LOUISIANA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS TO ELECTRIC UTILITES ON WINTER STORM EVENT

RESPONSES OF CLECO POWER LLC

At the Louisiana Public Service Commission's ("LPSC" or "Commission") February 2021 Business and Executive ("B&E") Session, Electric Utilities and Regional Transmission Organizations answered questions from the Commission concerning the winter storms that occurred during the week of February 15, 2021 (the "Winter Storms"). Questions to the Electric Utilities focused on the following general topics: 1) peak outages, 2) main causes of outages, 3) duration of restoration efforts, 4) curtailment of customers, and 5) customer communication during the Winter Storms.

On March 1, 2021, LPSC Executive Counsel submitted "Follow-Up Questions" to the Electric Utilities via email, requesting that the utilities provide responses thereto by April 7, 2021. Cleco Power LLC ("Cleco Power") hereby respectfully provides the following responses to the Follow-Up Questions.

Questions pertaining to the Distribution Grid:

1. How many MW of generation were offline or otherwise subject to unplanned outages during the Winter Storms?

   RESPONSE:
   Please see attached "LPSC_01_Outages.pdf."

2. What were all identified causes of storm related outages for generation during the Winter Storms for your system? Please also indicate what was the main contributing factor.

   RESPONSE:
   Please see attached "LPSC_02_Outages.pdf."

3. How many miles of distribution and transmission lines do you own and manage in Louisiana? Please separate your response by distribution and transmission.

   RESPONSE:
   As of December 31, 2020, Cleco Power's transmission system consisted of 67 circuit miles of 500-kiloVolt (kV) lines; 561 circuit miles of 230 kV lines; 678 circuit miles of 138 kV lines; and 29 circuit miles of 69 kV lines. Cleco Power's distribution system consisted of 3,405 circuit miles of 34.5 kV lines and 8,747 circuit miles of other lines below 34.5kV.

4. Did any part of your bulk transmission system suffer unplanned outages as a result of the Winter Storm? Please include the following in your response:
   a. The length of lines affected;
   b. The specific cause of the outage;
   c. The time span each line was offline;
   d. The expected return to full service time and date; and/or
   e. The actual return to service of these lines.

RESPONSE:
Yes.

LINE	LENGTH OF LINE (Circuit length)	SPECIFIC CAUSE	TIME SPAN	Expected return or actual return to service
Hopkins-Morbihan	**7.459 miles**	**A tree fell on the line**	**Feb 15, 2021 6:39 to 14:25 (7 hrs 46 mins)**	**Actual Feb 15, 2021 12:25**
Hopkins – Patoutville	**10.646 miles**	**Downed static wire near structure**	**Feb 17, 2021 9:15 to 11:19 (2 hrs 4 mins)**	**Actual Feb 17, 2021 11:19**

5. Was any of the utility's bulk transmission system or generating units offline due to planned maintenance when the Winter Storm event was declared? If yes, please provide:
    a. The name of the transmission system and/or generating unit(s);
    b. The size (KV) and length of the transmission lines, if applicable;
    c. Why such maintenance was scheduled in February 2021 as opposed to another time period.

RESPONSE:
Yes.

a. St. Mary Clean Energy Center was scheduled for three days of planned outage (February 15 – 18, 2021). However, the unit was placed into a forced outage in late January due the Boiler Feedwater Pump failures. The projected duration of the forced outage resulted in Cleco Power and Cabot Canal starting the planned outage activities early. The final three days of outage activities overlapped with those three days from the original planned outage schedule. The Cabot facility did not complete scheduled activities until after the Winter Storm event. St. Mary Clean Energy Center cannot operate while the Cabot facility is shutdown.

b. Not applicable

6. What was the average restoration time for power outages due to storm damage from the Winter Storms?

RESPONSE:
The average restoration time for power outages related to both winter weather events was 28.7 hours.

7. How heavily do you rely on contracted crews (compared to your own linemen) to restore power during normal outages?

RESPONSE:
Cleco Power's normal work force consist of 165 Cleco line mechanics, approximately 107 contractor line mechanics, and approximately 107 vegetation specialists. The Cleco line mechanics are on a rotating callout roster to respond to outages during nights and weekends. During normal conditions the mechanics on call handle outages. If the number of outages is beyond that can reasonably be addressed by the callout crew, additional Cleco personnel are called. Additionally, we can call some of our native contractor crews to assist in restoring service due to more extensive damage.

