DEMCO'S RESPONSES TO COMMISSION'S FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS TO ELECTRIC UTILITIES ON WINTER STORM EVENT

At the Commission's February B&E, the Electric Utilities and Regional Transmission Organizations ("RTOs") were questioned about the winter storms that occurred the week of February 15, 2021 (hereinafter "Winter Storms"). For the Electric Utilities, the questioning surrounded: 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. For the RTOs, the questioning surrounded the load shedding events.

Chairman Greene indicated that additional questions would also be submitted to the Electric Utilities after the B&E, with answers due back to the Commissioners within a month. Below are DEMCO's Responses to these questions.

Questions for All Electric Utilities

***Questions pertaining to the Distribution Grid*:**

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

   DEMCO Response: DEMCO at its peak experienced 42,253 member outages (37.5%) due to weather related events. At that time, DEMCO had a total system load of 470 MW.

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.

   DEMCO Response: Not applicable as DEMCO does not own or operate any generation facilities.

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

   DEMCO Response: DEMCO owns and manages 230 miles of transmission lines. The number of distribution miles is broken down between 4,168 miles of overhead and 1,124 miles of underground, with a total of 5,292 miles of distribution lines. These figures are for primary line only.

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:

   DEMCO Response: One section of transmission line between two substations, Dyer Rd and Indian Mound, tripped out during the storm but did not affect any members with an outage.

   a. The length of lines affected;

   DEMCO Response: 6.98 Miles

   b. The specific cause of the outage;

   DEMCO Response: The specific cause of the outage is unknown.

c. The time span each line was offline;

DEMCO Response: The line was offline for 2 hours and 37 minutes.

d. The expected return to full service time and date; and/or

DEMCO Response: See response to Item 4.e.

e. The actual return to service of these lines.

DEMCO Response: The line returned to service at 10:22 a.m. on February 15, 2021.

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:

DEMCO Response: DEMCO does not own or operate any generating facilities. There were no bulk transmission systems down for planned maintenance.

a. The name of the transmission system and/or generating unit(s);

DEMCO Response: Not applicable. See response to Item 5.

b. The size (KV) and length of the transmission lines, if applicable;

DEMCO Response: Not applicable. See response to Item 5.

c. Why such maintenance was scheduled in February 2021 as opposed to another time period.

DEMCO Response: Not applicable. See response to Item 5.

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

DEMCO Response: The average restoration time for power outages during the storm was 24.25 hours. This number was inflated due to the length of time it took to restore power to outages affecting only a few members near the end of the event. A simplified breakdown of outage length is as follows: 42% of outages lasted less than 6 hours, 8% more than 6 but less than 12, 6% more than 12 but less than 18, 5% more than 18 but less than 24, 13% more than 24 but less than 36, 5% more than 36 but less than 48, 8% more than 48 but less than 60, 2% more than 60 but less than 72, 8% more than 72 but less than 96, 2% more than 96 but less than 120 hours. The document titled Item 6 – Outage Count and Customers Affected Summary has also been provided to support this information.

7. How heavily do you rely on contracted crews (compared to your own linemen) to restore power during normal[1] outages?

DEMCO Response: DEMCO relies solely on in-house crews to restore power associated with overhead lines during normal outages. For underground outages, DEMCO crews investigate and isolate the problems while contractors test (if necessary) and make associated repairs.

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

DEMCO Response: Contract crews were utilized to repair damages to the system found during assessments. Their assistance freed up DEMCO employees to continue damage assessments and assist with power restoration. The following is a breakdown of the man-hours worked to restore power during the Winter Storms:

DEMCO Employees: 10,605.5
OH Contractors: 5,221
UG Contractors: 751
ROW Contractors: 1,397
Mutual Aid: 830

Total Hours: 18,804.5

9. Could any of those outages been prevented with different preparation or enhanced vegetation maintenance prior to the Winter Storms?

DEMCO Response: Trimming ground to sky on all distribution lines could have prevented some, but not all, of the outages resulting from 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?

DEMCO Response: Trimming ground to sky on all distribution lines could have prevented some, but not all, of the outages resulting from the Winter Storms.

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.

DEMCO Response: See attached document titled Items 9.b and 9.c.

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.

DEMCO Response: See attached document titled Items 9.b and 9.c.

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.

DEMCO Response: See attached document titled Item 9.d.

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?

DEMCO Response: See attached document titled Items 9.e and 9.e.i.

