

1 Q. Please provide a copy of the report on the results and lessons learned from the drill  
2 conducted on October 21, 2014 to test communications notification and  
3 coordination between Hydro and Newfoundland Power.

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6 A. Please see PUB-NLH-460 Attachment 1 for the final report provided by Cormorant  
7 Ltd.

## **EXERCISE REPORT**

# **EXERCISE BREEZEWAY**

**October 21, 2014**

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And

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## 1.0 EXERCISE OVERVIEW

This report documents Exercise BREEZEWAY, undertaken jointly by Newfoundland Power and Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro. Exercise BREEZEWAY demonstrated the communications component of an incident in which there is significant loss of electrical power distribution to Newfoundland customers.

The exercise was held simultaneously from 1:30 to 4:30 pm on Tuesday, October 21, 2014 at the offices of Newfoundland Power (NP) and Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro (NLH) in St. John's.

### 1.1 Participants

Participants included:

- The NP Communications Team;
- Members of the NP Communications Hub and representative Manager and Operations Liaisons;
- The Emergency Communications Manager in the NLH CEO office and the Communications Support Desk in the NLH CEOC, and the NLH emergency communications team; and
- Simulated input from NP's System Control Centre (SCC) and Newfoundland and Labrador NLH's Energy Control Centre (ECC).

### 1.2 Objectives

The objectives of the proposed exercise were to provide an opportunity for Utilities communications personnel to:

- Demonstrate how the *Joint Storm/Outage Communications Plan* ensures coordination of the communications strategies and actions of both utilities during an incident that results in the disruption of power to customers;
- Use the System Forecast Shortfall matrix in the plan as guidance for proactive and responsible notification of customers of a probable loss of power;
- Identify an appropriate communications response based on the severity of the outage scenario and the anticipated impact to customers;
- Use a strategic approach to planning communications actions for that scenario;
- Actually develop messages intended for release to stakeholders affected by the exercise scenario; and
- Demonstrate the timely development and updating of stakeholder messages.

### 1.3 Assessment

The exercise was assessed in a debriefing session by teleconference immediately following the exercise.

## 2.0 EXERCISE PARTICIPANTS

### 2.1 Newfoundland Power

#### 2.1.1 Communications Team

Manager, Corporate Relations and Communications	Karen McCarthy
Director, Public Affairs	Michele Coughlan
Comms Coordinator (Community and Stakeholder Relations)	Lee Ann Surette
Communications Advisor	Kristine Hamlyn

#### 2.1.2 Hub

Team Lead	Kevin Power
Customer Relations	Chris Acreman or Keith Barrett
Information Services	Frank Flynn or Barry Murphy
Corporate Communications	Kristine Hamlyn
Operation Liaison	Bill Styles or Peter Upshall

#### 2.1.3 Conference Call Forum

Incident Commander	Sean LaCour
Manager, Corporate Relations and Communications	Karen McCarthy
Director, Public Affairs	Michele Coughlan
Manager, Customer Relations	Peter Collins
Operations Manager	TBD (Area Affected)
System Control Centre Representative	Neville Collins

## 2.2 Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro

#### 2.2.1 Communications Team

Public Information Officer (CEO Office)	Dawn Dalley
Liaison Officer (CEO Office)	Deanne Fisher
CEOC Liaison and Customers	Erin Squires
Media Relations Advisor	Janine McCarthy
Social Media, Customers	Cara Pike
Government Inter-Agency Advisor	Mark King

#### 2.2.2 Corporate Emergency Operations Centre (CEOC)

Deputy Incident Commander	Bob Butler
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Operations Desk	Jason Tobin
Communications Support	Erin Squires
Document Creator Internal/Employee	Karen O'Neill

## 2.3 Exercise Feed

NLH ECC to NLH CEOC	Dan Philpott
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### 2.3.1 Exercise Operations/Control Centre Advisors

