



NEM Event – Directions Report 12 to 19 March 2020

February 2021

Important notice

PURPOSE

Where the Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO) intervenes in the National Electricity Market (NEM) through the use of directions, AEMO must publish a report in accordance with National Electricity Rules (NER) clauses 4.8.9(f) and 3.13.6A(a). This report satisfies those NER obligations and is based on information available to AEMO at 18 August 2020.

Unless otherwise indicated, terms in this report have the same meanings as those defined in the NER.

All references to time in this report are based on Australian Eastern Standard Time (AEST).

Disclaimer

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ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviation	Expanded name
AEMO	Australian Energy Market Operator
DI	Dispatch Interval
MN	Market Notice
NEM	National Electricity Market
NER	National Electricity Rules
PS	Power Station
SA	South Australia
GT	Gas Turbine
ST	Steam Turbine

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1. Summary

To ensure adequate system strength for secure operation of the South Australian power system, certain combinations of synchronous generating units must be in service at all times¹.

Clause 4.8.9 of the National Electricity Rules (NER) allows AEMO to intervene in the market by issuing directions or clause 4.8.9 instructions, if AEMO is satisfied that it is necessary to maintain or re-establish the power system to a secure, satisfactory, or reliable operating state. Section 116 of the National Electricity Law allows AEMO to issue directions to take certain action if AEMO considers that it is necessary to maintain power system security or for reasons of public safety.

Between 12 and 19 March 2020, AEMO issued six directions across three events to South Australian Market Participants to maintain power system security. These directions are summarised in Table 1.

Table 1 Summary of the South Australia directions between 12 and 19 March 2020

Direction	Directed Participant	Event No.	Issue time	Cancellation time	Direction instruction
Torrens Island PS B unit 4	AGL SA Generation Pty Ltd	1	1700 hrs, 12 March 2020	0430 hrs, 16 March 2020	Remain synchronised and follow dispatch targets from 0001 hrs, 13 March 2020
Torrens Island PS B unit 2	AGL SA Generation Pty Ltd	1	1700 hrs, 12 March 2020	0430 hrs, 16 March 2020	Remain synchronised and follow dispatch targets from 0200 hrs, 13 March 2020
Pelican Point Gas Turbine (GT) 11 and Steam Turbine (ST) 18	Pelican Point Power Limited (ENGIE)	1	1700 hrs, 12 March 2020	1500 hrs, 15 March 2020	Remain synchronised and follow dispatch targets from 1200 hrs, 13 March 2020
Pelican Point GT 11 and ST 18	Pelican Point Power Limited (ENGIE)	1	1700 hrs, 15 March 2020	1300 hrs, 16 March 2020	Remain synchronised and follow dispatch targets from 2130 hrs, 15 March 2020
Pelican Point GT 12 and ST 18	Pelican Point Power Limited (ENGIE)	2	1605 hrs, 16 March 2020	1330 hrs, 17 March 2020	Remain synchronised and follow dispatch targets from 0130 hrs, 17 March 2020
Torrens Island PS A unit 2	AGL SA Generation Pty Ltd	3	1800 hrs, 18 March 2020	1600 hrs, 19 March 2020	Synchronise and follow dispatch targets from 0100 hrs, 19 March 2020

¹ AEMO Transfer Limit Advice – System Strength, available at https://aemo.com.au/-/media/files/electricity/nem/security_and_reliability/congestion-information/transfer-limit-advice-system-strength.pdf?la=en.

2. Intervention assessment

2.1 The need for intervention

To ensure adequate system strength for secure operation of the South Australian power system, certain combinations of synchronous generating units must be in service at all times. If market conditions lead to market participants seeking to decommit synchronous generation AEMO is required to intervene to maintain the required level of synchronous units. The need for intervention, and options considered, were assessed against the set of viable plant combinations available at the time the directions were issued.

The requirement to intervene for the direction events in this report arose when the bids shown in Table 2 were submitted.

