

Veridian Connections Major Event Report

Freezing Rain on April 16, 2018

ELECTRICITY REPORTING AND RECORD KEEPING REQUIREMENTS

2.1.4.2.10 Major Event Response Reporting

When a distributor determines an outage was caused by a Major Event, it shall file a report with the OEB that outlines the distributor's response to the Major Event, including answers to all of the questions set out below.

A distributor shall file this report with the OEB within 60 days of the end of the Major Event unless there are exceptional circumstances, in which case the report can be filed within 90 days of the end of the Major Event. The distributor shall also post this report on its website at the same time it is filed with the OEB.

Prior to the Major Event

1. Did the distributor have any prior warning that the Major Event would occur?

Yes, Environment Canada issued a special weather statement on April 12th stating a potential ice storm for parts of southern Ontario for Saturday April 14th through to Sunday April 15th.

2. If the distributor did have prior warning, did the distributor arrange to have extra employees on duty or on standby prior to the Major Event beginning? If so, please give a brief description of arrangements.

Veridian enacted its Power Restoration Plan, which dictates the requirements for extra standby of employees. These included, but were not limited to: Customer Care Staff, Lines Staff, System Operators, Communications Personnel and Management.

3. If the distributor did have prior warning, did the distributor issue any media announcements to the public warning of possible outages resulting from the pending Major Event? If so, through what channels?

Veridian activated its Website Alert Notice on its homepage warning customers of the inclement weather, that outages were possible and reminding customers of the utility's outage communication channels. The same messages were also published on Veridian's Twitter account.

4. Did the distributor train its staff on the response plans for a Major Event? If so, please give a brief description of the training process.

Veridian performs a tabletop exercise of its Power Restoration Plan in November of every year, where Veridian carries out roundtable discussions of how to tackle a hypothetical major event.

5. Did the distributor have third party mutual assistance agreements in place prior to the Major Event? If so, who were the third parties (i.e., other distributors, private contractors)?

Yes, Veridian is a member of three (3) Mutual Assistance Plans:

1. South Central Ontario Mutual Assistance Plan (22 LDC Members)
2. Hydro One Mutual Assistance Plan
3. Canadian Mutual Assistance Group

During the Major Event

1. Please explain why this event was considered by the distributor to be a Major Event.

The weather event on April 16th was beyond the control of the utility which satisfies elements of being unpreventable or unavoidable. When assessed using the IEEE 1366 2.5 beta method and applied to five years of historic reliability data, the result exceeds the daily SAIDI threshold. Therefore April 16th was deemed as a major event day.

2. Was the IEEE Standard 1366 used to identify the scope of the Major Event? If not, why not?

Yes, IEEE standard 1366 was used to identify the scope of the Major Event.

3. Please identify the Cause of Interruption for the Major Event as per the table in section 2.1.4.2.5.

The cause of interruptions on April 16th is due to Code 6 Adverse Weather. Specifically Veridian experienced high wind and freezing rain across our service area.

4. Were there any declarations by government authorities, regulators or the grid operator of an emergency state of operation in relation to the Major Event?

No. However, a freezing rain warning was issued by Environment Canada for Southern Ontario for April 14th through to April 15th.

5. When did the Major Event begin (date and time)?

Initial outages begin on April 15th, 21:40. However only April 16th was deemed as a Major Event Day based on IEEE 1366 guideline.

6. What percentage of on-call distributor staff was available at the start of the Major Event and utilized during the Major Event?

System Control Centre – 100% of scheduled staff were on site at start of event. Those not scheduled at the start of the event were scheduled for relief.

Lines – 100% of on-call staff were available at the start of the event

7. Did the distributor issue any estimated times of restoration (ETR) to the public during the Major Event? If so, through what channels?

Estimated times of restoration were provided through Veridian's 24-hour outage hotline, Twitter account, my.alerts (Outage Notification System) and call centre. All Twitter notices were also displayed on the home page of Veridian's website, as is routine practice.

8. If the distributor did issue ETRs, at what date and time did the distributor issue its first ETR to the public?

The first estimated time of restoration was issued on Sunday, April 15th at 21:40.

9. Did the distributor issue any updated ETRs to the public? If so, how many and at what dates and times were they issued?

Between 5 and 10 updated estimated times of restoration were communicated to Veridian's customers on Monday, April 16th between approximately 1:06 a.m. and 8:40 a.m.

10. Did the distributor inform customers about the options for contacting the distributor to receive more details about outage/restoration efforts? If so, please describe how this was achieved.

Veridian's outage Twitter notices provide a link to the utility's Outage Map, highlighting the affected areas, causes, crew status and estimated times of power restoration. Customers registered for my.alerts also received outage information and details.

11. Did the distributor issue press releases, hold press conferences or send information to customers through social media notifications? If so, how many times did the distributor issue press releases, hold press conferences or send information to customers through social media notifications? What was the general content of this information?

Veridian published approximately 40-plus outage tweets and notifications through my.alerts. These communications provided affect areas, crew status and estimated times of power restoration. All Twitter notices are also displayed on the home page of Veridian's website.

12. What percentage of customer calls were dealt with by the distributor's IVR system (if available) versus a live representative?

92.7% of the calls handled through IVR. 7.3% of calls handled with live agent.

13. Did the distributor provide information about the Major Event on its website? If so, how many times during the Major Event was the website updated?

Veridian Website Alert Notice on its homepage warned customers of the inclement weather, that outages were possible and reminded customers of the utility's outage communication channels.

14. Was there any point in time when the website was inaccessible? If so, what percentage of the total outage time was the website inaccessible?

No.

15. How many customers were interrupted during the Major Event? What percentage of the distributor's total customer base did the interrupted customers represent?

10,350 customers were affected by this Major Event. This represents approximately 9% of Veridian's total customer base.

16. How many hours did it take to restore 90% of the customers who were interrupted?

21 hours, 90% of customers were restored by April 16th, 19:10.

17. Was any distributed generation used to supply load during the Major Event?

No.

18. Were there any outages associated with Loss of Supply during the Major Event? If so, please report on the duration and frequency of Loss of Supply outages.

Yes there were loss of supply outages.

Customers affected: 2405

Customer hours: 15,420

19. In responding to the Major Event, did the distributor utilize assistance through a third party mutual assistance agreement?

No. Outside assistance was not required.

20. Did the distributor run out of any needed equipment or materials during the Major Event? If so, please describe the shortages.

Veridian did not run out of any needed equipment or material during the major event.

After the Major Event

1. What steps, if any, are being taken to be prepared for or mitigate such Major Events in the future (i.e., staff training, process improvements, system upgrades)?

Per the Veridian Power Restoration Plan, a debrief session takes place after each major event. This debrief session is used to analyze the response to the outage to determine the requirement for further training, process, policy and/or Power Restoration Plan enhancements based upon lessons learned.

2. What lessons did the distributor learn in responding to the Major Event that will be useful in responding to the next Major Event?

Stemming from the debrief session, the following was documented as lessons learned:

- Have Customer Care lead call the direct System Control Center (SCC) when there is “critical” information that needs to get to the SCC
- Promote the use of radios more during storm events instead of company cell phones
- Manager, SCC to present lessons learned to staff

3. Did the distributor survey its customers after the Major Event to determine the customers' opinions of how effective the distributor was in responding to the Major Event? If so, please describe the results.

Veridian did not conduct a survey after this major event.