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Quick Facts

170 miles of
AEA-owned
transmission
line

Connecting
Fairbanks
utilities with
southern
utilities

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Alaska Intertie

Current Status

The Alaska Intertie continues normal operations carrying Bradley Lake and economy power north into the Golden Valley Electric Association (GVEA) system. The economy power is generated by Chugach Electric Association (CEA) and Municipal Light and Power (ML&P). Although power generally flows north, the line is available for GVEA to transfer energy south if an emergency situation finds the Cook Inlet region short of electric power.

At the direction of the Alaska Legislature the Alaska Regulatory Commission concluded an evaluation of the existing Railbelt transmission network in June 2015. This evaluation resulted in five recommendations designed to aggregate the existing transmission assets in a manner that will allow economic dispatch of power in the Railbelt. Under this concept, electric load in the Railbelt would be served by the least cost source of power available at any given minute. In order to facilitate this goal, the RCA has directed the IMC to revisit the operating and reliability standards to determine if a uniform set of rules can be agreed upon by all of the Railbelt utilities and AEA. The operating committee has been in discussion with HEA (non-participant) on reconciling the IMC reliability standards and HEA's reliability standards in an effort to adopt a uniform set of standards for the Railbelt.

Program Overview

The Alaska Intertie transmission line is a 170-mile long, 345kV transmission line between Willow and Healy that is owned by AEA and operates at 138 kV. The Intertie interconnects GVEA, the regulated utility that serves areas north of the Alaska Range, with southcentral Alaska utilities. Although the Alaska Intertie allows resources north and south of the range to be shared to improve reliability, the GVEA storage battery and generation resources have been used to send emergency power south to minimize catastrophic network wide outages.

Constructed in the mid-1980s with \$124 million in State of Alaska appropriations, this AEA-owned asset is associated with no debt. The project includes transmission towers and conductors, transformers at the Healy and Teeland Substations, and system stability devices at three locations that are necessary to allow the Railbelt utilities to remain interconnected.

There are significant cost savings resulting from the exchange of economy energy and sharing of reserve generation capacity between the Anchorage and Fairbanks load centers. Once estimated to be \$17 million in annual monetary benefit, GVEA ratepayers achieved savings in excess of \$52 million in 2012.

Governance and Utility Participation

The operation of the Intertie is governed by the Alaska Intertie Agreement entered into in 1985 and amended in 1991 and again in 2011. The parties to this agreement are AEA, GVEA, ML&P, Chugach and MEA. Each of these entities also has a seat on the Intertie Management Committee (IMC), the entity with the responsibility for operating and managing the Alaska Intertie.