tools and applications that System Operators use for situational awareness of the BES
		* Data exchange capabilities
		* Interpersonal (and alternate) Communications capabilities
		* Power source(s)
		* Physical and cyber security
	2. The impact of the relocation of the Control Center on the entity’s ability to perform the functions for which the entity is registered under normal and emergency conditions should be explored and documented to understand the manner in which the Control Center continues to support the reliable operations of the BES.
3. Modification of the Energy Management System (EMS) which is expected to materially affect CIP security perimeters or the System Operator’s situational awareness tools, functionality, or machine interfaces.

\*This includes changes in ownership of BES Facilities, changes in the applicability of the BES Definition to a Facility, and newly installed BES Facilities.

**This form and all supporting documentation must be uploaded via the NPCC Secure Drive.**

****

For questions regarding the certification process, please contact certification@npcc.org.

|  |
| --- |
| **Registered Entity’s Information** |
| **Entity Legal Name** |  |
| **Entity Acronym** |  | **NCR #** |  |
| **Date Submitted** |  |
| **Applicable Registered Function(s):** | [ ]  Balancing Authority (BA)[ ]  Transmission Operator (TOP)[ ]  Reliability Coordinator (RC)(Check all that apply) |
| **Multi Regional Registered Entity (MRRE):** | [ ]  MRO [ ]  NPCC [ ]  RF [ ]  SERC [ ]  Texas RE [ ]  WECC |
| **MRRE ‘Coordinated Oversight’ Group Name & Number:** |  |
| **Reliability Coordinator (RC)** |  |
| **Adjacent BA(s) and TOP(s)** |  |
| **Registered Entity’s Certification Contact Information** |
| **Name** |  |
| **Title** |  |
| **Address** |  |
| **Telephone** |  | **Cell** |  |
| **Email Address** |  |
| **Triggering Event[[1]](#footnote-1) (Check all the apply):** |
| [ ]  New Registration (Balancing Authority (BA), Transmission Operator (TOP) and/or Reliability Coordinator (RC))[ ]  Changes to a Registered Entity’s footprint (This includes changes in ownership of BES Facilities, changes in the applicability of the BES Definition to a Facility, and newly installed BES Facilities.) and may include changes (expansion or contraction of responsibilities) to existing JRO/CFR assignments or sub‐set list of requirements.[ ]  Construction and/or relocation of the Control Center (primary and/or backup) which impacts the functionality provided within these facilities for continued reliable operations of the BES that include but are not limited to the following:* Tools and applications that System Operators use for situational awareness of the BES
* Data exchange capabilities
* Interpersonal (and alternate) Communications capabilities
* Power source(s)
* Physical and cyber security

[ ] Modification of the Energy Management System (EMS) which is expected to materially affect CIP security perimeters or the System Operator’s: 1) situational awareness tools, 2) functionality, or 3) machine interfaces. [ ] Other (Please describe**):** |

### In order to determine the scope and type of certification engagement that may be needed, please provide answers to the General Questions and the additional questions based upon the ‘triggering event.’

# For all ‘triggering’ events, please provide answers to the following **General Questions**:

1. Please provide your entity’s characteristics including size, geographic service territory, and registered function(s) under the NERC Compliance Registry, etc.

Click here to enter text.

1. What is the expected completion date for this project?

Click here to enter text.

1. Please provide a general project timeline including major milestones and tentative completion dates.

Click here to enter text.

1. Is there a need for training of System Operators, Cyber Security Professionals or other impacted personnel resulting from the ‘triggering event?’

Click here to enter text.

1. Are there other entity specific or unique factors that you believe should be considered in determining the need for a certification review?

 Click here to enter text.

# In addition to the General Questions, if the ‘triggering event’ is a ***‘Change to the Registered Entity’s footprint,’*** please provide answers to the following:

1. Describe the changes to your ‘footprint’.

Click here to enter text.

1. Explain if the changes to your ‘footprint’ will result in any modifications/updates to the Energy Management System (EMS) in relation to:
	1. Tools and applications that System Operators use for situational awareness of the BES, and/or
	2. Data exchange capabilities.

Click here to enter text.

1. Has the ‘footprint’ change impacted the Physical Security Perimeter (PSP) or Electronic Security Perimeter (ESP) of existing or newly acquired facilities, including related access procedures (both logical and physical), physical security plan, the addition of card key readers, fencing, alarms or cameras?

 Click here to enter text.

# In addition to the General Questions, if the ‘triggering event’ is a ***‘Construction and/or relocation of the Control Center (primary and/or backup),’*** please provide answers to the following:

1. Describe how your entity currently achieves primary and backup Control Center functionality.

 Click here to enter text.

1. How will the transition between the current functionality and the new Control Center(s) be addressed?

 Click here to enter text.

1. Describe the changes for the current primary Control Center or backup Control Center when the new Control Center is operable.

 Click here to enter text.

1. Please describe whether this change will include upgrades or new system installation of any BES cyber systems, assets or storage areas.

 Click here to enter text.

1. Has the construction and/or relocation of the Control Center (primary and/or backup) impacted the Physical Security Perimeter (PSP) or Electronic Security Perimeter (ESP) of existing or new facilities, including related access procedures (both logical and physical), physical security plan, the addition of card key readers, fencing, alarms or cameras?

 Click here to enter text.

# In addition to the General Questions, if the ‘triggering event’ is a ***‘Modification of the Energy Management System (EMS),’*** please provide answers to the following:

1. Please describe the Energy Management System (EMS) (software and/or hardware) replacement, upgrade and/or virtualization.
	1. Please be specific in describing the specific hardware components being replaced, if applicable.
	2. Please include whether the change will include a change in Vendor.
	3. Please provide the Vendor ‘Release Notes’ for the EMS and/or Platform software updates.

 Click here to enter text.

1. Will the modification of the EMS result in changes to the Physical Access Control System (PACS), Physical Security Perimeter (PSP), Electronic Security Perimeter (ESP), physical or logical access control procedures or alarms?

 Click here to enter text.

1. Will the modification of the EMS impact existing Technical Feasible Exceptions (TFEs)?

 Click here to enter text.

1. Explain if the modification of the EMS will result in changes to the System Recovery Plans or responder ‘roles.’

 Click here to enter text.

1. Will the modification of the EMS impact the current patch management process or require Active Vulnerability Assessments to be conducted?

 Click here to enter text.

**Note:** Be prepared to provide copies of any revised documentation including respective policies, procedures, PSP and ESP diagrams, reflecting the changes associated with the ‘triggering event.’

1. NERC Rules of Procedure, [Appendix 5A](https://www.nerc.com/FilingsOrders/us/RuleOfProcedureDL/Appendix%205A%20effective%2020210119.pdf) Organization Registration and Certification Manual (Effective Date: January 19, 2021), Section V, Parts a - c. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)