§3409. Offshore wind power transmission

The commission, in coordination with the department, shall seek to advance regional transmission solutions to interconnect offshore wind power with transmission and distribution utilities, other New England states or entities and the independent system operator of the New England bulk power system or a successor organization. [PL 2025, c. 597, Pt. A, §42 (AMD).]

1. Transmission solicitation and procurement. The commission may conduct one or more competitive solicitations for proposals for the development and construction of offshore wind energy transmission projects or other electric infrastructure projects to facilitate offshore wind energy development and approve contracts for such projects in accordance with this section.

A. In developing a solicitation and approving a contract under this section, the commission shall:

(1) Consider the amount of transmission capacity needed to maintain or improve electric system reliability;

(2) Avoid unnecessary costs to upgrade the existing transmission grid;

(3) Seek to achieve the greenhouse gas emissions reduction obligations and climate policies of this State under Title 38, section 576-A and Title 38, section 577 and renewable energy goals under section 3210, subsection 1-A;

(4) Pursue demonstrable benefits for electric ratepayers; and

(5) Encourage projects that avoid, minimize or mitigate impacts to wildlife, the environment, fisheries, fishing activities or tribal burial and archeological sites, whether submerged or on land. [PL 2023, c. 481, §7 (NEW).]

B. The commission shall coordinate with the department and may coordinate with other entities, including, but not limited to, transmission and distribution utilities, other New England states and the independent system operator of the New England bulk power system or a successor organization, in the solicitation and selection of proposals under this section. [PL 2025, c. 597, Pt. A, §43 (AMD).]

C. The commission may host conferences with prospective bidders in advance of issuing solicitations under this section. [PL 2023, c. 481, §7 (NEW).]

D. A responsible entity may submit a proposal in response to a solicitation conducted under this section as long as the transmission service proposal provides for transmission service for more than one offshore wind power project. [PL 2023, c. 481, §7 (NEW).]

E. The commission may consider proposals that include, but are not limited to, upgrading the existing grid, extending the grid closer to offshore wind power projects, determining or upgrading optimal landfall approaches or interconnecting between offshore substations. [PL 2023, c. 481, §7 (NEW).]

F. The commission may select one proposal, multiple proposals or no proposals. [PL 2023, c. 481, §7 (NEW).]

G. The commission may select proposals that include federal funding in the form of a match, grant or loan or through ownership and operation by the Federal Government, cost sharing among states or recovery of transmission costs through federal transmission rates. [PL 2023, c. 481, §7 (NEW).]

H. The commission may modify a solicitation under this section, prior to selecting any proposal, in order to satisfy federal eligibility criteria. [PL 2023, c. 481, §7 (NEW).]

[PL 2025, c. 597, Pt. A, §43 (AMD).]

2. Rules. The commission may adopt rules to implement this section. Rules adopted under this subsection are routine technical rules pursuant to Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2-A.
[PL 2023, c. 481, §7 (NEW).]

SECTION HISTORY

PL 2023, c. 481, §7 (NEW). PL 2025, c. 597, Pt. A, §§42, 43 (AMD).

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