



Spring Newsletter - May 31, 2024

Welcome to the spring edition of DOE's Office of Cybersecurity, Energy Security, and Emergency Response (CESER) State, Local, Tribal, and Territorial (SLTT) newsletter! We are excited to share our updates and announcements with you and encourage you to spread the word to colleagues and friends about this periodic newsletter.

Recent Announcements and Resources

Biden-Harris Administration Announces New National Security Memorandum to Strengthen U.S. Department of Energy's Role in Ensuring Security and Resilience Across America's Energy Sector

DOE applauds the release of [National Security Memorandum 22](#) (NSM-22) on Critical Infrastructure Security and Resilience, which strengthens the role of Sector Risk Management Agencies (SRMAs), including DOE, to lead risk management in partnership with energy asset owners and operators, SLTT partners, international partners, manufacturers, academia, and others. The NSM will help ensure U.S. critical infrastructure continues to provide the nation a strong and innovative economy, protect American families, and enhance our collective resilience to disasters before they happen

strengthening the nation for generations to come. [Click here to learn more](#) and [here](#) to read reflections from Presh M. Kumar, Director of CESER.

CESER Releases State Energy Security Plans Resources to Support States and Territories

As part of its work to support states and territories with energy security planning, DOE's CESER provides resources for these entities to use in the development and strengthening of their State Energy Security Plans (SESPs). CESER recently released the "[Risk Assessment Essentials for State Energy Security Plans](#)," for states and territories that provides a simplified approach to risk assessment of critical energy infrastructure and cross-sector interdependencies. Another notable SESP resource released this month was: [Governor's SESP Certification Letter Guidance and Template](#).

For more information about these resources, please visit the [SESP Resources page](#).

AI for Energy, Risks, and Opportunities: DOE Delivers New Action to Enhance America's Global Leadership

In support of President Biden's Investing in America [agenda](#), DOE recently [announced](#) a series of actions delivering on key elements of the [Executive Order on the Safe, Secure, and Trustworthy Development and Use of Artificial Intelligence](#) (AI). As part of that effort, CESER, supported by Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory (LLNL), worked with energy sector partners to develop an interim assessment – summarized in this [report](#) – that identifies the potential benefits of AI use in the energy sector, as well as key sources of potential risk to the sector.

DOE also issued the [AI and Energy: Opportunities for a Modern Grid and Clean Energy Economy](#); a first-ever report on AI's near-term potential to support the growth of America's clean energy economy, and the [Advanced Research Directions in AI For Energy](#) report developed by DOE's National Laboratories on long-term opportunities and challenges in AI. In addition, DOE, led by OCET, launched a new [website](#) that showcases DOE-developed AI tools and foundation models useful for basic and applied science.

These actions and [announcements](#) will help drive advancements in AI safety and security, promote innovation and competition, and accelerate clean energy solutions to strengthen America's global leadership in science and technology for generations to come.

Tune into *Tech Talk for Regulators* Podcast on AI Impacts to Energy and Cybersecurity

The National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners' (NARUC) new podcast [Tech Talk for Regulators](#), supported by CESER, and hosted by NARUC Senior Cybersecurity Policy Specialist Jody Raines, focuses on cyber and energy security from a regulatory perspective. Episode 1 examines the intersection of AI and cybersecurity, and spotlights industry stakeholders' outlooks on AI's potential impacts on cybersecurity and U.S. energy regulators. Three industry experts discuss crucial information energy regulators should know about AI, exploring both the positive and negative implications on cybersecurity.

[Click here to take a listen.](#)

Cybersecurity Baselines for Electric Distribution Systems and Distributed Energy Resources Released

DOE applauds the release of cybersecurity baselines for electric distribution systems and distributed energy resources (DER) such as solar, wind, and storage. The initiative, spearheaded by NARUC, was funded by CESER and was guided by a steering group of industry and government subject matter experts including electricity sector owners and operators, state regulatory agencies, cybersecurity experts, and others.

[Click here to learn more.](#)

Energy Sector Exercises Program Releases 2023 End of Year Report

The Energy Sector Exercises Program, sponsored and led by CESER gives energy owners/operators and other whole-of-community partners the opportunity to test and evaluate their skills in low-risk scenarios, helping SLTT and industry partners prepare to respond to threats and vulnerabilities, build resilience, and mitigate risks. On May 20, CESER released its *2023 Energy Sector Exercises Program End-of-Year Report*, which provides highlights on the 36 exercises the team sponsored, conducted, supported, and/or participated in last year.