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.

    DEMCO Response: DEMCO's 2021 Operating Budget includes $8,007,788 for vegetation management, or 17% of the total budget. These dollars are broken down as follows:

Contractor-R/W Cutting	$	5,062,389.00
Herbicide Contracts	$	275,000.00
Hourly Tree Crews	$	1,934,399.00
Stump Grinding	$	20,000.00
Wood Debris	$	16,000.00
Tree Removals	$	700,000.00

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.

    DEMCO Response: Not applicable as DEMCO does not own or operate any generation facilities.

    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.

    DEMCO Response: Not applicable as DEMCO does not own or operate any generation facilities.

***<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.

    DEMCO Response: Not applicable as DEMCO was not asked to, nor did they, shed load.

13. Did your utility undergo in any mandated or self-imposed rolling blackouts?

    DEMCO Response: No, DEMCO did not undergo 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?

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

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?

DEMCO Response: As DEMCO did not have any rolling blackouts, all of the outages experienced by DEMCO members (42,253 at the peak) were due to storm damage from the Winter Storms.

15. Were any Load Modifying Resources ("LMRs"), including interruptible load, utilized during the Winter Storms?

DEMCO Response: No. See response to Item 15.b below.

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.

DEMCO Response: DEMCO did not utilize any Load Modifying Resources during the Winter Storms as our Load Management Transmitter (LMT) system is only designed to be utilized in the Summer months when the temperature is 95 degrees and above.

***<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.

    DEMCO Response: DEMCO has worked closely with our power supplier, CLECO Power, to develop a plan aimed to levelize the impact of the fuel costs over a 12-month period. Starting with the May 2021 bill, an additional $0.005 (half of one cent) per kWh will be added to the PCA each month for 12 consecutive months.

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

    DEMCO Response: Not applicable to DEMCO.

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:

    DEMCO Response: Not applicable to DEMCO.

    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.

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?

    DEMCO Response: See DEMCO's response to Item 16.

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?

    DEMCO Response: DEMCO has been in talks with CLECO Power to potentially develop a plan designed for both the Cooperative and the Power Supplier to equally shoulder the risk during extreme circumstances.

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?

    DEMCO Response: Not applicable as DEMCO does not own or operate any generation facilities.

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

    DEMCO Response: The end user ultimately bears the risk of Locational Marginal Pricing.

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?

    DEMCO Response: Not applicable as DEMCO does not own or operate any generation facilities.

    a. Should these measures have been taken when the Winter Storms were forecasted in weather reports?

<u>Questions pertaining to customer service and communication</u>:

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

    DEMCO Response: As of February 28, 2021, DEMCO served 113,907 meters.

25. How many customer service representatives[2] 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.

    DEMCO Response: DEMCO has 22 Member Service Representatives available to assist with the incoming call volume from our membership. Our Member Service Representatives are all located in Louisiana and work in different offices across our seven-parish service area. DEMCO also utilizes Cooperative Response Center (CRC), a third-party call handling service, to assist with the incoming call volume so that our members receive efficient service in a timely manner. Listed below is the job title and business address for each Member Service Representative located in Louisiana.

Member Service Representative (1)	Galvez District Office	15095 Highway 931 Gonzales, La 70737
Member Service Representative (2)	Central District Office	16262 Wax Road Greenwell Springs, La 70739
Member Service Representative (1)	Greensburg District Office	6823 La Highway 10

		Greensburg, La 70441
Member Service Representative (2)	Livingston District Office	29444 Frost Road Livingston, La 70754
Member Service Representative (1)	St. Francisville District Office	6843 La Highway 61 St. Francisville, La 70791
Member Service Representative (2)	Zachary District Office	20110 Plank Road Zachary, la 70791
Member Service Representative (1)	Denham Springs District Office	138 Aspen Square Suite B Denham Springs, La 70726
Member Service Representative (12)	Contact Center- Headquarters	16262 Wax Rd Greenwell Springs, La 70739

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

    DEMCO Response: DEMCO does not make live phone calls to communicate to our membership during weather events. Live outgoing calls during weather events are normally made to confirm outages or to follow up on member inquiries that may have been submitted using other communication portlets.

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

    DEMCO Response: DEMCO answers all calls using an automated system with pre-recorded messages. The member is then provided with options for assistance and may be transferred to an automated system, or to a live person depending on the option selected.