8. How heavily did you rely on contracted crews (compared to your own linemen) to restore power during the Winter Storms?

RESPONSE:
If the number of outage issues exceeds normal quantities, such as during a medium/large thunderstorm, our native contractors engaged to assist with restoration. For the few major storms each year that affect Cleco Power's system, native contractors are engaged to identify additional off-system resources to assist with the restoration. If they do not have sufficient resources to assist, other known contractors, brokers and/or mutual assistance from other utilities are engaged. Every storm is different. During the 2020 winter storms, Cleco Power increased normal workforce by 85% and with additional distribution line and vegetation mechanics.

Cleco (100% line/0% veg)	**162***	**23.5%**
Contractors – Native (50% line/50% veg)	**214***	**30.5%**
Contractors - Off System (56% line/44% veg)	**322**	**46.0%**
Total:	**701**	

***Already working on Cleco Power's system prior to storms**

9. Could any of those outages been prevented with different preparation or enhanced vegetation maintenance prior to the Winter Storms?
    a. If outages were caused by fallen or sagging tree limbs, could those outages have been prevented with better vegetation maintenance by your company?
    b. Please provide all locations within your service area that were included within your vegetation maintenance schedule over the past two years (2019-2020) and the first 2 months of 2021.
    c. Please provide the locations in your service area that received the most scheduled vegetation maintenance within the two years (2019-2020) and the first 2 months of 2021.
    d. Please provide the locations in your service area that received the least scheduled vegetation maintenance within the past two years (2019-2020) and the first 2 months of 2021.
    e. Please provide the locations with the most distribution grid damage due to fallen or sagging trees or tree limbs during the Winter Storms.
        i. If possible, please explain how many customers lost power due to the vegetation damage in these locations?

RESPONSE:

a. The first 2021 winter storm that impacted Cleco Power's service territory south of I-10 produced extraordinarily low temperatures for an extended period of time in an area that historically and statistically rarely experiences icing conditions. It is impossible to predict such events for the purpose of enhanced tree trimming or other preventive measures. The second 2021 winter storm, experienced in the northern part of the state, was still a very rare and likewise difficult to predict the area and extent of impact.

b. All regions of Cleco Power's service territory were part of the vegetation management schedule for the time period specified.

c. While all regions were maintained during the specified time period, and the schedule across the service territory fluctuates annually, the Pineville and Bunkie regions received the higher percentage of miles maintained during the specified time period.

d. While all regions were maintained during the specified time period, and the schedule across the service territory fluctuates annually, the Slidell and Rosepine regions received the lowest percentage of miles maintained during the specified time period.

e. Rapides Parish and Avoyelles Parish had the most recorded damage as identified by damage assessors. However, the majority of outages were caused by trees and limbs on lines that did not result in line damage. Due to the quantity and widespread nature of this situation, restoration times were lengthy and exasperated by hazardous road conditions due to ice and trees/limbs blocking roads and rights of way. This contributed heavily to longer than normal restoration times. Furthermore, the icing conditions lasted for days which extended the slow progress of identifying the source of outages and making necessary repairs.

i. Given the nature of the winter weather event, as with most large weather events, it is difficult to determine exactly how many customers were impacted by vegetation related damage. However, given the relative lack of wind, it can be assumed that the vast majority of outages were due to ice buildup on trees and limbs that either fell into lines or, in many cases, simply leaned into the lines.

10. How much of your total operating budget is dedicated to vegetation maintenance in Louisiana? Please provide both a percent of total budget and dollar amount.

RESPONSE:

Area	2021 Budget	% of Total 2021 Budget
Distribution Maintenance	**Approx. $13.5M**	**1.4%**
Transmission Maintenance	**Approx. $1.28M**	**0.1%**

11. Please provide a narrative explanation of the "winterization" procedures and protocols utilized by the utility for each of its generating facilities and verification that those procedures and protocols were followed.
    a. Please indicate whether there are any winterization procedures that were not performed on any of the utility's generating units for this winter season and why such procedures were not performed.

