



STRATEGIC PLAN

Fiscal Years 2021 to 2024

Revised July 1, 2020

Our mission:

- *Determine fair, just, reasonable and nondiscriminatory rates and utility practices for electric, gas, telephone and water consumers.*
- *Ensure the delivery of safe, reliable and efficient utility services.*
- *Regulate the public utilities to secure and promote the general safety, health and public welfare.*
- *Ensure safe operation of intrastate pipelines.*
- *Ensure the safe transportation of hazardous materials by the railroads.*
- *Ensure the public safety at railroad grade crossings and public streets, roads or highways.*
- *Implement and maintain a secure cyber network for the staff and public.*



INTRODUCTION

The Idaho Public Utilities Commission (hereafter Commission) was established by the 12th session of the Idaho Legislature and was organized on May 8, 1913. The Commission’s statutory authorities are set out in Idaho Code, Titles 61 and 62.

The Commission oversees the intrastate operation of investor-owned electric, gas, water, and telecommunications utilities. The Commission does not regulate publicly owned, municipal or cooperative utilities. The Commission also does not regulate cable TV companies, cellular telecommunication carriers or paging companies.

For much of the last 100 years, public utility regulation has been based on the theory of a “regulatory compact” between utilities and regulators: In return for an exclusive franchise granted by regulators, utilities agree to serve all those requesting service; and in return for agreeing to invest capital in plant and facilities, utilities are given a reasonable opportunity to earn a fair return on that capital. Changes in law and technology are dramatically affecting the industries we regulate, opening the door to more competitors and enabling the establishment of more competitive markets.

The Commission also oversees rail and pipeline safety programs.

The Commission is actively pursuing to define and implement a secure cyber network modeled after the National Institute and Technology Cybersecurity Framework.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Commission serves the citizens and utilities of Idaho by ensuring that the rates and policies established for utility services are fair, just, reasonable and nondiscriminatory; utility services are delivered safely, reliably, and efficiently; and pipelines and rail carriers operate safely within the state.

STRATEGIC PLAN

VISION: The Commission balances the interests of Idaho jurisdictional utilities and their customers. The Commission is uniquely situated to act on behalf of public utility ratepayers in establishing a proactive regulatory environment that encourages development and dispatch of cost-effective energy resources in an increasingly changing environment. However, implementing regulatory actions to accommodate the legitimate interests of both ratepayers and

utilities requires a delicate balance between costs allowed for scientific advancements in generation and costs to the Idaho economy. The Commission will continue to be proactive in the areas of water and natural gas conservation.

ADMINISTRATION DIVISION

Program Goal:

The Administration Division is responsible for managing and coordinating the administrative activities of the Commission efficiently and effectively. The Administration Division manages all information received, handled or published by the Commission; it informs the public of its actions and decisions; it maintains a website with an electronic database of Commission cases and other information; it provides fiscal, personnel, information technology, and administrative support services to the Commission as a whole; and it supports the Legislative and Executive branches with analysis and information on utility, pipeline and railroad matters.

Program Objective 1 - Manage and coordinate the administrative activities of the Commission efficiently and effectively as well as facilitate the efficient management of cases being considered by the Commission.

Annual Performance Measures:

Number of cases older than a year that are closed during the fiscal year.

Annual Performance Targets:

Close 20% of all cases older than one year.

External Factors:

The Commission has no control over the number of cases filed. While it makes every effort to close all cases in a timely manner, the judicial process requires adequate time for public comment, discovery, investigation, presentation of evidence, receiving testimony and deliberation.

UTILITIES DIVISION

Program Goal: Ensure that the citizens of Idaho are charged just, fair, reasonable and nondiscriminatory rates for utility commodities and that utility services are delivered safely, reliably and efficiently.

Program Objective 1 – Perform audits and investigations of utilities for compliance with Commission orders and regulations.

Annual Performance Measures:

Number of comprehensive audits completed.

Number of utility annual reports reviewed.

Annual Performance Target:

Conduct seven comprehensive audits of utilities.

Conduct 20 annual report reviews of utilities.

External Factors:

The Commission has no control over the number of rate cases filed in a fiscal year. Funding and manpower limits the number of audits. The availability of qualified auditors, engineers and analysts to fill personnel vacancies impacts operations. Reviews may produce results requiring additional time and resources to resolve.

Program Objective 2 – Investigate and resolve complaints from customers. Respond to inquiries regarding regulated utilities.

Annual Performance Measures:

Number of formal complaints received by Commission.

Number of informal complaints received by Commission.

Number of inquiries received by Commission.

Average number of days needed to respond to inquiries and resolve informal complaints.

Annual Performance Target:

Respond to inquiries and resolve informal complaints within an average of 10 business days.

External Factors:

The Commission has no control over the number of inquiries or complaints received in a fiscal year. Funding for resources limits the number of investigators to handle inquiries and complaints.

PIPELINE SAFETY SECTION

Program Goal - Serve the citizens of Idaho by ensuring the safe transportation of natural gas shipped in intrastate pipelines. This is accomplished by monitoring the compliance of jurisdictional operators with state and federal regulations.

Program Objective 1 – Conduct on-site visits of gas system operators’ facilities and conduct audits and inspections to ensure compliance with state and federal pipeline safety regulations.

Annual Performance Measures:

Number of inspection units audited.

Number of inspection days completed.

Annual Performance Targets:

14 inspection units audited.

275 inspection days completed.

External Factors:

Availability of funds, weather, and operator schedules.