28. Do you have a local (area code within your Louisiana service territory) customer service number, or do you utilize a 1-800 number?

    DEMCO Response: DEMCO uses both a local and a toll-free phone number for members to reach our Member Services Department.

    a. Please explain the advantages or disadvantages of utilizing a local number over a 1-800 number or vice versa.

    DEMCO Response: DEMCO has recently launched a branding initiative which includes consolidating many of the previously published local numbers into one number. This initiative provides members who may be charged long distance fees with a free method to contact DEMCO.

The following is a listing of all the numbers available to reach DEMCO:

Toll Free:
1-844-My-DEMCO (1-844-693-3626) forwarded to 261-1177
1-800-262-1170 (Old billing toll free - still active and forwarded to 261-1177)
1-800-262-1160 (Old outage toll free - still active and forwarded to 261-1177)
1-800-222-2907 (Old Denham number – still active and forwarded to 261-1177)

Local:
225-261-1177 (Billing)
225-261-1160 (Outage)

Local number considered obsolete, but still active and forwarded to 261-1177:
225-686-2591 (LIV)
225-635-3348 (SF)
225-654-9355 (ZAC)
225-665-8932 (DS)
225-222-6132 (GB)
225-622-2549 (WC)

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

DEMCO Response: Yes. DEMCO has seven local facilities that members can visit to conduct business with us. Due to COVID the lobbies of all offices are closed, however, drive-thru service is available at five of the district offices.

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

DEMCO Response: DEMCO's facilities are located in the areas that we serve. Local facilities provide members with another avenue to contact DEMCO if the member would like an in-person experience with us.

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?

DEMCO Response: During 2020, DEMCO's average wait time before reaching a live agent was 1 minute 15 seconds. 2021 year to date, DEMCO is averaging a 6 minute, 50 seconds hold time before a member reaches a live agent. These averages do not include calls that are routed to our third-party call handling service.

a. Will that live person always be in Louisiana?

DEMCO Response: No, DEMCO uses a Cooperative Response Center, a third-party call handling service based in Austin, Minnesota.

b. Do customers have to press extension numbers to reach a live person?

DEMCO Response: No. Members are routed through an automated system which guides them to their destination. Members are asked relevant questions and they respond by pressing a single digit on their keypad. Those choices will bring them to a live person or to our automated system.

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?

    DEMCO Response: Yes, DEMCO's Member Service Representatives can communicate directly with the resource they may need in order to answer member inquiries.

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

    DEMCO Response: DEMCO members currently are not able to text DEMCO directly; however, the NISC system, which will be implemented on June 28, 2021, includes functionality to allow members to text the Cooperative through their MyDEMCO hub. Our current system does allow for members to sign-up to receive text notifications when large clusters of meters are out of power. This service was functioning as designed during the Winter Storms.

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

    DEMCO Response: Yes, DEMCO utilizes automated phone calls to communicate with our membership.

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

    DEMCO Response: Yes, DEMCO utilizes email notifications to communicate with our membership.

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?

    DEMCO Response: DEMCO contracts with Pioneer Utility Resources (PUR) for regular social media content and monitoring our social platforms 24/7/365. Their staff reports to DEMCO any urgent or potentially dangerous issues. They are also authorized to ban someone for using profanity; and to report someone for making a threat and to report that threat to DEMCO and the social media platform; and then ban from our page.

    DEMCO has four full-time employees who are tasked to manage communication to members, media, city officials, and LPSC commissioners and staffers during all emergency events. A management-level staffer and an executive level staffer oversee and manage DEMCO social platforms: Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn. Before, during and after the emergency, messaging focuses on safety, insight on outage assessment and restoration progress, and education on the steps to restoration. Other methods used to keep our members and communities informed include email messages, text messages and call outs. News releases are distributed to broadcast, print, digital and radio media contacts, as well as to DEMCO Board Directors, city mayors, LPSC staffers and commissioners, and Chambers of Commerce.

Social media posts are a large component of messaging during any weather event, used to prepare before, during, and after. In addition to the content we post, we also monitor the page to assess what our members need, usually it is information about outages or restoration progress, and we focus on helping them find the tools on our website to get that information so they can use it anytime they need it; and when there is urgency, a dedicated DEMCO employees works to get information to assist the member.

DEMCO crew leaders and district line supervisors are also asked to relay specific information to communications personnel so it too can be shared:

- Unique situations crews may see or face.
- Specific types of damage (anything beyond what we know: trees, radial ice, etc.)
- Specific areas that have more damage (very helpful)
- Any general messages to get out to the membership
- Images coming in from the field

a. Do you answer questions your customers post on social media?

