

EEAC Database Subcommittee meeting minutes 11-26-13, 2:30pm
100 Cambridge Street, 2nd floor, Conference Room B

Attendees:

Database Consultants: Leo Steidel, Mike Myser – Energy Platforms
Steve Venezia – DOER, Sharon Weber – DEP, Nancy Seidman – DEP, Matt Saunders – AGO, John Howat – NCLC/LEAN, Ian Finlayson – DOER, Eric Winkler – ISO-NE, Shaela Collins – Rich May, Barry Perlmutter – DPU, Lisa Shea – Northeast Utilities, Monica Cohen – Columbia Gas of MA, Lynn Westerlind – National Grid, Jeff Leupold – DPU, Cara Mottola – DPU, Mary Downes – Unitil, Amy Vavak – Mass Energy, Brad Swing – City of Boston, Christina Dietrich – Environment North East, Tina Halfpenny – DOER, Eric Belliveau – Optimal Energy, Lawrence Masland – DOER.

Meeting Notes:

The meeting opened with introductions shortly after 2:30pm.

Leo began with a recap of the database specification that was presented and discussed during the morning database working group meeting, using a flow chart that had been prepared on the white board.

The central approach to the statewide data organization proposed is a design with three separate database areas:

- 1) A PA only database area with both PA specific and statewide data, that uses an electronic version of the Technical Resource Manual (TRM) to convert PA specific project and measure level data into statewide aggregated data and to generate any reporting requirements both to the DPU and to other stakeholders for PA review prior to publication.
- 2) A ‘vault’ of richly detailed data, over which there is tightly controlled access available only to specific approved users.
- 3) A public access database containing current standard reporting and some additional detail, such as geographically aggregated data at the Municipal scale, available for user defined queries to address most common stakeholder questions.

The database would maintain historical tracking of prior data and all TRM versions to ensure that past data is not lost, and could be used for trend analysis after a number of years.

Leo transitioned to Ian Finlayson to review the broadly accepted need for a statewide database, and to outline a number of expected benefits from the database architecture as proposed by Energy Platforms.

Ian emphasized the importance of an audit trail for evaluating data, and mentioned the challenge in identifying final numbers for the 1st 3 year plan which likely would be avoided in future if there were a common data set.

The focus of the discussion moved on to whether there was agreement around the conceptual proposal put forward by the Energy Platforms (EP) team, and where there were areas of concern among the PAs.

Energy Platforms circulated an 8-page handout which included the whiteboard conceptual flow diagram, a description of the proposed approach, and a summary of the expected benefits. There was agreement on the broad concept illustrated in the EP flow diagram, but there was substantial input from several PAs around access to the rich data set, and expected challenges or potential costs raised by the inclusion of this proposed rich data 'vault'.

Particular areas of concern, primarily voiced by Columbia Gas and Unitil, included whether and how much consumption data to include in the database, and what the likely costs would be for the PAs to input data from their various tracking systems. Eric Winkler raised a general concern that it is a challenging process to develop a complex database.

There was broad agreement on the benefits of integrating an electronic version of the TRM, and little comment on the public facing reporting section of the database. There was no agreement on the amount of usage data to be included but there was agreement among voting members what functionality should be included in the database requirements specification even if it were not initially used. The EP team noted any concerns and topics for further discussion at the next meeting on the whiteboard.

Towards the end of the meeting Halfpenny asked all voting members to comment on their level of support and/or concern regarding the concept outlined by Energy Platforms. All voting members supported moving forwards with the concept as outlined by EP, however several members acknowledged concerns from PAs about a cost to more detailed data being required and the need for more details on the functionality of the system to be developed.

The EP team was tasked with developing a more detailed database requirements specification based on the concept they presented, including an estimate of likely costs to implement. The EP team was also asked to consider the likely costs of a second option for a less detailed database lacking the PA level rich data set.

The PAs requested up to a month prior to the next Subcommittee meeting (January 13th) to review the more detailed proposal, and the EP team committed to getting a more detailed draft specification proposal out significantly in advance of the January meeting.

The meeting adjourned shortly after 4pm.