    RESPONSE:
    Cleco Power utilizes procedures and protocols for each of the generation units. Please see "LPSC_11_Winterization Procedures.pdf."

    a. All procedures were followed.

<u>Questions Pertaining to Rolling Blackouts:</u>

12. Please describe the procedures used by the RTOs and by you to determine which load should be shed and for what duration.

    RESPONSE:
    Please see "LPSC_12_MISO procedure.pdf."

13. Did your utility undergo in any mandated or self-imposed rolling blackouts?
    a. If you did execute rolling blackouts, how much time lead time did you receive from when you knew a blackout would occur to when the blackout took place for the end user? Please include a timeline of all notices received from MISO or SPP (as applicable) regarding the necessity to begin load shedding.
        i. In that time, were the effected customers notified in preparation?
        ii. Were the effected customers notified during or after the rolling blackout?
        iii. If effected customers were notified of a rolling blackout, what mode of communication was used?
        iv. If effected customers were notified before or during, were they given a timeline of how long the blackout would occur? Was that timeline accurate?
    b. If the blackout was mandated, who made that decision and was a recommended time period given for how long the blackouts needed / should last?
    c. If you did execute rolling blackouts, how long did the blackouts last? Please provide a shortest, longest, and average time of the rolling blackouts.
    d. Please indicate the amount of industrial, commercial and/or residential load tripped off/shed during the Winter Storms, including the number of customers in each class and the number of MW by region and/or location.
    e. If you did execute rolling blackouts, were you able to target those blackouts in order to:
        i. Lessen the impact on vulnerable customers, such as, but not limited to, those needed electricity for health reasons or those customers who were just getting their power back after multiple days?
            1. If not, is there something different that can be done in the future to potentially achieve this?
        ii. Ensure the most power was conserved during a rolling black while potentially affecting the least customers? For instance, were you able to conserve energy

by shutting off closed commercial customers and therefore spare shutting off residential customers trying to stay warm in their home?

1. If not, is there something different that can be done in the future to potentially achieve this?

RESPONSE:

Yes, Cleco Power did undergo rolling blackouts.

a. Cleco Power notifications to customers included:

- **Press releases sent to statewide media**
- **Storm Center, Newsroom website pages**
- **Facebook**
- **TV and radio interviews**
- **Call Center**

i. Please see the attached "LPSC_13_Notifications.pdf."

ii. Cleco Power was not able to send alerts to specific customers who would experience load shed interruptions. Cleco sent alerts via mass media outlets to ensure as many customers were notified as possible.

iii. N/A

iv. Cleco Power's operating instructions from MISO did not include a projected end time estimate, but were listed as "until further notice."

b. Please see the process outlined in No. 12 above.

c. Please see "LPSC_13c_Blackouts.pdf."

d. Please see "LPSC_13c_Blackouts.pdf."

e. As noted in answer to Item No. 12 above, whenever Cleco Power had opportunity to choose where load was shed, the circuits affected were selected from pre-defined blocks, which are designed to avoid outages at critical facilities. Furthermore, Cleco Power attempted to avoid areas that had already experienced storm related outages and areas predicted to be most affected by the winter storms in the coming days.

i. Cleco Power plans to implement load shed blocks not only for generation deficiencies but also for transmission congestion.

ii. Cleco Power does not have the ability to differentiate between residential and commercial load as it pertains to load shed.

14. How many of your meters were turned off intentionally due to rolling blackouts versus lost power naturally due to storm damage from the Winter Storms?

RESPONSE:

- **Morning Event Load Shed: 23,249 customers affected**
- **Evening Event Load Shed: 24,277customers affected**
- **Total customers affected by load shed: 47,526**
- **Need count of customers outaged by weather – 78,785**

15. Were any Load Modifying Resources ("LMRs"), including interruptible load, utilized during the Winter Storms?
    a. If yes, please provide:
        i. The type of LMR;
        ii. The total number of MW of LMR; and
        iii. The duration of their use.
    b. If no, please provide identify any interruptible customers who were not interrupted during the Winter Storm and provide a narrative as to why they were not interrupted. Included with this response, please also identify any interruptible load that did not fulfill its obligation to interrupt load when called."