DEMCO Response: Communications personnel read all comments and pay close attention to direct messages. DEMCO members will jump in and answer questions based on their knowledge, which is always great to see. Personnel respond to direct messages.

If someone posts on their page and tags DEMCO, personnel will try to reach out to that person on their page to invite them to DM or email the team to address the member's issue. Communications personnel may post a comment on the member's feed to invite them to reach out to a DEMCO Member Services Representative. The most efficient course of action is recommended to assist the member as quickly as possible.

b. Do you find a social media presence is helpful in responding to your customers?

DEMCO Response: Social media is helpful in getting information out to DEMCO members and is a great forum that encourages social engagement and further education on a topic. Occasionally DEMCO personnel will interject, but that is rare. DEMCO usually leaves it to the social platform community – and sometimes the members engage with each other - to express themselves in relation to a post. When members need more information than what is available on the post, they often direct message DEMCO and receive a response in return. Oftentimes a fellow member will participate in a discussion and help members learn why something is happening or share insight about what they know or how to use a website tool. They begin to drill down at the member-to-member level, whereas we publish the post, they begin conversing with each other.

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.

DEMCO Response: Yes, DEMCO has an AMS and it operated as designed during the Winter Storms. As evidenced by the attached document titled Item 36 – Average Daily RIS, DEMCO's Read Interval Success (RIS) rates were at similar periods, immediately prior to, during, and following the Winter Storms.

37. Does your utility utilize an online outage map accessible to customers?

DEMCO Response: Yes. DEMCO's online outage map can be accessed at https://www.demco.org/member-services/storm-center

a. Was that map accurate during the Winter Storms? Why or why not?

DEMCO Response: Yes, DEMCO's external outage map is designed to roll up outage calls to the predicted location where the member would be affected. The line remains green until a lineman in the field has verified that the line is actually de-energized at the predicted location. Once verified, the color of the line turns red on the outage map.

38. Are your systems able to identify whether a customer has power or does not have power?

DEMCO Response: DEMCO's systems currently do not have the ability to identify whether or not an individual member has power. Only upon restoral of power are we able to 'ping' the meter to determine if power has been restored. That is not a function that is heavily relied upon.

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?

DEMCO Response: At no point were any members asked to curtail their 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?

DEMCO Response: DEMCO maintains dedicated employees on staff who are experts in telephone and internet systems. If an issue is identified, the staff member investigates the problem to determine the source and uses their knowledge to troubleshoot and resolve the problem. In the event they are not able to solve the issue, we have a standing contract with an outside vendor to perform 24x7 technical support. Further, we have contracts in place to provide replacement hardware for any items that can not be repaired.

When an issue is identified that could impact the member, a notification is placed on the DEMCO website and social media platforms. Our Member Service Representatives are also informed of the issue so they can communicate it to members on the phone.

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?

DEMCO Response: DEMCO staff manages all communications during emergency events. DEMCO contracts with (PUR) for regular social media content, and during an emergency, they hold all regularly scheduled posts and DEMCO staff takes over the Cooperative's social platforms until notified to pick up the schedule again. DEMCO may reach out to PUR for specific media

resources, such as a video, photo or graphics related to a weather condition, safety issue, or general information.

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?

DEMCO Response: The messaging from DEMCO during an emergency event is designed to communicate accurately and quickly in order to make members aware of the potential hazards that the specific event may carry. Portions of this messaging are general in nature and others are specific according to how DEMCO feels the information will benefit the member. Moreover, some of the messaging tools can be geotargeted if the team feels it will better serve the members in a specific area that may be the only members impacted by the event. The tools we use for this outreach to the membership include the following:

- We toggle our website into Emergency Mode and post details throughout the day to keep members updated. Street level restoration, miles of line energized/deenergized, as well as other general information we deem valuable to the Membership are published on the site.

- We also post on social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and LinkedIn) to reach a wide variety of members who use different platforms.

- News releases are distributed to TV broadcast, print, digital and radio media contacts, as well as to DEMCO Board Directors, city mayors, LPSC staffers and commissioners, and Chambers of Commerce before, during and after a storm. Storm preparation and readiness, storm safety reminders, and information about outage reporting are included in the messaging designed to go to the membership before, during and after the event.

