

Rajasthan Electricity Regulatory Commission

Petition No. RERC/1969/2021

Petition filed by Discoms under regulation 15 and 16 of Rajasthan Electricity Regulatory Commission (Standards of Performance for Distribution Licensees) Regulations, 2021 to make necessary amendments in the said regulations to ease the problems faced by Discoms due to restricting the scheduled outages/planned shut downs for maintenance works on specific days in a week only

Coram:

Dr. B.N. Sharma, Chairman

Shri S. C. Dinkar, Member

Petitioners:

Jaipur Vidyut Vitran Nigam Ltd.
Ajmer Vidyut Vitran Nigam Ltd.
Jodhpur Vidyut Vitran Nigam Ltd.

Present :

Sh. Bipin Gupta. Advocate for Petitioners.

Date of hearing :

08.02.2022

Date of Order :

22.02.2022

Order

1. Jaipur Vidyut Vitran Nigam Ltd., Ajmer Vidyut Vitran Nigam Ltd. & Jodhpur Vidyut Vitran Nigam Ltd. have jointly filed this petition on 14.12.2021; under regulations 15 and 16 of Rajasthan Electricity Regulatory Commission (Standards of Performance for Distribution Licensees) Regulations, 2021, (hereinafter referred to as "RERC SoP Regulations 2021") to make necessary amendments in the said regulations to ease the problems faced by Discoms due to restricting the scheduled outages/planned shut downs for

maintenance works on specific days in a week only

2. The Discoms have submitted that:

2.1. They are Distribution Licensees in the State of Rajasthan and are undertaking the functions of distribution and retail supply of electricity in their respective area of distribution.

2.2. The RERC (Standards of Performance for Distribution Licensees) Regulations, 2021 published by the Commission is applicable to all the Distribution Licensees including Deemed Licensees/Franchisees and all of its consumers in the state of Rajasthan.

2.3. Sub-Clauses 1.5(b) to 1.5 (e) of Schedule –I of the RERC SoP Regulations 2021 lay down the guidelines for implementation of scheduled outages/planned shutdowns. The relevant section of the said regulations is provided below:

"1.5 Scheduled Outages

.....

b) Scheduled outage/planned shutdown on industrial feeders shall not be taken except on weekly off days of the concerned industrial area in consultation with industrial areas association.

c) Scheduled outage/planned shutdown on urban feeders shall not be taken except on Tuesday and Friday.

d) Scheduled outage/planned shutdown on rural feeders shall not be taken except on Wednesday and Saturday.

e) In case there is a planned/scheduled outage from 132 kV substations, the same shall be utilized by the Discom(s) for planning their activity such as preventive/periodical maintenance/service connection related activity."

2.4. Operational hitches are faced while implementing the maintenance/repair works during such scheduled outages/ planned shutdowns, thus underlining the utmost significance for un-restricting the Discoms to carry out such activities only on specific days as specified in the above mentioned regulation.

2.5. The Petitioners are catering to a large number of consumers in the areas

under their authority, which requires a well established and robust distribution network. As such, the associated distribution network calls for constant maintenance activities not only to ensure proper and reliable power supply but also to increase the useful life-span of the associated equipment and lines.

- 2.6. The Discoms maintains and operate a hefty electrical network of transformers, cables and overhead lines. The network detail is detailed out as under:

Particulars (as on Dec'20)	JVVNL	AVVNL	JdVVNL	Total
33/11 kV sub-stations (Nos)	1,851	1,921	2,285	6,057
33/11 kV sub-stations (MVA)	12,218	9,973	114,43	33,634
33 kV lines (Sq. Km)	16,164	16,332	24,857	57,353
33 kV lines (Sq. Km)	165,725	148,691	248,638	563,054
LT lines (Sq. Km)	159,202	193,349	163,298	515,849
11/0.4 kV sub-stations (Nos)	781,872	650,796	541,006	1,973,674
11/0.4 kV sub-stations (MVA)	17,681	16,567	17,474	51,722

- 2.7. The vast spread out network and allied equipments demand suitable and timely maintenance works. Line patrolling, maintaining ground clearance, replacement of insulators, restringing of lines, replacement of burnt jumpers, replacement of damaged conductor, replacement of damaged pole, etc. are some of the checks performed during maintenance activity.
- 2.8. The primary scheduled network maintenance work is executed majorly during three time stretches i.e pre-monsoon time, pre Diwali time and post Makar Sankranti. The Petitioners, understanding the importance of having a strong and working distribution network in the urban areas during monsoons, which tends to be one of the most challenging periods in the power distribution scenario, carry out maintenance works of its established network. Such elaborate works requires the involvement of sizable manpower and takes up substantial amount of time.
- 2.9. The festive periods of Diwali and Makar Sankranti, are known to be the

times when extensive repair and maintenance is required in the distribution network. Diwali, being the festival of lights, calls for a upsurge in the power requirement across households and commercial establishments. Hence, prior maintenance of the network holds utmost importance in order to cater to the up and coming load. Limiting the scheduled outages for maintenance works in such scenarios to specific days hampers proper planning and implementation of such works.