RESPONSE:
The following LMR was utilized:

UNIT	TYPE	TOTAL MW	DATE	DURATION
Clarksdale	**Generator**	**22MW**	**Feb 16, 2021**	**H/E 14:00 (1hr)**
****Note: : MISO issued the LMR request at 06:04 02/16/2021. Clarksdale initiated startup procedures but did not meet the start time nor did it come online during that hour.**				

The following Interruptible Customers were curtailed:

CUSTOMER	TYPE	AMOUNT OF CURTAILMENT	DATE	NOTIFICATION TIME	START TIME	END TIME
Boise Cascade	**Interruptible Load**	**5MW**	**Feb 16, 2021**	**19:22**	**20:22**	**21:27**
Columbian Chemical	**Interruptible Load**	**7MW**	**Feb 16, 2021**	**19:22**	**20:22**	**21:27**

The following Interruptible Customers were not curtailed due to load below contract demand limits:

- **IP Campti**
- **IP Mansfield**
- **Equilon Berwick**
- **Equilon Julien**
- **Red River (ADA)**

<u>Questions Pertaining to Fuel and Generation Needs throughout the Winter Storms:</u>

16. Please describe the impact of the Winter Storms on fuel costs and the expected impact on upcoming utility bills.

RESPONSE:
Cleco Power's total fuel and purchased power costs incurred during the February winter storm was approximately $78 million, approximately $55 million higher than total fuel costs in January 2021 with estimated rates of approximately $84.00 per mWh. For a customer using 1,000 kWh compared with fuel charges of $27.00 per mWh billed in February 2021, the impact on the bill would be an additional $57.

17. Please describe any factors that limited the ability to import fuel to serve load and quantify the level of imports that were limited.

RESPONSE:
Cleco Power's only gas supply limiting factor was very thin market liquidity. Many of Cleco Power's natural gas counterparties lost supply and were not able to sell gas. Cleco Power's normal supplier portfolio was reduced to approximately 50% during this timeframe.

18. Please indicate whether there were any fuel suppliers who failed or refused to deliver the contracted quantities of fuel during the Winter Storms. If there were any failures or refusal of delivery, please indicate:
    a. The name of the fuel supplier;
    b. The amount of fuel that was not delivered;
    c. The generating unit(s) to which fuel was not delivered;
    d. The reason provided by the fuel counterparty for failure to deliver; and
    e. Whether or not that generating unit had to cease or curtail operations as a result of the failure of the fuel supplier to deliver contracted-for quantities.

RESPONSE:

Supplier	Fuel Not Delivered (MMBtu)	Fuel for	Reason Non Delivery	Impact on Generation
Mansfield	22,140	Brame Energy Center	Forced Majuere [1]	None
Shell	6,053	Brame Energy Center	Forced Majuere [1]	None
Texla	2,829	Brame Energy Center	None Given [2]	None
NextEra	250	Brame Energy Center	None Given [2]	None
Mitsui	395	Teche Power Station	None Given [2]	None

[1] Forced majuere declared by Supplier due to supply well freeze offs

[2] Supply cut by pipeline due to Supplier's "pools" being out of balance

19. What are your suggestions on how to spread the fuel costs through the Fuel Adjustment Clause ("FAC") such that these costs are not incurred on a single bill?

RESPONSE:
Cleco Power proposes deferring $50 million of this fuel expense for the month of February and collecting the balance as a surcharge adjustment over a 12 month period beginning May 2021. This would reduce the impact on the 1,000 kWh bill from a one-time increase of $57 to a monthly increase over 12 months of approximately $5.

20. What are your suggestions on other ways to share the risk of such effects to the FAC rather than flowing those costs through to customer bills?

RESPONSE:
Technology and/or financial adjustments may be worth consideration as alternatives to flowing those costs through to customer bills. The technology path could begin with letting each individual customer know the approximate bill impact based on usage during high

pricing events at a minimum should encourage voluntary adjustments to thermostats and perhaps delaying discretionary usage of other appliances.

Allowing customers to make a decision on whether they are willing to pay their share of estimated incremental costs (i.e., the $57 identified in 18 above) or voluntarily participate in temporary disconnection could also help customers understand the impact their consumption choices have on their bill. Billing systems would need additional coding to make sure that customers who reduced their consumption did not subsequently pay the costs caused by customers who did not curtail their usage.

