

*Task Force on Emergency Preparedness, Recovery and Resiliency*  
**Charter<sup>1</sup>**

The Presidential *Task Force on Emergency Preparedness, Recovery and Resiliency* is chartered for a period of two years, as of this 30th day of April, 2020, to assist in managing NARUC's efforts in responding to and educating members about existing and emerging issues and opportunities associated with emergency preparedness, recovery and resiliency, including best practices, funding opportunities, resources, and collaborative efforts.

The objective of the Task Force is to bring together a balanced, diverse group of NARUC members, stakeholders and experts to consider policy issues facing the regulatory community on Emergency Preparedness, Recovery and Resiliency. To this end, a primary goal of the Task Force will be to educate NARUC members on the available resources, including federal disaster recovery grant programs that may be available before, during, and after an event. The Task Force is predicated on the idea that a thoughtful approach to these policy issues can contribute to a greater level of preparedness, recovery, and resiliency. Considerations for the Task Force include available federal funding, the meaning of resiliency; the critical connections that exist between regulatory policy and implementation; the relationship between preparedness, response, and resilience; and the future of resiliency as it relates to a diverse and changing energy future. The Task Force may also act as a resource for NARUC leadership on relevant matters.

There are four primary responsibilities of the Task Force. These are:

1. Conduct research and provide ongoing education on federal funding to support recovery;
2. Support NARUC member preparedness in the event of a Black Sky event;
3. Seek to build consensus on construction standards for FEMA reference in recovery; and
4. Educate on COVID lessons learned and best practices for the path forward.

These responsibilities are not necessarily mutually exclusive. The Task Force will convene sessions with the NARUC community, organize educational efforts within NARUC, and publish policy papers, manuals and reports with actionable policy recommendations for the future.

The Task Force will organize panel discussions and educational roundtables at each NARUC meeting to identify historical and ongoing challenges with accessing

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<sup>1</sup> Charter finalized in accordance with April 30, 2020 NARUC Executive Committee approval of a motion to permit NARUC President Brandon Presley pursuant to Title I, Section 19 of the *Policies and Procedures of the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners* to establish a *Presidential Task Force on Emergency Preparedness, Recovery and Resiliency*.

federal funding programs for recovery, showcase the available funding programs and applicable requirements and educate State commissions on opportunities and challenges.

Additionally, to help ensure that NARUC members have a tailored resource available when needed, and maintain the institutional knowledge gained through these efforts, the Task Force will create a *NARUC Emergency Preparedness, Recovery and Resiliency Manual* and/or other materials to support such information sharing.

Upon a presidential disaster declaration, the Stafford Act triggers a wide range of federal assistance programs for individuals and public infrastructure, including funds for both emergency and permanent work. This covers debris removal, emergency protective measures, restoration of damaged facilities, hazard mitigation, and more. However, the types and levels of available assistance and eligibility depend on the declared disaster. The Task Force will help to raise awareness of the scope of assistance afforded by the Stafford Act, the mechanisms in place to apply for assistance, and relevant timetables governing FEMA's assistance programs. This work can memorialize key insights, references, and lessons learned about accessing and complying with federal assistance.

Moreover, in 2019, FEMA recognized the limited coverage of existing construction standards for rebuilding to extreme weather and new resilience opportunities that could arise from revisiting such construction standards. Following this acknowledgement, FEMA released a FEMA Recovery Interim Policy FP- 104-009-11 Version 2.1, *Consensus-Based Codes, Specifications and Standards for Public Assistance*,<sup>2</sup> pursuant to Section 406 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, as amended by Section 1235(b) of the Disaster Recovery Reform Act of 2018 (DRRA) to identify hazard-based design codes and standards. The Task Force will review, analyze, and seek to build consensus around electricity-related construction standards that inform FEMA recovery assistance and potential options for new standards that could be referenced. Accordingly, the Task Force will also work to identify, as appropriate, a set of recommended construction best practices or standards for consideration of NARUC members. These standards will be developed with consideration of those minimum standards adopted by FEMA and applicable to the federal disaster grant programs that it administers.

In addition to pandemic-related emergencies, commissions, industry, and the federal government are further concerned and preparing for extreme weather events as NOAA predicts a higher than average hurricane season, wildfires continue to threaten large areas, and cybersecurity attacks have been on the rise even further. Any of these regional or multi-regional "Black Sky" hazards have the

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<sup>2</sup> Version 2.1 (Dec. 20, 2019), online at: [https://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/1579188158300-159a38c75b6204517ad6c8641819c143/DRRA\\_1235\(b\)\\_V2.1\\_12-20-2019\\_508\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/1579188158300-159a38c75b6204517ad6c8641819c143/DRRA_1235(b)_V2.1_12-20-2019_508_FINAL.pdf).

potential to disrupt essential lifeline services that put our Nation's citizens in peril. Interdependencies of critical infrastructures and their supply chains magnify the disruptive effects. Exceptional levels of collaboration across federal, state, and local governments, relief agencies, and private sector organizations are necessary to build resilience to these hazards. The Task Force will help to support commissions in improving their state energy emergency response capabilities.

The Task Force will have a Special Subcommittee comprised of members of the Task Force to study the COVID-19 pandemic response. Specifically, the Special Subcommittee will gather, examine and analyze regulatory and industry actions, responses and lessons learned from COVID-19. The scope of the analysis may include workforce issues, low-moderate income customer issues, utility financial approaches to pandemic response, and other key challenges. The work of the Special Subcommittee will be conducted via conference calls, webinars, and NARUC meeting sessions.

The Task Force may seek to set NARUC policy on these issues by presenting resolutions to the NARUC Board of Directors. Any proffered resolution from the Task Force will be moved by the 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President for possible discussion and approval.

The Task Force will convene its first meeting at, or near in time as possible with, the upcoming July NARUC virtual Summer Summit.

**Membership:** Membership of the Task Force shall be composed of voting and non-voting members. All Task Force members shall be appointed by the President of NARUC. Both the Task Force Chair and the Special Subcommittee Chair will be appointed by the NARUC President from among the voting members of the Task Force. The President will serve as an ex-officio member. Voting members shall be no more than 15 members who must each be a NARUC member. The non-voting members shall be volunteer representatives from interested stakeholder entities with expertise, experience, knowledge and/or skills in energy matters related to emergency preparedness, recovery and resiliency or have significant interest in the objectives of the Task Force that add to the quality of the Task Force's work. Non-voting membership is encouraged to be a balanced diverse group which may include representatives from public and private entities. For example, the nonvoting members may include representatives from our federal partners such as United States Department of Energy, Federal Emergency Management Agency, United States Department of Interior, and United States Department of Transportation. The President of NARUC will designate a Chair of the Task Force.

**Staffing:** The NARUC Executive Director, after consultation, as appropriate, with the President and the Task Force Chair, will designate staff and other resources

to assist the Task Force. The Task Force can solicit additional volunteer support from NARUC member commission staffs. Upon determination of need, and in accordance with the NARUC bylaws with approval of the President, and the Executive Director or the Executive Committee, the Task Force also may acquire additional staffing from outside professionals with specific subject matter expertise.

**Duration:** Two years.