NP Operations/SCC	Neville Collins
NLH Operations/ECC	Jason Tobin

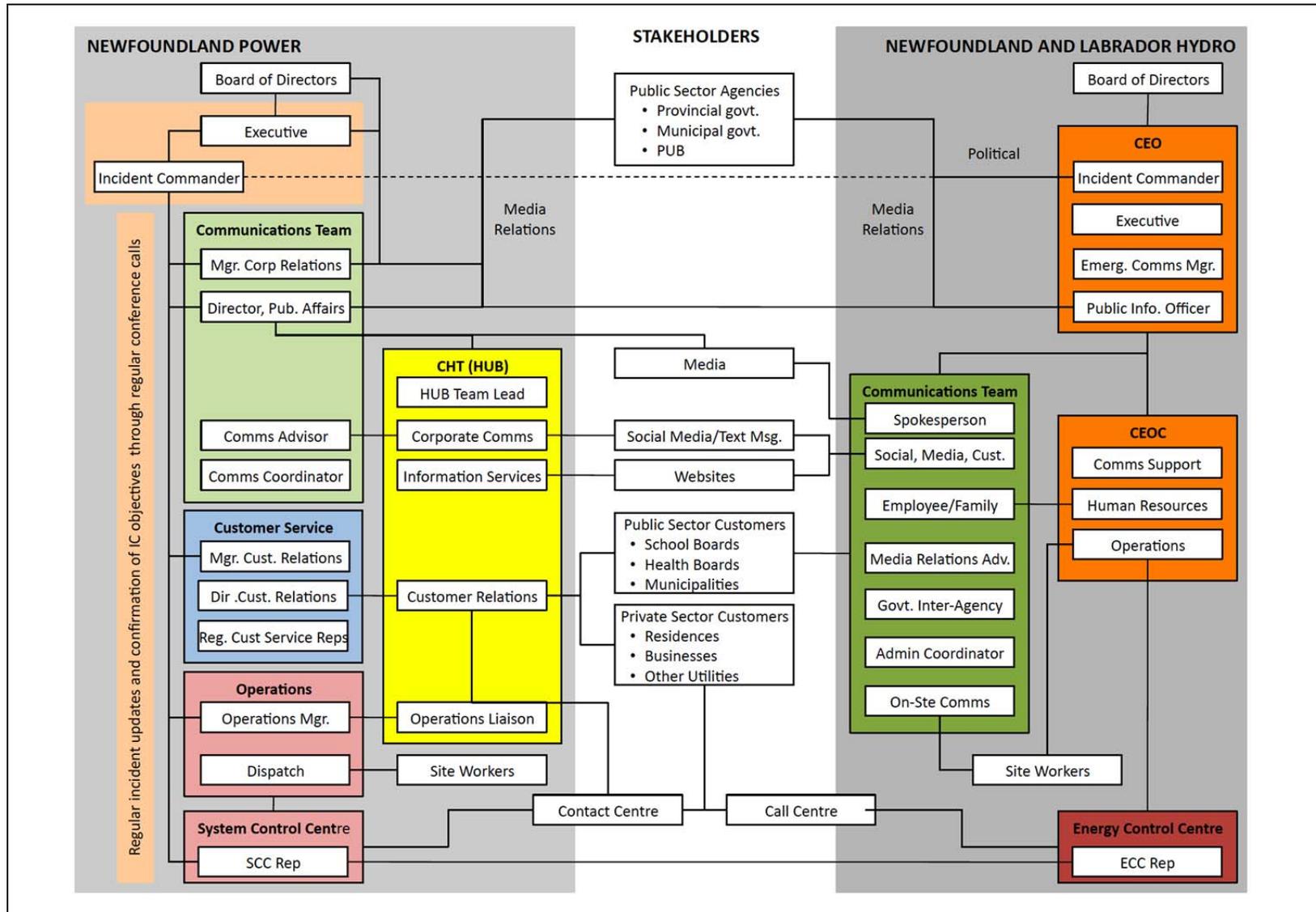
### 2.3.2 Exercise Stakeholder Advisors

NP Stakeholders	Jessica Fisher
NLH Stakeholders	Aimee Igloliorte

## 2.4 Exercise Controller

Newfoundland NP Office	Jim Dempsey
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## 2.5 Exercise BREEZEWAY Communications Map



### 3.0 SCENARIO

The exercise was not conducted in real time. The scenario represented the changes in T-001 demand shortfall forecasting over a period of several days in November, 2014.

#### 3.1 Scenario Background Information

- Scenario Date is November 11, 2014
- Information given to all participants at 1:30 PM on exercise day

In anticipation of persistent cold and windy winter conditions and the increased demand for electrical power in 2015, planned maintenance of generating units and transmission lines and equipment is scheduled for summer months of 2014.

In September, one of the thermal generating units at Holyrood was down for maintenance and supply from Bay d'Espoir was reduced to due to line maintenance on TL 201 and TL 207 (a 2014 Capital Project). The schedule for return to service was October 10, 2014. Weather conditions were warmer than normal and demand was low enough that forecast power reserves were greater than the demand and operations were at T-001 Level 0 (Normal Conditions).

By November 1, scheduled maintenance had not yet been completed and, with longer nights and colder temperatures, demand was increasing to the point where the 5-day reserve forecast recognized that operations were now running at T-001 Level 1.

