



# The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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## DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC UTILITIES

D.P.U. 11-03

January 3, 2011

Investigation by the Department of Public Utilities on its Own Motion into the Preparation and Response of Massachusetts Electric Company and Nantucket Electric Company, each d/b/a National Grid to the December 26, 2010 Winter Storm.

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VOTE AND ORDER TO OPEN INVESTIGATION

## I. INTRODUCTION

The Department of Public Utilities (“Department”) opens an investigation into efforts by Massachusetts Electric Company and Nantucket Electric Company, each d/b/a National Grid (jointly “National Grid” or “Company”) to prepare for and restore power following the winter storm that occurred on December 26, 2010 (“Winter Storm 2010”). The Department conducts this investigation pursuant to its authority to open a full investigation upon its own initiative<sup>1</sup> to determine whether an electric or gas distribution company has violated the Department’s standards regarding acceptable performance for emergency preparedness and restoration of service, G.L. c. 164, § 1J, 220 C.M.R. § 19.00 et seq.; the Department’s authority to review the performance of an electric or gas distribution company in restoring service during an emergency event, G.L. c. 164, § 85B; the Department’s authority to establish service quality standards and review service quality performance by electric and gas distribution companies, G.L. c. 164, §§ 1E and 1I; and the Department’s general supervisory authority over electric distribution companies, G.L. c. 164, § 76.

The Department will review National Grid’s compliance with its performance standards regarding emergency preparation and restoration of service, 220 C.M.R. § 19.00 et seq., by evaluating National Grid’s preparation for Winter Storm 2010 and its implementation of its

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<sup>1</sup> General Laws c. 164, § 1J also requires the Department to open a full investigation regarding a violation of the Department’s standards of acceptable performance upon petition of the Attorney General of the Commonwealth (“Attorney General”) or by a city council or board of selectman of an affected municipality. The Attorney General submitted a petition for an investigation of National Grid’s preparation and response to Winter Storm 2010 under this authority on December 30, 2010.

emergency response plan (“ERP”). The Department’s inquiry in this matter will focus on National Grid’s compliance with the Department’s performance standards for emergency preparedness and restoration of service, including: (1) preparation for and management of the restoration efforts with respect to Winter Storm 2010; (2) allocation of Company resources in the affected communities; (3) communications with state and local public safety officials and with the Department; (4) dissemination of information to the public; and (5) identification of Company practices that require improvement.

## II. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Pursuant to 220 C.M.R. §§ 19.03(4)(b) and (c) and Final ERP Guidelines, D.P.U. 10-02-A (April 20, 2010) (“Guidelines”), electric distribution companies are required to submit to the Department reports before, during and following an emergency event such as Winter Storm 2010. The Department directs National Grid to file its final event report on Winter Storm 2010 no later than January 27, 2011. Guidelines at VII.B.2(d).

## III. PROCEDURAL MATTERS AND OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Attached to this Order is a notice of this investigation to be published by the Secretary of the Department in a statewide newspaper of daily circulation within the Commonwealth. To provide the opportunity for comment, the Department will hold public hearings within National Grid’s service territory. In addition, the Department seeks written comments from interested persons in this matter. The Department will issue a subsequent notice identifying the time and place of the public hearings and deadlines for comments from interested persons.

IV. ORDER

Accordingly, the Department

VOTES: To open an investigation into efforts by Massachusetts Electric Company and Nantucket Electric Company, each d/b/a National Grid to prepare for and restore power following the winter storm that occurred on December 26, 2010; and it is

ORDERED: That the Secretary of the Department shall publish the attached notice of this investigation in a statewide newspaper of daily circulation within the Commonwealth; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED: That the Secretary of the Department shall serve this Order on Massachusetts Electric Company and Nantucket Electric Company, each d/b/a National Grid; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED: That the Secretary of the Department shall serve a copy of this Order upon all persons on the Department's service list; and it is

