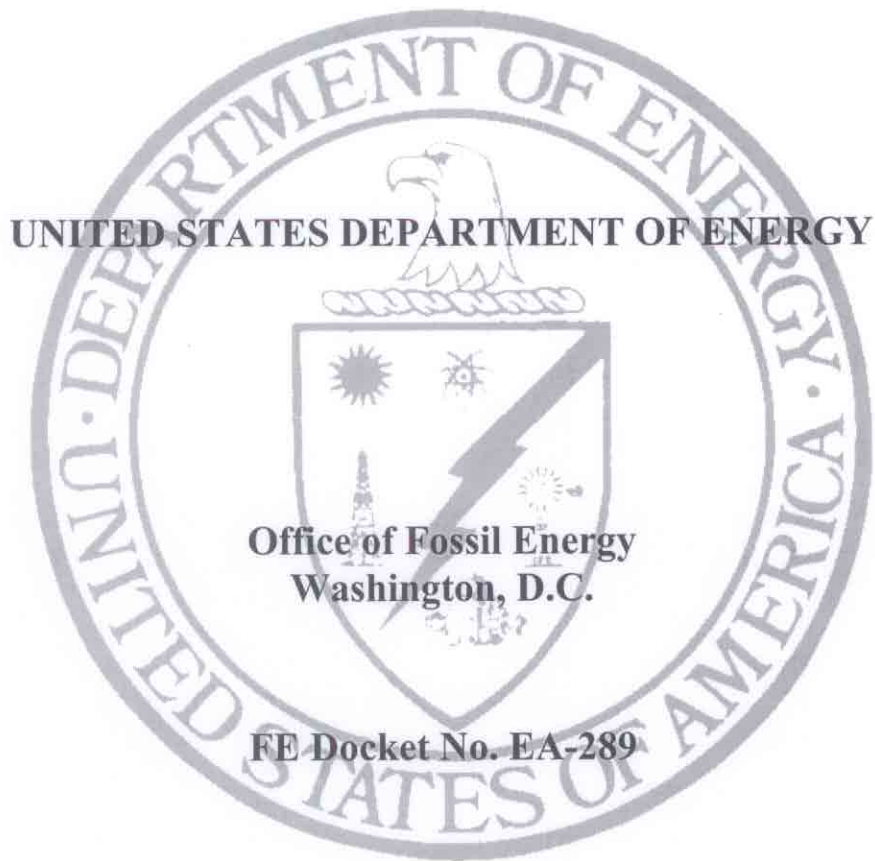




Intercom Energy, Inc.

Order Authorizing Electricity Exports to Mexico

Order No. EA-289

May 19, 2004

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I. BACKGROUND

Exports of electricity from the United States to a foreign country are regulated and require authorization under section 202(e) of the Federal Power Act (FPA) (16 U.S.C. §824a(e)).

On February 27, 2004, Intercom Energy, Inc. (Intercom) applied to the Office of Fossil Energy (FE) of the Department of Energy (DOE) for authorization to transmit electric energy to Mexico as a power marketer. Intercom is a California company with its principal place of business in Chula Vista, California. Intercom does not own any generation or transmission resources.

Intercom proposes to purchase surplus electric energy from electric utilities and other suppliers within the United States and export this energy on its own behalf to Mexico. The energy to be exported will be delivered to Mexico over the international electric transmission facilities presently owned by Comision Federal de Electricidad (CFE), the national electric utility of Mexico, Central Power & Light Company (CPL), El Paso Electric Company (EPE) and San Diego Gas & Electric Company (SDG&E).

Notice of the Intercom export application was placed in the *Federal Register* on April 2, 2004, (69 FR 17398) requesting that comments, protests, and petitions to intervene be submitted to the DOE by May 3, 2004. None were received.

II. DISCUSSION and ANALYSIS

The authority requested of DOE by Intercom is a necessary condition for exporting under section 202(e) of the FPA. Before an electricity export authorization is granted, DOE must evaluate the impact of the export on the reliability of the U.S. electric system by determining whether the export will impair the sufficiency of electric supply within the U.S. and whether it will impede or tend to impede the coordinated use of regional transmission facilities.

Prior to the restructuring of the electric power industry, the only entities able to export were those electric utilities that were contiguous with the U.S. international border that owned international transmission facilities. The exported energy originated from within the exporter's system and standard transmission studies could be performed to determine the impact of the export on regional electric systems.

However, deregulation of wholesale power markets and the introduction of open-access transmission expanded the geographic scope of entities capable of exporting electric energy. Today, at the time of application, the typical exporter cannot identify the source of the exported energy or the electric systems that might be called upon to provide transmission service to the border. Consequently, traditional transmission studies cannot be used to determine the reliability impacts of the export on regional electric systems.