From the financial side, allowing a consistent moderately higher rate of return which incorporates the risk of fuel volatility could potentially moderate the impact of these infrequent events. For instance, if the likelihood of such events occurring is once every 10 years, charging customers something like an additional $6 per year over a ten-year time frame may eliminate the otherwise temporary higher impact on customer bills.

One other financial alternative could be collecting a modest surcharge in excess of actual fuel costs each month which could be applied against the significant but infrequent price spikes such as those which occurred in connection with the February 2021 winter storms.

21. How much did the price of fuel go up during the Winter Storms and for how long did it stay at those peak prices?

    RESPONSE:
    Cleco Power's actual natural gas costs during the week of the storm increase from an average purchase cost of about $3.00 per MMBtu to peak pricing of $70.00 per MMBtu. The peak cost of $70.00 per MMBtus lasted one day.

22. Ultimately, who bears the risk of Locational Marginal Pricing ("LMP") changes throughout MISO? Throughout SPP?

    RESPONSE:
    The MISO Market Participant (Cleco Power) and their retail customers bear the risk of MISO Locational Marginal Pricing (LMP). Cleco Power does not participate in the SPP market.

23. Could different measures have been taken in preparation for the Winter Storms in order to prevent fuel shortages? If so, why were those measures not taken?
    a. Should these measures have been taken when the Winter Storms were forecasted in weather reports?"

    RESPONSE:
    Cleco Power did not experience any natural gas shortages that impacted unit generation. Additional measures were not necessary.

Questions pertaining to customer service and communication

24. How many customers do you serve in the state of Louisiana?

    RESPONSE:
    Cleco Power serves approximately 288,000 customers in 24 of Louisiana's parishes through its retail business and supplies wholesale power in Louisiana and Mississippi.

25. How many customer service representatives do you have in Louisiana answering phone calls or making live calls to your customers? Please provide the job title and business address for each of these employees.

    RESPONSE:

JOB TITLE	NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES	LOCATION
Call Center Specialist	24	Call Center – Pineville, La
Call Center Coordinator	6	Call Center – Pineville, La
Call Center Supervisor	3	Call Center – Pineville, La
Contract Workers	9	Call Center – Pineville, La
Customer Service Representative	32	Customer Service Offices throughout La
Temporary Customer Service Representative	1	Customer Service Office in La
Customer Service Office Supervisor	3	Customer Service Offices throughout La
Customer Experience Trainers	4	Customer Service Offices throughout La
TOTAL	82	

26. Do you make live phone calls (non-recording) to communicate to your customers?

    RESPONSE:
    Yes. Cleco Power utilizes live phone calls to communicate with customers as a follow-up tool. However, Cleco Power primarily receives inbound calls.

27. Do you answer phones with live personnel or use pre-recorded messages to answer phone calls?

    RESPONSE:
    Cleco Power utilizes live personnel to answer customer phone calls.

28. Do you have a local (area code within your Louisiana service territory) customer service number, or do you utilize a 1-800 number?
    a. Please explain the advantages or disadvantages of utilizing a local number over a 1-800 number or vice versa.

    RESPONSE:
    Cleco Power currently utilizes a 1-800 number for customer service. Advantages include one point-of-contact for customers and reduced maintenance cost.

29. Does your company have local, customer service offices or facilities within your Louisiana service area?

a. If so, please explain any perceived or realized advantages of such local facilities.

RESPONSE:
Cleco Power does have 13 local customer service offices throughout the geographical service territory for face to face interaction with customers (payments, orders, installment plans, etc.)

a. Advantages include providing one-on-one services to customers and maintaining an extensive community presence.

30. On average, when a customer calls your customer service number, how long does it take for them to reach a live person who can answer their questions?
    a. Will that live person always be in Louisiana?
    b. Do customers have to press extension numbers to reach a live person?

RESPONSE:
On average, a live person interacts with the customer within approximately 4 minutes.

a. Yes. All Cleco Power call center employees are located within Louisiana.
b. No. Customers do not have to press extension numbers to reach a live person.

31. Are your customer service representatives able to communicate directly to other departments of your utility operations in order to get helpful, accurate information efficiently for customers calling in?