2.10. Post Makar Sankranti is also one such period which calls for heaps of repair work in the system. This is mainly attributed to the kite flying season, during which the kite flying strings tend to come in contact with network lines and cables causing considerable damage.

2.11. During the course of year, several important events, holidays and examinations tend to fall on days throughout the week. This makes it all the more problematic to execute maintenance activities on certain specified days only, further putting the Petitioner in a uncertain position and adversely impacting the consumers too.

2.12. The RERC SOP Regulations, 2021 allow only for couple of days during the week to carry out any sort of planned shutdowns. The Petitioners would like to submit that solitarily designating just two specific days in a week seriously undermines the time and effort required to carry out such periodic preventive maintenance activities.

2.13. The Hon'ble Commission in its previous RERC SoP Regulations, 2014 also had no specific days allotted for the scheduled outage for maintenance works. Clause 1.5 of the Schedule 1 is as under:

"1.5 Scheduled Outages

Interruption in power supply due to schedule outages, other than the load-shedding, shall be notified by licensee at least 24 hours in advance for planned shutdown and same day in emergent cases and shall not exceed 10 hours in a day. The supply should normally be restored by 6 PM"

This gave the Petitioners much more leverage to efficiently plan and implement planned shutdowns for carrying out the maintenance works.

2.14. The SoP Regulations, issued by the Hon'ble Commissions of different states across India have no specific days, designated for the purpose of maintenance works through scheduled outages/ planned shutdowns.

2.15. The Petitioner, in view of the facts detailed in the above paras, requested for removal of Clause 1.5 (b) to 1.5 (e) of the Schedule –I of the "RERC SoP Regulations 2021", for not limiting the scheduled outages/ planned shutdowns for maintenance works to specific days in the week.

3. The matter was heard, through video conferencing, on 08.02.2022. Sh. Bipin Gupta, Advocate appeared on behalf of the Petitioners.

4. Sh. Bipin Gupta has submitted that:

4.1. Discoms are facing lot of problems due to existing restriction of carrying out scheduled outages / planned shutdowns for maintenance works on specific days only.

4.2. Discoms may not be limited, for scheduled outages / planned shutdowns for maintenance works, to specific days in the week.

4.3. Discoms may be allowed any two days of week of scheduled outages / planned shutdowns for maintenance works, instead of specific days of the week.

4.4. Accordingly sub - clause 1.5 (b) to 1.5 (e) of the Schedule –I of the "RERC SoP Regulations 2021" may be modified or relaxed for the purpose and suitable order may be issued by the Commission, removing the difficulty faced by the Discoms.

Commission's view

5. Commission has considered the submissions made in the petition and oral submissions made on behalf of the Petitioners.
6. Petitioners in their petition have submitted to modify sub - clause 1.5 (b) to 1.5 (e) of the "RERC SoP Regulations, 2021".
7. During the course of hearing, Advocate Sh. Bipin Gupta on behalf of the Petitioners submitted that Discoms have been facing lot of problems due to existing restriction of carrying out scheduled outages / planned shutdowns for maintenance works on specific days only and requested for removal of difficulties in implementation of sub - clause 1.5 (b) to 1.5 (e) of the Schedule -I of the "RERC SoP Regulations 2021".
8. He has also submitted that Discoms may be allowed any two days of week of scheduled outages / planned shutdowns for maintenance works, instead of specific days of the week.
9. The Commission took note of the submission of the Discoms and in exercise of the powers given under regulation 14 – "Power to remove difficulties", of the "RERC SoP Regulations 2021", directs that the Discoms in normal course should adhere to provisions of the existing sub - clause 1.5 (b) to 1.5 (e) of the Schedule -I of the "RERC SoP Regulations 2021". However, in case of exigencies or in special cases, the Discoms may carry out scheduled outages / planned shutdowns for maintenance works on other days of week generally restricting scheduled outages / planned shutdowns to total one day in a week for industrial feeder & two days in a week for urban & rural feeder.
10. However, while carrying out scheduled outages / planned shutdowns for maintenance works in such cases of exigencies or in special cases,

Discoms should ensure compliance of sub - clause 1.5 (a) of the Schedule -I of the "RERC SoP Regulations 2021", regarding restoring of the supply normally by 6 p.m. and timely notification of the scheduled outage shall be conveyed to the effected consumers by wide publicity in the local news paper/display on the Discom's website and shall also be sent on the registered mobile number through SMS or by any other electronic mode.

11.The Petition is disposed of in terms of the above.

(S. C. Dinkar)
Member

(Dr. B. N. Sharma)
Chairman