



Southwest Power Pool Stakeholder Prioritization Process

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SPP Stakeholder Prioritization Process

Prioritization of work at SPP is a multi-step process, utilizing several factors in determining the priority of projects, revision requests, and enhancements. Stakeholder participation is critically important to the success of the prioritization process.

Stakeholder Prioritization

The Stakeholder Prioritization process is based on the principle that there is power in participation and collaboration. The process includes seven distinct steps which provide a mechanism by which stakeholders can participate into the prioritization of projects, revision requests, and enhancements.

- 1) Revision Request and Enhancement submission via the [Request Management System](#)
- 2) Assessment of initial priority by staff and/or working group
- 3) Publication of the SPP Portfolio Report
- 4) Stakeholder comment period
- 5) Open Stakeholder Prioritization Quarterly Meeting
- 6) Post-quarterly meeting portfolio adjustments as needed
- 7) Publication of the Adjusted Portfolio report

More information, including the quarterly meeting schedule, is available on the [Stakeholder Prioritization page on SPP.org](#).

SPP Portfolio Report

Per the Stakeholder Prioritization Process, the SPP Portfolio Report is published on a quarterly basis. The report reflects the latest available inventory of revision requests, enhancements, defects, and projects.

Note: See **Appendix A** for definitions of the terms ‘member-facing’ and ‘member-impacting,’ which are referenced below.

Revision Requests

A revision request is a request to make additions, edits, deletions, revisions, or clarifications to the SPP Business Practices, SPP Criteria, SPP Market Protocols, or SPP Open Access Transmission Tariff including any attachments and exhibits to these documents, except for Appendix F of the Market Protocols. The SPP Portfolio Report includes all system and/or process-impacting revision requests.

Enhancements

An enhancement is a request for new or changed system functionality that does not require updates to the SPP Market Protocols, SPP Business Practices, SPP Criteria, or SPP Open Access Transmission Tariff. The SPP Portfolio Report includes both stakeholder and staff-requested member-facing and member-impacting enhancements.

Defects

A defect is a deviation between the expected and actual results of a system component, service component, or approved artifact, (e.g., Protocols, requirements, design, etc.). The SPP Portfolio Report includes both stakeholder and staff-reported member-facing and member-impacting defects.

Projects

A project is a temporary endeavor undertaken to create a unique product or service. The SPP Portfolio Report includes both Enterprise and non-Enterprise projects. An Enterprise Project is a project that involves shared resources or impacts two or more departments and requires material or substantial planning and coordination. A non-Enterprise project is a smaller scale project, such as a quarterly release of a functionality for a system. The SPP Portfolio Report includes member-facing and member-impacting projects as well as major technology projects.

Prioritization

Items included in the SPP Portfolio Report are evaluated with consideration for several key factors which influence the prioritization. The prioritization approach for each of the portfolio items is explained below.

Revision Requests and Enhancements

Prioritization of revision requests and enhancement requests is reflected via Priority Grouping. Priority Grouping values and their definitions are shown below.

- Current Release – Those items for which system changes or process/procedure changes are in progress. The in-service date will vary depending on the length of development and implementation effort.
- Release+1 – Items that are planned for inclusion in upcoming release(s). Release+1 may also include items with a longer-term implementation date due to their complexity, which are being worked as a higher priority.
- Release+2 – Items that are planned for inclusion in the next release after Release+1 items.
- Unplanned-A, B or C – Items in the queue not yet planned for a specific release. The sub-classification of A, B or C indicates priority within Unplanned, A being the higher, B being middle and C being the lowest priority of the Unplanned items.
- Other – Items which a) need clarification, b) need further explanation of the benefits of the request, or c) cannot be placed in the queue for another reason.

The Priority Group of a revision request or enhancement request is determined based on three main factors. These factors are included in the SPP Portfolio Report.

- Level of Complexity – Staff's assessment of how complex the item is to implement, taking all factors into consideration (High, Medium, Low or Unknown).
- Severity – The severity, ranked by the Primary Working Group for RRs or Staff for Enhancements Requests, defines the criticality, according to a scale of: Critical, High, Medium or Low.
 - Critical – A critical severity revision request or enhancement resolves an environment or system outage or instability, addresses key participant functionality, or security, audit or compliance requirements.
 - High – A high severity revision request or enhancement addresses SPP's ability to manage reliability or perform daily operations functions, or addresses the calculation of participants' financial position or settlements results.
 - Medium – A medium severity revision request or enhancement addresses the ability to manage markets capabilities, or impacts a non-critical software component or business function or rare or low priority business conditions.
 - Low – A low severity revision request or enhancement does not have any reliability or operations impact and does not materially alter system functionality.