On November 6, a 24-hour cold front came through in combination with a sudden trip at Holyrood, causing over 90,000 on the Avalon to lose power starting at 5:45 PM. To prevent another trip, it was decided to rotate power to customers on the Avalon for a period of 4 hours on the night of November 6. Customers were asked to conserve power to help maintain the stability of the system when bringing Holyrood back on.

On November 7 customers were thanked for their efforts to conserve and with their help, Holyrood was now operating normally with the exception of one unit which was down for regular seasonal maintenance.

Between November 7-11 temperatures warmed and the system was again at T-001 Level 1.

#### 3.2 Information Sheet 1

- Delivered to the NLH CEOC Operations at 1:45 PM, October 21, 2014;
- Scenario Date is 9:00 AM on November 12;
- Information given to the Hydro CEOC Operations at 1:45 PM on exercise day; and
- Information was distributed through links shown in Section 2.5.

On November 12, work on the generating unit down for maintenance in September-October had still not been completed. Spare parts were needed for the repair were unique to the specific generating unit and could not be sourced locally. It was expected to be up and running the afternoon of November 17. Hydro was in the final stages of completing the line work on TL 201 and TL 207 from Bay d'Espoir, but still needed a couple of days and was anticipating that weather may slow them down for the next couple of days.

The Avalon had its first snow and the temperature is dropping to below freezing tonight with forecast temperatures to be 2-3°C below normal for the next week. It's 9:00 AM and the 24-hour reserve forecast indicated that operations will be at T-001 Level 2 by about 6:00 PM that night. Peak demand indicated that the situation would not improve in the coming days.

### 3.3 Information Sheet 2

- Delivered to the NLH CEOC Operations at 2:50 PM, October 21, 2014;
- Scenario Date is 9:00 AM on November 14;
- Information is given the Hydro CEOC Operations at 2:50 PM on exercise day; and
- Information was distributed through links shown in Section 2.5.

Participants were advised that rotating outages were not required during the peak periods on November 12.

Cold temperatures persist and, on November 14, the Avalon received 20 cm of wet snow. Slowed by terrible weather, Hydro maintenance is still ongoing and because of closed schools, peak loads had changed dramatically and the system moves into T-001 Level 3. There was a 50 MW shortfall and is expected to remain that way until kids get back to school.

The part needed for the Holyrood generating unit arrived early despite the weather, and maintenance was expected to be completed mid-day tomorrow, November 15.

## 4.0 EXERCISE ACTIONS

### 4.1 Level of Engagement

The activity during the exercise was focused on the communications within and between the two Utilities. Although there were no actual conversations with external stakeholders, participants were required to identify who would be contacted and what information would be provided. All participants recorded their actual or simulated actions on personal log sheets.

### 4.2 Scenario Triggers

The scenario described in Section 3.0 prompted exercise activity. Each stage of the scenario was intended to trigger an assessment of the current situation and the internal and public notifications required. The incident scenario was also influenced by an incident that occurred approximately one week before the exercise time period.

The current situation at each stage of the scenario was clearly linked to changing generation reserves that resulted in reassessment of the island interconnected system forecast supply shortfall and escalating the classification of emergency condition from T-001 Level 1 (Power Advisory) to T-001 Level 2 (Power Watch) to T-001 Level 3 (Power Warning). In providing situation information operations and system exercise participants enhanced the scenario by providing general background information without having to justify the current alert level.

### 4.3 Joint Plan Guidelines

The Joint Storm/Outage Communications Plan was used as a guideline at several levels during the exercise.

- Established protocol for determining the level of response based on forecast supply shortfall;
- Strategy and actions based on severity of the situation;
- Need for activation of the joint utility protocol;
- Proactive organization of utility communications teams;
- Use of the Newfoundland Power Communications HUB as a means of interacting with operations and customers;
- Identification of communications targets and timelines; and
- A prepared approach to delivering key messages.

### 4.4 Actual Activity

Personal log sheets, exercise coordinators' observations, and participant's comments during the joint de-briefing provide a record of the actual activity during the exercise. A review of the collated records generated by the exercise indicates a high level of integrated engagement internally and diligence in efforts to inform external stakeholders.

#### 4.4.1 Internal Engagement

Interaction within and between the two Utilities was comprehensive. All or most of the personnel who would have been involved in a situation of this kind participated in the exercise. Exercise records and coordinators' observations consistently document conversations between the key personnel at all levels:

### **Operational**

Both the NLH ECC and the NP SCC were represented. In addition to providing the source of operational information to communications and management participants, these centres communicated with each other to confirm the current situation.