RESPONSE:
Yes. Customer service representatives are able to communicate directly to other departments within Cleco Power and Cleco Corporate Holdings LLC.

32. Do you utilize text notifications to communicate with your customers? Did this service work during these past Winter Storms?

RESPONSE:
Yes. Cleco Power utilized text notifications to communicate with customers.
Yes. The text notifications worked during the 2021 Winter Storms.

33. Do you utilize automated phone calls to communicate with your customers?

RESPONSE:
No. Cleco Power does not use automated phone calls to communicate with customers.

34. Do you utilize email notifications to communicate with your customers?

RESPONSE:
Yes. Cleco Power does utilize email notifications to communicate with customers.

35. Do you have personnel dedicated to monitoring social media pages related to your company as well as social media pages in general and social media trends within your service territory in

order to further understand any problems that may be arising for your customers and/or communicate directly with customers?

a. Do you answer questions your customers post on social media?
b. Do you find a social media presence is helpful in responding to your customers?"

RESPONSE:
Yes. Using Facebook, Cleco's Corporate Communications and Customer Experience teams actively post critical and time sensitive information, as well as monitor and respond to customer posts and private messages Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. During storms or large power outage events, such as the recent winter storms, the company monitors and responds to customers seven days a week between the hours of 6 a.m. and 10 p.m.

Beginning in March 2021, the company implemented a social media monitoring platform to measure customer sentiment (positive / negative) across its service territory, categorize topics of concern, pinpoint customers' location within a 25-mile radius using geo-fencing and create detailed reports.

a. Yes. Cleco responds to customers' private messages and public posts on the company's Facebook page. Cleco does not go to customer pages to respond to or participate in conversations.

b. Cleco's social media presence allows the company to reach thousands of customers and communities with up-to-the-minute information. Storm statistics support social media as a source. For instance, during Hurricane Laura, the Cleco Power Facebook page garnered nearly 10,000 new Followers, received nearly 1,500 private messages, made 205 posts, had a peak 22,000 page views in one day and a peak reach of 176,000. During the recent ice storms, we acquired roughly 2,200 new followers. Additionally, the posts shared by Cleco Power can be shared by other social media users on any other public platform, only furthering the reach of the communication. Finally, news and media personnel are able to refer to Cleco's social media for updates and information that they can and do share on their channels.

36. Do you have an automated or advanced meter system?
    a. If so, did it function/perform properly during the Winter Storms? Why or why not? Please support with examples and evidence.

RESPONSE:
Cleco Power's AMI system functioned normally before and during the storm. However, due to communications issues following the event, Cleco Power was unable to verify service restoration in some of the more rural areas. The AMI system is a supplemental tool and did not hamper restoration efforts.

37. Does your utility utilize an online outage map accessible to customers?
    a. Was that map accurate during the Winter Storms? Why or why not?

RESPONSE:
Cleco Power does utilize an online customer outage map that functioned as expected during the weather event. The accuracy of the map is dependent upon information received from field devices, damage assessors, and restoration personnel. As the weather event occurs, the accuracy of the map varies. After the weather event passes, outage information is based upon AMI meter data and remote-communicating field devices. Depending on the timing of events, it is possible to have nested outages. The control center system directly drives the outage map information.

38. Are your systems able to identify whether a customer has power or does not have power?
    a. If yes, was this function working properly during the Winter Storms?
    b. If yes, are you able to therefore communicate with customers who have power differently than customers who do have power?
    c. At any point during the Winter Storms, did your company ask customers who did not have service to curtail their usage?

RESPONSE:
Yes. Cleco Power's systems can identify whether a customer does or does not have power. The systems remotely monitors key field devices and AMI meters for loss of power. The outage management system then determines the device that opened and, where applicable, provides an estimated location of the fault causing the outage.
    a. This system worked as expected during the storm.
    b. The outage management system updates the outage map. Customers who enrolled in the notification system received the initial power outage notices.
    c. Yes. As part of the regional load shedding event, customers were asked to curtail usage.

39. If your company realizes their customer service or communications systems are not working, what is your company's response to this issue? What mitigation measures are taken to address any malfunctions? What mitigation measures are taken to explain any deficiencies to your customers?