In evaluating reliability impacts of export proposals, DOE has always used a variety of methodologies and information, including established industry guidelines, operating procedures and/or infrastructure, as well as traditional technical studies where available and appropriate. When determining reliability impacts for exports by power marketers or other entities operating in a similar manner, it is convenient to separate the export transaction into two parts: (1) moving the export from the source to a border system that owns the international transmission connection; and, (2) moving the export through that border system and across the border.

In order to deliver the export from the source to a border system, Intercom must make the necessary commercial arrangements and obtain sufficient transmission capacity to wheel the exported energy to the border system. In doing so, Intercom would use domestic transmission facilities for which open-access tariffs have been approved by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). Intercom also must make reservations for transmission service in accordance with the FERC Open-Access Same-time Information System (OASIS), and must schedule delivery of the export with the appropriate Independent System Operator(s) (ISO) and/or control areas. The posting of transmission capacity on OASIS indicates that transmission capacity is available. Furthermore, it is the responsibility of the ISO and/or control area to schedule the delivery of the export consistent with established reliability criteria. During each step of the process of obtaining transmission service, the owners and/or operators of the transmission facilities will evaluate the reliability of the system and schedule the movement of the export only if it would not violate established operating reliability standards. Therefore, DOE has determined that the existing industry procedures for obtaining transmission capacity on the domestic transmission system provide adequate assurances that an export will not impair the reliability of the U.S. electric power supply system.

In determining the reliability impacts of moving the export through a border system and across the border, DOE relies on the traditional technical studies that were performed in support of electricity export authorizations issued to that border system. Allowing these technical studies to suffice in this docket is sound and, thus, DOE need not perform additional reliability assessments here, provided the maximum rate of transmission for all exports through a border system does not exceed the authorized limit of the system.

An export authorization issued under section 202(e) does not impose on transmitting utilities a requirement to provide service. However, DOE expects transmitting utilities owning border facilities to provide access across the border in accordance with the principles of comparable open access and non-discrimination contained in the FPA and articulated in FERC Order No. 888 (Promoting Wholesale Competition Through Open Access Non-Discriminatory

Transmission Services by Public Utilities; FERC; Stats. & Regs. ¶31,036 (1996)), as amended. The actual rates, terms and conditions of transmission service shall be consistent with the non-discrimination principles of the FPA and the transmitting utility's Open-Access Transmission Tariff on file with the FERC.

All recipients of export authorizations, including owners of border facilities for which Presidential permits have been issued, are required by their export authorization to conduct operations in accordance with the principles of the FPA and pertinent rules, regulations and orders, which include the comparable open access provisions of FERC Order No. 888, as amended. Cross-border electric trade ought to be subject to the same principles of comparable open access and non-discrimination that apply to transmission in interstate commerce. (See Enron Power Marketing, Inc., 77 FERC ¶61,013 (1996)). Thus, DOE expects owners of border facilities to comply with the same principles of comparable open access and non-discrimination that apply to the domestic interstate transmission of electricity.

III. FINDING

DOE has assessed the impact that the proposed export would have on the reliability of the U.S. electric power supply system. Based on the above discussion and analysis, DOE has determined that the export of electric energy to Mexico as requested by Intercom, would not impair the sufficiency of electric power supply within the United States and would not impede or tend to impede the coordination in the public interest of facilities provided that; (1) for exports through the system of SDG&E, Intercom shall coordinate exports with SDG&E and/or the control area operator or Independent System Operator (ISO), as appropriate, such that total exports across the SDG&E/CFE interconnection are in conformity with the operating limitations established by the SDG&E/CFE operating nomogram and the Southern California Import Transmission Nomogram; and (2) for exports through the system of EPE, Intercom shall coordinate such exports with EPE and/or the control area operator or ISO, as appropriate, such that total exports across the EPE/CFE interconnection are in conformity with the requirements of the Southern New Mexico Import nomogram that governs the amount of imports allowed into the Southern New Mexico area. These nomograms are on the file in the Office of Fossil Energy for public review.

DOE also has determined that this action is among those classes of actions not normally requiring preparation of an environmental assessment or an environmental impact statement and, therefore, is eligible for categorical exclusion under Appendix B to Subpart D, paragraph B4.2 of the revised DOE Regulations implementing NEPA. Specifically, this categorical exclusion is provided for transmission of electric energy using existing transmission systems. Documentation of the use of this categorical exclusion has been placed in this Docket.