[Click here to learn more.](#)

Events and Engagement

CESER in the Field: NGA's Roundtable on Energy Resilience, Security, and Emergency Response for U.S. Territories and Islanded Communities

CESER supported the National Governor's Association's (NGA) *Roundtable on Energy Resilience, Security, and Emergency Response for U.S. Territories and Islanded Communities* held in Honolulu, Hawaii, on May 14-16. This workshop brought together every U.S. territory, as well as representatives from the State of Hawaii, as islanded states and territories face unique challenges, given their proximity to military installations and isolated and disconnected critical energy infrastructure.

Governors from Hawaii, the U.S. Virgin Islands, American Samoa, and officials as well as industry representatives from Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and Puerto Rico convened alongside a full house of Federal partners from DHS, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and the Department of Interior (DOI) to discuss energy issues shared by islanded communities.

Participants discussed best practices for resilience and energy security planning, system hardening through risk-based analysis, addressing cyber threats, emergency response in remote communities, wrapping up with an action planning session for state energy, emergency response, and homeland security leadership.



2024 NGA Roundtable on Energy Resilience, Security, and Emergency Response for U.S. Territories and Islanded Communities held in Honolulu, HI, on May 14-16.

E-ISAC Center Physical Security Regional Workshop

Physical security threats, such as vandalism to electrical substations and impacts from natural disasters, remain a top concern for the electricity industry. Between 2022 and 2023 there were more than 5,000 incidents of which 3 percent led to grid impacts. That is why the Electricity Information Sharing and Analysis Center (E-ISAC) in partnership with American Public Power Association (APPA), Edison Electric Institute (EEI), National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA), the Western Electricity Coordinating Council (WECC), Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI), and Puget Sound Energy hosted a Physical Security Workshop on May 16, 2024, in Bellevue, Washington. CESER attended the workshop to discuss the current threat landscape, mitigation strategies, and lessons learned. Participants shared information and built trusted relationships, identified mitigation strategies, developed leading practices, and learned about available resources to reduce risks. The next workshop will take place later this fall in the Midwest.



Ryan Murphy, Director of Electric Operations, Puget Sound Energy; Manny Cancel, Sr. Vice President for the North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC) & CEO for E-ISAC; and Scott Aaronson, Sr. Vice President Security Preparedness at EEI share opening remarks at the E-ISAC Physical Security Workshop, Bellevue, WA, on May 16, 2024.

CESER at Cybersecurity Training for State Regulatory Commissions

At the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners' (NARUC) bi-annual Cybersecurity Training for State Regulatory Commissions held on April 16-18, 2024, in New Orleans, CESER Policy Advisor Amanda Coolidge shared CESER tools and resources to help assist the risk and security work of public utilities commissions (PUCs). State commissioners and national commission staff also engaged in multiple cybersecurity trainings, including information technology (IT) and operational technology (OT) technology trainings and how to identify cybersecurity cost challenges during recovery efforts. These trainings fortified their ability to solve future energy security challenges within their own states.

[Click here to learn more.](#)



Amanda Coolidge at NARUC's bi-annual Cybersecurity Training for State Regulatory Commissions.

CESER Spotlited at Annual National Emergency Management Association Mid-Year Forum

During the Annual National Emergency Management Association (NEMA) Mid-Year Forum, held on March 17, 2024, in Washington, D.C., energy was a major topic of discussion on the agenda, featuring discussion with the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas, FEMA Administrator Deanne Criswell, and Deputy Secretary of Energy David Turk. Deputy Secretary Turk highlighted the importance of building trust within the electricity sector, the need for cybersecurity training, and creating

energy resilient infrastructure during a fireside chat with NEMA President and Maryland Department of Emergency Management Secretary Russell Strickland. State energy officials participated in a building energy resilience session to discuss state energy security, federal funding, emerging threats, and innovative resilience efforts developed by states and territories.

[Click here to learn more](#) about this year's Mid-Year Forum.



2024 NEMA Mid-Year Forum, General Session, Monday, March 18. DOE Deputy Secretary David Turk and NEMA President, Secretary Russ Strickland, Maryland Department of Emergency Management.

SLTT Resource Library

CESER's SLTT Resource Library contains helpful resources to inform state, local, Tribal and territorial governments with energy security planning, risk awareness, policy, investment decisions, and more. CESER partners with SLTT organizations to develop a suite of tools, analysis, trainings, and useful guides for their members and the public. Resources are tagged according to their Project Partner, Topic Area, and Resource Type. They can be sorted by selecting the checkboxes on the left.

Click here to visit the [SLTT Program Resource Library](#) and explore all of its available resources.

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