The document titled Item 41 – Winter Storm Uri Communications outlines the communication efforts DEMCO made during the Winter Storms.

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.

DEMCO Response: DEMCO uses all available methods of communication to communicate with our members:

- Email
- Text messaging
- App push notifications
- Call outs
- Social Media posts
- Facebook Direct Messaging
- Website
- News Releases
- Live interviews for tv, radio and print media

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?

DEMCO Response: DEMCO continually updates members using our website Emergency Mode. Specific updates include total outages, outages by parish, line miles energized/de-energized, outages by zip code and streets restored more than 60% in the last hour, as well as other specific messaging that DEMCO feels necessary to communicate.

- DEMCO has a real-time outage map that shows street level outage and restoration progress (https://demco.maps.sienatech.com/)
- Members are given instructions and tips to navigate the website map, to view vicinity and street-level outage and restoration progress. Members can also toggle between Parish and Zip Code view to monitor outages and restoration progress.

c. What are barriers to communicating tailored, relevant information to each customer that would cause a company to rely only on general communications?

DEMCO Response: One barrier is that it takes a good while to assess the damages caused by a storm. And the way DEMCO makes repairs and restores power is from the most to the few, which is why DEMCO communicates with this strategy. The staff will communicate this in the Cooperative's Member Guide, Member Handbook, on its website. DEMCO always shares this information with media in advance of a storm and through posts on social platforms before the storm begins to remind Members of the steps to restoring power.

System improvements beginning this year with DEMCO's AMI project as well as the software transition will enable DEMCO to serve the members even better during future events.

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

DEMCO Response: The communication efforts to reach DEMCO's membership were focused on providing accurate preparation, outage and safety information before, during and after the event. Through established protocols laid out in DEMCO's Emergency Response Plan, the specific information of this event was communicated to the membership to help them be prepared for a winter storm of this nature prior to the storm's arrival.

During the storm, DEMCO communicated safety and outage reporting information to its members. After the event passed, the Cooperative was able to communicate the progress of the restoration efforts through the areas that received the most damage. Communication tools varied so that valuable information could be communicated to members who may be without power (social platforms, radio, internet news outlets) as well as on live air television. Moreover, the members with access to DEMCO's internet page were able to view detailed information regarding the effort 24/7.

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

DEMCO Response: DEMCO's 2021 Operating Budget totaled $46,814,860.00.

44. How much of your utility's total yearly operating budget is allocated to customer service? Please provide dollar number and percentage.

DEMCO Response: DEMCO budgeted $7,703,615.00, or 16% of the total Operating Budget, for customer service for 2021.

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?

DEMCO Response: DEMCO's budget is based on the annual value of total compensation for human Member Service Representatives, which was $2,155,217.11 as of June 2020.

ii. How much money is spent on automated systems?

DEMCO Response: In 2020, DEMCO spent $44,559 on the Interactive Voice Response, or IVR, system.

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)?

DEMCO Response: DEMCO budgeted $884,021 in 2021 for the maintenance of all physical locations.

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

DEMCO Response: The average cost to hire and onboard one Member Service Representative is $9,045.59. The average annual salary and benefits package for one Member Service Representative is $65,166.40, bringing the total cost to hire and maintain one Member Service Representative for one year to $74,211.99.

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

DEMCO Response: The impact of the Winter Storms was so severe that it made it difficult to foresee and communicate how to adequately prepare for events that unfolded during the Winter Storms. However, according to DEMCO's Emergency Response Plan, the communication shifted to a message of preparation when the storm seemed imminent.

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

DEMCO Response: DEMCO believes that useful and helpful customer service was provided by our Cooperative to our members before, during, and after the Winter Storms. As a member-owned organization we exist to serve our members to the best of our ability at all times. Our core values are Safety, Our People, Integrity, Member Focused and Innovation/Process Excellence. Member focus is a foundational value at DEMCO so communication with member/consumers during extraordinary events is a high priority.

Through all the different communication channels available, we were able to provide our members with current information on large outages and specific problem areas. We kept them updated on our

restoration progress through various social and traditional media channels, as well as provided avenues to connect with our representatives in real time. Our own Member Services Representatives were available through 1-844-MyDEMCO and CRC, our third-party call handling service, was engaged to assist in answering calls as well.

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?