RESPONSE:
Cleco utilizes multiple methods for communicating with customers, including the online outage map; notifications driven by the outage management system; the customer call center; social media; and press releases through traditional media.

40. Do you have a public relation, customer service, or other team in charge of crafting and sending out notifications and public outreach messages to your customers?

RESPONSE:
Yes. Cleco Power's Corporate Communications team is responsible for developing customer messaging for the Cleco Customer Experience team fielding phone calls, as well as crafting and disseminating customer messaging using multiple channels, including social media (i.e. Facebook), traditional media (i.e. TV, radio, print interviews) and the Storm Center and Newsroom pages on the company's website (cleco.com).

41. Do you target messages based on relevancy to your customers or simply send general notifications across your entire service territory, regardless of its relevancy for each customer?
    a. If the answer depends on a scenario, please expand on those different scenarios to provide a full understanding of how your teams attempt to best communicate with customers.
    b. Does your company believe that targeted messages (or different forms of messaging) are more useful in ensuring accurate, relevant communication to customers? Why or why not?
    c. What are barriers to communicating tailored, relevant information to each customer that would cause a company to rely only on general communications?

RESPONSE:
The Cleco Power engages in both types of messaging.

a. **As it pertains to social media, if a customer posts a comment about their service or asks a specific question about their account, the Corporate Communications team responds to that customer one-on-one via Facebook Messenger. The protocol is to ask that customer to send Cleco Power a private message through Facebook Messenger, as the communication is not relevant to other customers and to ensures customers are not publicly sharing personal information. This allows a team member to take the conversation offline and work directly with the customer to resolve the issue. Cleco Power makes every attempt to respond to private messages and comments posted on the company's Facebook page that require a response. Generic responses are available to respond to frequently asked questions, such as "Why does my neighbor have power and I don't?" or "How does the company restore power?" Through Facebook, the Corporate Communications team also has the ability to target users and boost posts in certain geographic locations.**

   When distributing press releases to the media before, during and after storms, the Corporate Communications team does have the ability to send updates to appropriate media outlets. The team uses a database in which media outlets throughout the state are organized by parish. For instance, when a storm hits Cleco Power's service territory, it may or may not impact customers in all three of the company's regions (northern, southern, eastern). Once a storm passes and restoration begins, the Corporate Communications team evaluates where the outages are, who needs the information and then sends storm updates based on location and relevancy.

   When updating the website, there is a special section within the site called the *Storm Center* where updates are posted for those looking for this information. Customers seeking storm restoration updates can access the *Storm Center* from the home page of cleco.com through a special ALERT banner or by clicking on "Storm Center."

b. **Targeted messages are helpful to providing accurate, relevant communication to customers. In this information-age, where many customers are inundated with texts, phone calls, social media ads, Internet ads and more, we understand why customers appreciate relevant messages. Additionally, audience analysis is one of the four steps in the public relations process. Research shows when customers receive information applicable to them, they're more engaged and satisfied. While Cleco Power believes in targeted messages and creates them when applicable, in some instances, the company's customer communication applies to all customers.**

c. **Barriers can include access to communication touchpoints such as internet access, cable, etc. Cleco Power serves a diverse group of customers, including geographically and socioeconomically. For example, some customers have smartphones and can access the Internet and rely on social media for information, while other customers rely primarily on traditional communication methods for information (i.e., local TV and radio broadcasts). In addition to access, is choice, meaning how customers want to get their information. Some customers are comfortable with electronic notifications while other prefer paper notifications, for instance.**

42. Were you able to get accurate information to your customers before, during and after the Winter Storms?

RESPONSE:
Yes. Cleco Power used multiple platforms to communicate with its customers before, during and after the winter storms. Messaging included safety, storm preparation, outage notifications, restoration updates, and more. Communication touchpoints used by the Corporate Communications team included the company's website (Outage Map, Newsroom and Storm Center pages), social media (Facebook posts, some boosted and the private message feature), news media press releases, TV and radio interviews and the customer call center. Below are Cleco Power's communication stats for each winter storm.