IV. ORDER

Based on the above, it is hereby ordered that Intercom is authorized to export electric energy to Mexico under the following terms and conditions:

(A) The electric energy exported by Intercom pursuant to this Order may be delivered to Mexico only over the following existing international transmission facilities:

<u>Present Owner</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Voltage</u>	<u>Presidential Permit No.¹</u>
San Diego Gas & Electric	Miguel, CA	230 kV	PP-68
	Imperial Valley, CA	230 kV	PP-79
El Paso Electric Company	Diablo, NM	115 kV	PP-92
	Ascarate, TX	115 kV	PP-48
Central Power & Light Company	Brownsville, TX	138 kV	PP-94
		69 kV	
	Eagle Pass, TX	138 kV	PP-219
Comision Federal de Electricidad	Laredo, TX	138 kV	PP-57
	Falcon Dam, TX	138 kV	None

(B) Exports authorized herein shall not cause a violation of the terms and conditions contained in existing electricity export authorizations associated with the international transmission facilities identified in paragraph (A) above. Specifically:

(1) Exports made by Intercom made pursuant to this Order shall not cause the total exports on a combination of the facilities authorized by Presidential permit PP-68 and PP-79 to exceed an instantaneous transmission rate of 400 megawatts (MW). All exports made pursuant to this Order must be consistent with the operating limitations established by the SDG&E/CFE operating nomogram and the Southern California Import Transmission Nomogram

(2) Exports made by Intercom made pursuant to this Order shall not cause the total exports on a combination of the facilities authorized by President Permits PP-48 and PP-92 to exceed an instantaneous transmission rate of 200 MW. All exports made pursuant to this Order must be consistent with the operating limitations of the Southern New Mexico Import Nomogram.

¹ These Presidential permit numbers refer to the generic DOE permit number and are intended to include any subsequent amendments to the permit authorizing the facility.

(3) Exports by Intercom shall not cause the total exports on a combination of the 138 kV facilities at the Falcon Dam and the facilities authorized by Presidential Permits PP-50, PP-57, and PP-94 to exceed an instantaneous transmission rate of 600 MW during those times when the CPL system is at a minimum load condition. During all other load conditions on the CPL system, exports by Intercom over the facilities identified in this subparagraph shall not cause the maximum rate of transmission to exceed:

(a) 300 MW for the 138 kV and 69 kV facilities authorized by Presidential Permit PP-94; or,

(b) 50 MW total for the 138 kV facilities at Falcon Dam and those authorized by Presidential Permits PP-50 and PP-57.

(C) Changes by DOE to the export limits in other orders shall result in a concomitant change to the export limits contained in paragraph (B) of this Order. Notice of these changes will be provided to Intercom.

(D) In scheduling the delivery of electricity exports to Mexico, Intercom shall comply with all reliability criteria, standards, and guides of the North American Electric Reliability Council, Regional Councils, or independent system operators, as appropriate, on such terms as expressed therein, and as such criteria, standards, and guides may be amended from time to time.

(E) Intercom shall conduct all operations pursuant to the authorization hereby granted in accordance with the provisions of the Federal Power Act and pertinent rules, regulations, and orders adopted or issued thereunder, including the comparable open access provisions of FERC Order No. 888, as amended.

(F) The authorization herein granted may be modified from time to time or terminated by further order of the DOE. In no event shall such authorization to export over a particular transmission facility identified in paragraph (A) extend beyond the date of termination of the Presidential permit authorizing such facility.

(G) This authorization shall be without prejudice to the authority of any State or State regulatory commission for the exercise of any lawful authority vested in such State or State regulatory commission.

(H) Intercom shall make and preserve full and complete records with respect to the electric energy exported to Mexico. Intercom shall furnish quarterly reports to the DOE, within 30 days following each calendar quarter, detailing for each month of the previous quarter: (1) the gross amount of electricity delivered, in kilowatt hours; (2) the consideration received for such energy; and (3) the maximum hourly rate of transmission, in kilowatts. Quarterly reports must be filed regardless of current activity and whether or not deliveries of electric energy have been made. If no transactions have been made, a one-sentence report indicating "no activity" for the previous quarter is sufficient.

Reports shall be submitted to the U.S. Department of Energy, Office of Fossil Energy, FE-27, 1000 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20585-0305. Properly identified quarterly reports will also be accepted via facsimile at (202) 287-5736 to meet time requirements, but original copies should still be filed at the above address.

(I) In accordance with 10 C.F.R. §205.305, this authorization is not transferable or assignable, except in the event of the involuntary transfer of this authority by operation of law. Provided written notice of the involuntary transfer is given DOE within 30 days, this authorization shall continue in effect temporarily. This continuance also is contingent on the filing of an application for permanent authorization within 60 days of the involuntary transfer; the authorization shall then remain effective until a decision is made on the new application. In the event of a proposed voluntary transfer of this authority to export electricity, the transferee and the transferor shall file jointly an application for a new export authorization, together with a statement of reasons for the transfer.

(J) Exports authorized herein shall be reduced or suspended, as appropriate, whenever a continuation of those exports would impair or tend to impair the reliability of the U.S. electric power supply system.

(K) This authorization shall be effective for a period of two years from the date of this Order. Application for renewal of this authorization may be filed within six months prior to expiration of this authorization.

Issued in Washington, D.C., on May 19, 2004.


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Office of Coal & Power Systems
Office of Fossil Energy