- Cost Estimate – The cost estimate for the item. For revision requests, this is most often from an Impact Assessment; for enhancement requests, this is a staff-generated high-level cost estimate.

In addition, other factors including resource availability, Tariff/FERC status, other functional areas impacted (outside of the primary functional area), and correlation to other enhancements in the Priority Group may be considered in prioritization.

Defects

Prioritization of defects is reflected via Severity. Severity values and criteria are shown below. A defect may meet one or more of the criteria within a severity classification.

- Critical – A critical severity defect causes an environment or system outage or instability, impacts to key participant functionality, or security, audit or compliance risk. In addition, an issue for which there are no options to manually mitigate the issue is considered a critical severity defect.
- High – A high severity defect impairs SPP’s ability to manage reliability or perform daily operations functions, impacts more than two-thirds of SPP’s participants or 90% of SPP’s generational capacity or load served, or impacts the calculation of participants’ financial position or settlements results. An issue for which a short-term sustainable mitigation is available is considered a high severity defect.
- Medium – A medium severity defect causes manageable impact to SPP reliability and/or markets capabilities, impacts less than two-thirds of SPP’s participants or less than 90% of SPP’s generational capacity or load served, or impacts a non-critical software component or business function or rare or low priority business conditions. An issue for which a sustainable mitigation is available is considered a medium severity defect.
- Low – A low severity defect does not have any reliability or operations impact, does not materially alter system functionality, or does not require mitigation.

Projects

Prioritization of projects is reflected via Priority. Priority values of High, Medium, and Low are used to indicate the relative priority of each project in the Portfolio.

The priority of a project is similarly determined based on factors included in the SPP Portfolio Report.

- Score – The score calculated using the SPP Scoring Tool. See **Appendix B** for more information on the Scoring Tool.
- Cost Estimate – The cost estimate for projects is most often from the SPP Cost Estimation Tool, which consider cost line items such as hardware, internal costs, and vendor estimates.

As with revision requests and enhancements, factors including resource availability, Tariff/FERC status, areas impacted, and correlation to other projects may also be considered in prioritization.

Stakeholder Prioritization Quarterly Meeting

Each quarter, in the month prior to the MOPC meeting, SPP will host a net conference open to all stakeholders. The meeting will serve the three purposes shown below.

1. Review of enhancement requests received by SPP during the previous quarter
2. Stakeholder opportunity to weigh in on enhancement requests
3. Review of the priority grouping of all portfolio items

Quarterly Meeting Process

The Stakeholder Prioritization Quarterly Meetings will be open to all stakeholders and other interested parties. Stakeholder questions and comments on report items received prior to the meeting (in response to the publication of the SPP Portfolio Report) will be used to guide meeting discussion. Comments are submitted via RMS using the Quarterly Stakeholder Prioritization Feedback Quick Pick. Stakeholders will be given the opportunity to offer input (ask clarifying questions, voice their support, concerns, or objections, etc.) regarding enhancement requests that have been added to the portfolio. Stakeholders will also be given an opportunity to ask clarifying questions and request changes be made to the priority grouping of the portfolio items. SPP staff will facilitate the meeting and will be available to support the discussion if needed.

Portfolio Adjustments

The priority grouping of portfolio items may also be changed to reflect stakeholders' feedback. All adjustments will be reflected on the Adjusted SPP Portfolio Report which will be posted on SPP.org as soon as possible following the quarterly meeting but no later than one week prior to the MOPC meeting.

Enhancement Request Cancellation/Retirement

Enhancements already included in the portfolio may be cancelled or retired, per the processes outlined below.

Stakeholder-initiated Cancellation

Based on feedback received from the stakeholders during the quarterly process, enhancement requests may be removed from the portfolio. If a commenter wishes to remove an enhancement, SPP will mark the enhancement as a candidate for cancellation on the next scheduled quarterly report. If there are no objections during that cycle, the enhancement will be closed and cancelled.

SPP-initiated Cancellation

Based on other system changes and/or the ongoing applicability of an aging request, SPP may suggest the cancellation of an enhancement request. To initiate cancellation, SPP will mark the request(s) as candidate(s) for cancellation during the next quarterly cycle. Based on stakeholder feedback, those items will be reinstated or cancelled as appropriate.

Enhancement Retirement

Enhancements that have been included in the portfolio for greater than twenty-four (24) months and that are not yet planned for implementation may be considered for retirement. To initiate discussion, SPP will mark the request(s) as candidate(s) for retirement during the next quarterly cycle. Based on stakeholder feedback, those items will be retired or reinstated as appropriate.

