

NERC

NORTH AMERICAN ELECTRIC
RELIABILITY CORPORATION

ALIGN

Registered Entity Newsletter

June 2020

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LET'S GET ALIGNED: KEY TAKEAWAYS

Benefits of the ERO Secure Evidence Locker

On June 22, FERC issued a [delegated letter order](#) approving NERC's financing request for the development of the ERO Secure Evidence Locker (SEL). The ERO SEL is a key component of NERC's reimagined suite of Compliance Monitoring and Enforcement Program (CMEP) work and data management tools and will be implemented in conjunction with Align Release 1 in early 2021. The ERO SEL will be used for the collection and analysis of evidence provided by registered entities in support of the CMEP. The ERO SEL will greatly improve the security of how the ERO Enterprise collects, manages, and disposes of sensitive information, and construction is scheduled to begin in July.

Venona Greaff, Senior Energy Analyst at Ingleside Cogeneration LP (TRE), has more than 30 years' experience in the energy sector and seven years with the company. She has closely followed the progress of the Align project since its inception in 2014. "The greatest benefit that Align offers is the consolidation of all regions' work processes, which will allow for better oversight. Additionally, for us, ensuring the security and confidentiality of highly sensitive information is of paramount concern and the development of the ERO SEL successfully addresses this concern," said Ms. Greaff.

Daniela Hammons, Director, Policy and Compliance at CenterPoint Energy Houston Electric, has over 20 years of experience in the sector and has been working in NERC Compliance since 2007. "Align presents many shared benefits for the ERO Enterprise by improving the consistency of CMEP processes and increasing collaboration across regions," said Ms. Hammons. "Strong data protection mechanisms are essential to the security and reliability of the power grid. The ability to use the ERO SEL, in addition to our industry maintaining the most sensitive information inhouse, is an important step in this initiative."

For more information on the ERO SEL, visit the "Secure Evidence Locker Functionality" section on the [Align FAQs](#) page and view this [webinar](#).

Upcoming Registered Entity Testing Exercise

While NERC and regional staff have tested Align Release 1 functionalities extensively, the upcoming registered entity testing exercise is an opportunity for select registered entities to test entity-specific functionality. Registered entity testers will execute relevant business scenarios and validate the following are functioning as expected:

- Self-report, mitigation and enforcement related workflows and business rules
- Registered entity dashboards

- Registered entity notifications

The Regions are leading this testing exercise and have already finalized their respective registered entity testers and scheduled the testing sessions in July. The project team will share a detailed update on the exercise in our next newsletter.

Overview of the Align Support Model

There are several training and support materials currently in development to ensure that end users are fully prepared for a smooth transition to Align. These materials—which include training videos, quick reference guides, and FAQs—are designed to serve as self-service resources that users can independently access to help them navigate Align.

In addition, the project team has also built a robust support model to help users address issues that may arise post go-live. The support model consists of three key layers.

1. Registered entities will be able to submit a support request through a web-based system, which will be routed to designated points of contact within the Regions trained to manage and address support requests.
2. For complex, technical, or other unresolved enquiries, the regional points of contact can route the support request to a centralized NERC team responsible for resolving such issues and tracking key support metrics.
3. If the issue remains unresolved by the NERC team, NERC will contact the vendor’s technical support resources for resolution.

The support model will be discussed in more detail during training that will be delivered to registered entities later this year.

Accessing Align: Act Now!

Even though there is still time prior to Release 1, it is important that you complete the setup or verification of your ERO Portal Account now. You are required to have an active ERO Portal Account prior to accessing Align. Additional instructions and next steps on provisioning will be sent closer to Release 1. **Please follow the instructions below to verify your existing account or set up your new account!**

To Set Up an ERO Portal Account:

1. Navigate to <https://eroportal.nerc.net>.
2. Select “Register” in the upper left-hand corner.

3. Complete the registration form and click “Submit.”

To Verify an ERO Portal Account:

1. Navigate to <https://eroportal.nerc.net>.
2. Select “Sign In” in the upper left-hand corner.
3. Enter your credentials to confirm access to ERO Portal.

If you cannot remember your username/password, select the “Forgot Password/Username” to reset your password. If you have questions or problems concerning your ERO Portal account, please submit a support ticket [here](#).

Quick Links for Reference

Here is a list of links to commonly requested project materials for Align and the ERO SEL. Please reach out to the Change Agents for your Region for any additional materials.

Quick Links
FAQs
Program Business Case (Updated April 2020)
Registered Entity SEL Requirements (April 29, 2020)
ERO SEL Stakeholder Presentation (March 23, 2020)
Stakeholder Webinar (January 27, 2020)

Want to Learn More? Key Contacts and Resources

Reach out to your Region’s Change Agents, who meet on a monthly basis and have the latest project updates. They are another resource available to you for asking questions or sharing comments and feedback on the project.

Align Change Agents	
Organization	Change Agents
MRO	Desiree Sawyer , Marissa Falco
NERC	Chris Boyd-Witherspoon , David Calderon , Farzaneh Tafreshi , Sara Minges

NPCC	Jason Wang , Kimberly Griffith
RF	Ray Sefchik
SERC	Andrew Williamson , Melinda Montgomery , Todd Curl , Rick Dodd , Janice Carney
Texas RE	Rochelle Brown
WECC	Michael Dalebout

ABOUT THE ALIGN NEWSLETTER

This newsletter compiles a list of important Align project updates with actionable deadlines, as well as upcoming events, recently posted resources, and other relevant news and information. Please [email the Align project team](#) with feedback on this newsletter. Current and future newsletters and additional project resources, including the regularly updated [Align FAQs](#), can be found on the [Align Project Site](#).