<u>Winter Storm 1</u>

- **23 media (TV/radio) interviews**
- **14 press releases**
- **27 Facebook posts**
- **56 unique private messages/requests from customers**

Winter Storm 2

- **15 media (TV/radio) interviews**
- **18 press releases**
- **43 Facebook posts**
- **261 unique private messages/requests from customers**

43. What is your utility's total yearly operating budget?

RESPONSE:
Cleco Power LLC's 2021 operating budget is approximately $965M.

44. How much of your utility's total yearly operating budget is allocated to customer service? Please provide dollar number and percentage.
    a. Please break down the dollars allocated to customer service based on categories your utility spends in, such as, but not limited to:
        i. How much money is spent on human customer service representatives?
        ii. How much money is spent on automated systems?
        iii. How much money is spent on physical customer service locations (places where the public can contact either physically or by telephone an individual dedicated to handling their customer service issue)?

RESPONSE:

Area	2021 Budget	% of Total 2021 Budget
Customer Billing	**$1.88M**	**0.2%**
Customer Payment Processing	**$0.88M**	**0.1%**
Customer Service Admin	**$0.7M**	**0.1%**
Customer Systems and Credit	**$4M**	**0.4%**
Regional Office Admin	**$4.4M**	**0.5%**
Customer Call Center	**$3.34M**	**0.3%**

45. How much does it cost (rough estimate based on current employment) to hire and maintain one customer service representative?

RESPONSE:
Cleco Power estimates that it costs approximately $77,500 to hire and maintain one customer service representative.

46. Do you feel your customer service and communication allowed for your customers to adequately prepare for events that unfolded during the Winter Storms?

RESPONSE:
Yes. Cleco Power prepares year-round for weather events and encourages customers to do the same. Storm preparation messaging occurs not only before a storm, but year-round.

The Corporate Communications teams began sending pre-storm messages to customers on Feb. 11, 2021, which was three days before Winter Storm 1 impacted Cleco Power's service territory. Pre-storm messages were distributed through news releases, website, media interviews and Facebook. The messages advised customers that snow, ice and freezing temperatures from a major winter storm could leave roads impassable or closed and cause widespread power outages. Also included was information on how Cleco Power was

preparing for the storm (i.e. bringing in additional resources) and how customers could prepare were included. Tips included:

- **Encouraging customers to gather supplies (i.e. medicine, water, batteries)**
- **Charge devices**
- **Prepare for the possibility of declining, unsafe travel conditions**
- **Safety reminders around using generators, as well as power line safety**

Before Winter Storm 1 hit Louisiana, the Corporate Communications team made nine posts on Facebook, fielded 25 inbound private messages via Facebook, distributed three press releases, conducted four media interviews and posted a winter storm alert on the home page of the company's website that remained in place until power was restored to all customers from both storms.

47. Do you believe useful and helpful customer service was provided by your company to your customers during the Winter Storms?

    RESPONSE:
    Yes. Cleco Power provided useful and helpful customer service to customers during the Winter Storms?

48. Based on your company's customer service performance in the Winter Storms, does your company plan on increasing the amount of budget they allocate to customer service?
    a. Will your company ask for a rate increase to do so?

    RESPONSE:
    At this time Cleco Power has not made a definitive determination as to potential budgetary changes related to customer service and/or resulting rate impacts.

<u>Closing Questions:</u>

49. Please provide all temperature forecasts you received for your Louisiana service territory (and the source of those forecasts) for February 14-20, 2021 and the actual temperatures experienced on those dates.

    RESPONSE:
    Cleco Power utilizes weather forecasts from five diverse locations within its footprint to derive load forecasts:

    1. **ESF - Pineville, LA**
    2. **GWO - Greenwood, MS**
    3. **LFT - Lafayette, LA**
    4. **MSY - New Orleans, LA**
    5. **SHV - Shreveport, LA**

    Please see the attached spreadsheet "LPSC_49_Temperature forecasts.xlsx."

50. In your opinion, was your utility adequately prepared for the Winter Storms?
    a. Did you customers benefit from your level of preparedness?"

    RESPONSE:
    Cleco Power continuously monitors weather forecasts in order to adequately prepare for severe weather conditions and believes that it was adequately prepared for the Winter Storms, and that Cleco Power's customers benefited from the Company's level of preparedness.

51. In your opinion, was your response to the Winter Storms sufficient or to a standard of excellence your customers deserve?

    RESPONSE:
    Yes.