MOPC Summary Report

A written report summarizing discussion and items potentially requiring MOPC review will be provided to the MOPC. During the MOPC meeting, meeting attendees may request discussion of specific portfolio items as desired. SPP staff will be available to support the discussion.

Note: MOPC does not approve the Portfolio nor the prioritization of portfolio items but does provide oversight of the process and may act as an escalation point should an MP wish to raise the priority of Portfolio item(s) to MOPC's attention. Raising a priority item would be done during the agenda review portion of the MOPC meeting.

Appendix A – Member-Facing vs. Member-Impacting

A project, revision request, enhancement, or defect is considered **member-facing** if there are no changes market participant/member entities need to make to allow for SPP's work, but the work (change) will be noticeable.

A project, revision request, enhancement, or defect is considered **member-impacting** if the work will require changes to market participant/member system(s) or processes and/or there are required system modifications or testing to be accomplished by market participants/members, without which their current systems will no longer function properly.

Appendix B – Scoring

Scores are calculated using the SPP Scoring Tool, which considers alignment with foundational strategies and strategic initiatives defined by the [2014 SPP Strategic Plan](#), as well as operational and technical efficiencies. The [2014 SPP Strategic Plan](#) was developed by the [Strategic Planning Committee](#). The plan is a three year plan, developed to leverage SPP’s capabilities and operational processes to enhance member value, maintain an economical optimized transmission system, and to optimize interdependent systems, all while maintaining reliability assurance.

In establishing the plan, the Strategic Planning Committee set forth four foundational strategies and associated strategic initiatives to position SPP for the future while balancing operational priorities and financial considerations.

- Reliability Assurance
- Maintain an Economical, Optimized Transmission System
- Enhance and Optimize Interdependent Systems
- Enhance Member Value and Affordability

The SPP Scoring Tool considers each of these Foundational strategies and strategic initiatives, allowing evaluation of each effort based on its alignment with the strategies. Evaluating based on this alignment serves to ensure efforts undertaken by SPP and stakeholders are in support of strategic direction.

Score Calculations

The SPP Scoring Tool is a spreadsheet detailing strategies, initiatives and their associated priorities. Per initiative, the Priority and the Impact chosen within the tool result in a calculated priority score for the initiative. The total of all individual initiative scores becomes the overall priority score for the item being scored. The scoring components within the tool are discussed below.

Note: Users of the tool are encouraged to be familiar with the SPP Strategic Plan, and to consult the plan if necessary during the scoring activity.

Strategies

The Strategy component utilizes the strategies set forth in the SPP Strategic Plan as well as Operational Efficiencies and IT Efficiencies, which round out the most common drivers of work undertaken by SPP and its stakeholders.

Initiatives

The Initiatives component considers the detailed initiatives related to and in support of each of the strategies, as documented in the SPP Strategic Plan.

Initiative Alignment

Presented as “Does the work ___?” questions, the Initiative Alignment component of the scoring tool presents topics for consideration in determining the applicability of the strategy/initiative on the work being scored. Note that SPP Scoring Tool does not detail all questions to be considered but rather provides high level questions per strategy/initiative.

Priority

The Priority component employs the priorities for each of the strategies and initiatives as set by the Strategic Planning Committee. For the purpose of priority scoring, the interpretations below have been applied to the Strategic Planning Committee's strategy prioritization.

- Priority A – Resources are budgeted and committed, unbudgeted resources may be committed in order to achieve completion of the effort.
- Priority B – Resources are budgeted and committed to achieve completion of the effort within budget limits.
- Priority C – Resources are budgeted and committed, but could be applied to achieve completion of Priority A and B items if needed.

Impact

The Impact component is chosen by the user of the tool based on impact of the work being scored on the strategy/initiative. The Priority Scoring Tool offers the following Impact options.

- High – The work has a critical impact on the strategy/initiative.
- Medium-High – The work has a significant impact on the strategy/initiative.
- Medium – The work has a limited or partial impact on the strategy/initiative.
- Low – The work has a slight impact on the strategy/initiative.
- None – The work has no impact on the strategy/initiative.

Score

The Score component is calculated by the tool, based on the Priority dictated by the Strategic Planning Committee and the Impact chosen by the user of the tool.

Scoring Against the Strategies

Priority scoring is about considering work in light of the strategies detailed in the SPP Scoring Tool. As noted above, the strategies considered in the tool are the four foundational strategies identified by the Strategic Planning Committee as well as Operational and IT Efficiencies. Taken together, these six strategies encompass the breadth of the most frequent drivers of work undertaken by SPP and its stakeholders.