



Department of Energy

Washington, DC 20585

December 29, 2011

Chad Whiteman
Department of Energy Desk Officer
Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs
Office of Management and Budget
Washington, DC 20503

SUBJECT: Nonsubstantive Change to survey EIA-860, “Annual Electric Generator Report,” (Cleared under OMB clearance number 1905-0129).

Dear Mr. Whiteman:

In 2005, the Energy Information Administration began collecting reactive power data on the EIA-860, The Annual Electric Generator Report, at the request of the North America Electric Reliability Council (NERC)¹. Due to the lack of standard operating conditions under which reactive power is measured, this data was challenging for respondents to provide and of little value to the key stakeholder NERC and the public. During the 2008 reclearance, EIA modified the reactive power question in an attempt to make it easier for respondents to interpret and more useful as a collected data set. The recleared format resulted in little improvement. In the 2011 reclearance, EIA modified the reactive power questions again and the quality and burden of the data in the last year has continued to disappoint.

Following discussion of this issue, NERC concurs with EIA that the EIA-860 is not the best instrument to collect this data. As a result, EIA now proposes a minor modification of the instructions to assist in collecting cleaner reactive power data with lesser respondent burden.

Specifically, EIA proposes adding text to the two questions on existing reactive power in Line 3 of Schedule 3B of the EIA-860, directing that reactive power data should be provided only “if the reactive power capability has been tested.” EIA also proposes adding parenthetical text to the on-line display of the Line 3B questions stating “[Leave Blank if Test Has Not Been Conducted].” Similarly, to address the reactive power capability of proposed units, EIA recommends adding text to Line 3 of Schedule 3C stating “[Leave Blank if Uncertain].”

These instructional adjustments should preclude the collection of inaccurate and inconsistent data that results from varying perception of the question’s intent among the respondent population. As a result, this proposal should improve the quality of the data that is made available to the public as well as reducing unnecessary respondent burden.

Sincerely,

/s/ 12-30-2011

Stephanie Brown
Director
Office of Survey Development and Statistical Integration
U.S. Energy Information Administration

¹ NERC is now the North American Electric Reliability Corporation, serving as the Electric Reliability Organization established by EPAAct 2005.