Program Objective 2 – Conduct on-site inspections of gas system operator records, maintenance, construction, training, integrity management, incident, operator qualification and damage prevention activities to ensure all areas of natural gas transportation are conducted in a safe manner.

Annual Performance Measures:

Number of inspection types audited.

Annual Performance Targets:

Perform inspection of predetermined operational aspects of each operator each calendar year.

External Factors:

Availability of funds, weather, and operator schedules.

Program Objective 3 – Conduct follow-up investigation of all natural gas operator reportable accidents and incidents to ensure corrective action is taken and the operator is in compliance with state and federal regulations.

Annual Performance Measures:

Number of reportable accidents and incidents.

Annual Performance Targets:

Conduct investigation follow-up of all reportable accidents and incidents.

External Factors:

Availability of funds, weather, and operator schedules.

RAIL SECTION

Program Goal - Serve the citizens of Idaho by ensuring that carriers comply with state and federal safety regulations regarding crossings, clearances and the carriage of hazardous materials. The Commission will also determine whether or not it is in the public interest to represent the state in various rail line abandonment cases before the Surface Transportation Board.

Program Objective 1 - Inspect rail crossings and clearances for compliance with rules and regulations based on complaints and accident investigations.

Annual Performance Measures:

Number of rail crossings and clearances inspected based on complaints, applications, and accidents.

Annual Performance Targets:

Investigate all rail crossing complaints within 30 days, and accidents within 180 days

External Factors:

Number of complaints, number of accidents, availability of funds, weather, and operator schedules.

CYBERSECURITY NETWORK

Program Goal – To work with the State’s cybersecurity task force to define and implement a security framework modeled after the National Institute and Technology (NIST) Cybersecurity Framework and the Center for Internet Security (CIS) Controls.

Program Objective 1 – Identify the necessary actions to be taken to ensure that the Commission’s systems are in compliance with CIS controls.

Annual Performance Measures:

Determine how many of the CIS’s first five controls are implemented.

Annual Performance Targets:

Implement the required security controls to be in compliance with the State’s Cybersecurity Task Force Recommendations (E.O. 2017-02). Consolidate IT functions within the Office of Information Technology implemented by July 1, 2019.

RED TAPE REDUCTION ACT

Program Goal – To comply with the Red Tape Reduction Act (Executive Order 2019-02), each state agency is required to designate a Rules Review Officer (RRO) “to undertake a critical and comprehensive review of the agency’s administrative rules to identify costly, ineffective, or outdated regulations.”

Program Object 1 – Work with Commission Staff to identify rule sections that can be modified or rule sections or chapters that can be eliminated, and make recommendations to the Commission.

Annual Performance Measures– Progress must also be reported annually through the agency’s performance report under the profile of cases managed. Currently the PUC has (see addendum):

- Number of Chapters of Administrative Code
 - 16 Chapters
- Number of Words in Administrative Code (Excluding Table of Contents and Index)
 - 87,700 Words
- Number of Restrictions in Administrative Code (Use of “shall,” “must,” “may not,” “prohibited,” and “required.”)
 - 1,206 Restrictive Words
- Rules Review Officer Designee
 - Stephen Goodson, Policy Advisor to the Commissioners

ADDENDUM

Senior Commission Staff will do a more in depth review of the proposed rules that were posted in the June Special Bulletin. The PUC Staff will host workshops with interested parties, and identify chapters or subsections of chapter to be resubmitted pending on October 1, 2019.

The current total number of pages is 186 comprised of a total of 87,700 words with 1,206 words which are restrictive in nature.

As of June 2019

	Rule Chapter	Pages	Words	
General	Rules of Procedure	50	27,487	
	Safety and Accident Reporting	5	2,018	
	Systems of Accounts for Public Utilities	3	899	
	Utility Customer Relations	22	10,967	
	Energy Consumption	4	1,053	
Electric	Master Metering	3	1,215	
	Stray Voltage	29	9,677	
Gas	Gas Service	5	2,101	
Telephone	Telephone Customer Relations	21	10,810	
	Universal Service Fund	12	6,239	
	Telecommunication Relay Services	8	4,449	
	Operator Services and Pay Telephone	12	5,544	
	Automatic Dial and Announcement Devices	1	226	Cut
Rail	Railroad Clearance	8	3,959	
	Railroad Safety and Accident Reporting	3	844	
Water	Small Water Companies	1	212	
	Total (16 Chapters)	186	87,700	

As of June 2019

Rule Chapter						
		Shall	Must	May Not	Prohibited	Required
General	Rules of Procedure	115	154	2	7	22
	Safety and Accident Reporting	5	2	0	2	12
	Systems of Accounts for Public Utilities	0	0	0	0	5
	Utility Customer Relations	125	16	0	4	23
	Energy Consumption	10	2	0	1	1
Electric						
	Master Metering	6	4	0	1	3
	Stray Voltage	184	6	0	0	13
Gas						
	Gas Service	33	1	0	0	2
Telephone						
	Telephone Customer Relations	70	68	0	5	27
	Universal Service Fund	37	17	0	0	9
	Telecommunication Relay Services	37	7	0	2	9
	Operator Services and Pay Telephone	11	40	1	3	9
	Automatic Dial and Announcement Devices	0	2	0	6	0
Rail						
	Railroad Clearance	38	17	2	0	10
	Railroad Safety and Accident Reporting	10	0	0	3	5
Water						
	Small Water Companies	0	0	0	0	0
Total		681	336	5	34	150

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