Table 2 Participant offers

Event No.	Unit	Offer date	Bid
1	Torrens Island PS B unit 4	0936 hrs, 11 March 2020	Initial bid to de-commit from 0000 hrs, 12 March 2020 ^A
2	Pelican Point PS	1310 hrs, 16 March 2020	Rebid to de-commit from 0130 hrs, 17 March 2020 ^B
3	Torrens Island PS A unit 2	1142 hrs, 17 March 2020	Initial bid to de-commit from 0100 hrs, 19 March 2020 ^C

A. Initial bid: 0935~F~00 INITIAL BID~

B. Rebid reason: 1150~F~REVISED TOLLING NOMINATION # 1944~

C. Rebid reason: 1135~F~00 INITIAL BID~

2.2 Assessment of market response and latest time to intervene

Under NER clause 4.8.5A(a) and (c), AEMO must notify the market of any anticipated power system security or reliability issue, and the latest time for market response before AEMO would need to intervene. For each of the direction events, AEMO issued this market notification as listed in Table 3.

AEMO contacted all participants who operate suitable generating units in South Australia to confirm their availability and the latest time to intervene. Those participants indicated that no market response would be provided but identified units that would be available if directed.

For each of the direction events, AEMO assessed the latest time to intervene taking account of the advised lead times. The latest times to intervene are listed in Table 3.

Table 3 Summary of latest time to intervene

Event No.	Latest time to respond	Market Notice
1	1700 hrs, 12 March 2020	MN 74882
2	1700 hrs, 16 March 2020	MN 74961
3	1800 hrs, 18 March 2020	MN 74971

3. Intervention process

AEMO considers that it followed all applicable processes under NER clause 4.8 for the management of the directions between 12 and 19 March 2020².

3.1 Adequacy of responses to AEMO inquiries

NER clause 4.8.5A(d) permits AEMO to request information from Scheduled Network Service Providers, Scheduled Generators, Semi-Scheduled Generators, and Market Customers.

AEMO is satisfied with the timeliness, adequacy, and effectiveness of all responses to its requests for information prior to issuing the directions between 12 and 19 March 2020.

3.2 Participant ability to comply with the intervention

NER clause 4.8.9(d) requires that a Registered Participant must immediately notify AEMO of its inability to comply, or intention not to comply, with a direction or clause 4.8.9 instruction.

AEMO is satisfied with all participants complying with the directions listed in Table 1.

4. Dispatch and pricing outcomes

4.1 Changes to dispatch outcomes due to the directions

The directions resulted in approximately 19,689 megawatt hours (MWh) of synchronous generation being directed into the market.

Intervention pricing did not apply for these events.

Under clause 3.8.1 of the NER, AEMO must operate a central dispatch process to balance power system supply and demand, using its reasonable endeavours to maintain power system security in accordance with NER Chapter 4 and the power system security standards. AEMO notes that in the absence of directions for system security, the central dispatch process would have produced an outcome which would have resulted in the operation of the power system in an insecure state and would therefore have been an infeasible dispatch solution.

² AEMO. Power system operating procedure SO_OP 3707, "Procedures For Issue Of Directions And Clause 4.8.9 Instructions", 06 September 2019, available at https://aemo.com.au/-/media/files/electricity/nem/security_and_reliability/power_system_ops/procedures/so_op_3707-procedures-for-issue-of-directions-and-clause-4-8-9-instructions.pdf?la=en.

4.2 Direction costs

The compensation recovery costs for the direction between 12 and 19 March 2020 were \$1,887,055. Direction compensation recovery data can be found on the AEMO website³.

5. Conclusions and further actions

Between 12 and 19 March 2020, AEMO issued six directions to South Australian Market Participants to maintain power system security, in response to a forecast lack of system strength in the region.

AEMO is satisfied that all applicable procedures and processes were followed in assessing the need for intervention, determining the latest time to intervene, enacting and managing the intervention and seeking market response from all generators capable of meeting the system strength requirements. The market was informed after each direction was issued.

AEMO is also satisfied with the timeliness and adequacy of participant responses and communication throughout.

³ AEMO. Direction Compensation Recovery, available at <https://aemo.com.au/en/energy-systems/electricity/national-electricity-market-nem/data-nem/settlements-data/direction-compensation-recovery>.