Log sheets indicated how each centre was linked to either the NP Contact Centre or the NLH Call Centre which were the front line point of communications with customers.

### **Management**

Management of each Utility was represented at both an operational and at an executive level.

Strategy decisions were made in consultation between both Utilities in light of current conditions and the options for mitigation. Operational management was also frequently and directly in touch with both communications teams to confirm the current shortfall forecast, the likelihood of immediate improvement, and the need to notify customers.

When the potential for public notification was high, each company chief executive was briefed personally by operations and communications and then made decisions in direct consultation with his counterpart at the other utility.

### **Communications**

Each communications team was directly linked to its operational and management groups and led the ongoing dialogue concerning the current need to release public messages. Although this dialogue took the form of phone calls or conversations in offices or hallways, the process was directed and very efficient.

Interaction within each communications team followed a similar course. In addition to direct interaction with management and frequent executive briefings, activities also included situation assessment and team briefings, media monitoring, use of social media, and a formal media release supported by media interviews.

## **4.4.2 External Engagement**

Both Utilities simulated engagement with external stakeholders.

### **Government**

NLH provided notification to provincial government via the Minister of the Department of Natural Resources, the Premier's Officer, Executive Council, Avalon MHAs, and Fire and Emergency Services. The NLH Government Inter-Agency Advisor was also responsible for advising the NLH Board of Directors. Notifications or update bulletins were delivered to government stakeholders on at least two occasions - as part of the severe weather warning Power Advisory on November 12 and then the Power Warning on November 14 (see below).

### **Large Customers**

Each utility contacted larger customers concerning conservation or curtailment of power. NP contacted City of St. John's, Eastern Health, Memorial University, and College of the North Atlantic. NLH was able direct additional power to the grid by obtaining capacity assistance from Corner Brook Pulp and Paper in Deer Lake, thereby avoiding a shortfall forecast on November 12.

### **Residential customers**

Smaller customers were approached as follows:

- A Power Advisory on November 12 in which customers were advised of the potential effects of forecast severe weather;
- A Power Warning on November 14 in which customers were advised via a news release and media interviews that rotating power outages were likely and that personal conservation is necessary;
- Telephone centres where customers could report outages or receive current system information; and
- Social media (Twitter, Facebook) in which customers were provided with practical information on personal preparedness, safety, and, ultimately conservation.

## 5.0 EXERCISE ASSESSMENT

### 5.1 Objectives

The objectives set for the exercise (see Section 1.2) were accomplished in that:

- The exercise demonstrated how the *Joint Storm/Outage Communications Plan* can ensure coordination of the communications strategies and actions of both utilities during an incident that results in the disruption of power to customers;
- The System Forecast Shortfall matrix proved to be a simple and efficient tool for determining the timing and appropriate level of notification of customers of possible loss of service;
- The two utilities jointly developed a strategy for communicating with customers using all available media tools; and
- Messages were created and authorized shortly after the decision to advise customers of a potential power shortfall.

### 5.2 Observations

- The hands-on experience from the exercise will be particularly valuable as the participants were the individuals within each Utility who would actually be called on in the exercise scenario. Participants ranged from operations and system personnel, managers and executives, corporate communications, and customer service. The overall level of integration and cooperation at all levels was good.
- Exercise participants were required to assess the current and forecast conditions and to use the guidelines of the System Forecast Supply Shortfall matrix in the *Joint Storm/Outage Communications Plan* (Plan) in deciding whether to issue public advisories.
- Both utilities were prepared for a scenario like this.
- There was considerable proactive preparation for interaction with customers at level 2 (Power Advisory), even though a request for conservation was not made. This preparation was very useful when a request was made at Level 3 (Power Warning). Examples include:
  - Media monitoring;
  - Drafting public statements for possible release; and
  - Provision of telephone centre contact information and preparedness and safety tips via social media.
- The NP HUB was activated as and when directed in the Plan.
- Communications targets required by the Plan for a Level 3 situation were met:
  - Initial social media acknowledgement within 30 minutes of Level 3;
  - Internal communication within 1 hour of Level 3;
  - Media release with 1.5 hours of Level 3; and
  - Media interviews planned for various times during the day, beginning less than 3 hours after Level 3.
- Joint communications, with NLH taking the lead (power generation) through the release of a written statement finalized after discussion between each CEO and authorized by both utilities as required by the Plan.

- Joint communications via media interviews involving senior communications staff from each Utility, as required by the Plan.
- The needs of key stakeholders identified in the Plan were met.