DEMCO Response: DEMCO was recently approved for a 1.53% overall rate increase through Docket No. U-35359. This rate filing was based on 2018 test year data and included $578,191 in increased customer service costs, $214,882 of which was allocated to add four additional Member Service Representatives. These additional dollars were incorporated into 11 months of the 2021 Operating Budget as the rate increase did not go into effect until February 1, 2021 although the positions were filled prior to this time.

a. Will your company ask for a rate increase to do so?

DEMCO Response: DEMCO will continue to file Formula Rate Plan filings beginning with the 2021 test year. It is unknown at this time if the Formula Rate Plan will result in a rate adjustment, as although spending on customer service is likely to increase, that is only one factor of the equation to determine the necessity of a rate adjustment. It is anticipated that a rate increase will be requested with the full rate case that DEMCO will submit in 2025 simply due to the span of time between the evaluated test years of Docket No. U-35359 and the future filing (Test Year 2018 vs. Test Year 2024); however, the final amount requested will depend upon the information included in the last Formula Rate Plan in this cycle (Test Year 2023).

***Closing Questions*:**

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.

DEMCO Response: DEMCO uses several sources for weather forecasting and monitoring on a constant basis, particularly before and during anticipated weather events. DEMCO works with SPIDI Technologies, LLC based in Guthrie, OK on information concerning winter storms. SPIDI Technologies created and owns licensing agreements for the "Sperry-Piltz Ice Accumulation Index," which is utilized by many utilities as well as by the U.S. Department of Energy to monitor ice impact forecasting for the high voltage transmission grid across the country.

DEMCO also received updates from the Association of LA Electric Cooperatives (ALEC) on February 13 (forecast graphic 2/13 midnight -2/16 6am), February 14 (forecast graphic 2/14 midnight – 2/17 6am) and February 17 (forecast graphic 2/17 6am – 2/20 6am). ALEC utilizes SPIDI Technologies and DTN, headquartered in Burnsville, MN for winter weather forecasting and events. This information has been provided on the attached document titled Item 49 – Forecast Information.

Additionally, DEMCO frequently references the temperature forecasts provided by local media outlets. On the attached document titled Item 49 – Forecast Information, DEMCO has compiled the forecasted temperatures as provided by WAFB along with the actual daily temperatures for the Baton Rouge area.

50. In your opinion, was your utility adequately prepared for the Winter Storms?

DEMCO Response: Yes, DEMCO was adequately prepared for the Winter Storms.

a. Did you customers benefit from your level of preparedness?

DEMCO Response: As a member-owned cooperative, everything that we do is directly tied to the betterment or detriment of our members. Our core mission is to focus on enhancing the quality of life for our members by providing safe, reliable and competitively priced energy services. We do this by staffing our organization with well trained, adequately equipped employees who are dedicated to serving our members. Further, we contract with companies that maintain similar values as DEMCO so that we have full confidence that our members are receiving the highest level of service available, whether the service is being performed by a DEMCO employee or outside contractor.

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

DEMCO Response: The way that we constantly improve is to identify areas where we can do better and then follow that up with action. DEMCO responded quickly to the Winter Storms with all hands on deck to restore power as quickly as possible. As part of our emergency work plan, DEMCO was also able to deploy additional crews and contractors to assist with restoration efforts. Although the majority of our outages lasted less than 12 hours, we do believe that the restoration time could have been further reduced through the use of additional crews and contractors, specifically mutual aid crews from other electric cooperatives. Unfortunately, this event was so widespread that many of our typical outside resources were needed in their home territory. While this was not something that we were able to prevent, it is simply acknowledgment that additional crews would have been an asset.

We made it a goal to saturate all sources of media with as much accurate information as was safely available to be released to the public. DEMCO felt it was important that updates were coming directly from the source to stem the spread of false information. We recognize that much of this communication was one-way and that our members would benefit from more two-way interaction. We are working to remedy that with the implementation of new software products on June 28, 2021. This software will give members access to many more online features and the ability to communicate with DEMCO via text. DEMCO also acknowledges that our members were faced with much longer call hold times during the Winter Storms than what we typically strive to achieve. The MyDEMCO hub (previously referenced in Item 32) will help to alleviate some of the calls coming in during events as there will be much more information available to the member at the touch of a button, which will ultimately correlate with shorter wait times in the future.

We received many words of encouragement and appreciation from our members both during and following the event. There will always be lessons learned from each event and we will continue to improve, but the positive affirmation from our members reinforces our belief that we offer the best service possible to our members every single day.