

# Smart Utilities Group – Charter

11th April, 2015

## **1. PREAMBLE**

In the Indian power sector scenario amongst value chain comprising of generation, transmission and distribution, perhaps distribution requires improvement in delivering service to the customers not only from the point of view of reaching to all but also delivering quality power 24x7. To make this important change the sector has to imbibe technologies which will deliver improved performance standards and be cost effective. The deployment of Smart Grid as a technology is seen as a key driver in this regard. The Government has also taken different initiatives R-APDRP, NMEM, JNNSM, NSGM, IPDS, and Net Metering Regulations including proposed amendments to the Electricity Act 2003 in this regard.

Utilities in India (and worldwide) are embarking on transitions towards a Smart Grid, which is a high-level transition based on harnessing digital communications and control technologies for multiple functionalities aimed towards making utilities more robust, efficient, sustainable, etc.

Given the nebulous nature of Smart Grids, which have been described as a journey more than a destination, as well as the fact there is no single architecture, standard, etc., there is immense value to utilities sharing best practices, lessons learned, challenges faced, etc., in addition to collectively stating needs which will be relevant for solution providers as well as policy-makers. Through the workings of the SUG, we aim to accelerate the process of information sharing and hand-holding for deployments,

## **2. VISION**

The Smart Utilities Group (SUG) is a voluntary association of electricity utilities in India and other stakeholders aiming to accelerate the transition of utilities to be Smarter, deliver value to the customer, maintain high performance standards and be sustainable (spanning economics, environment, and equity).

## **3. MISSION**

SUG will work with all stakeholders to deliver its mission:

- 1) Facilitate Learnings within member utilities in India including international utilities
- 2) Facilitate Learnings for better Technology Deployment and Transformations in the Indian Scenario
- 3) Collaborate and Benchmark with Indian and Global Utilities and Technology Partners for high performance standards and performance
- 4) Facilitate Customer Empowerment and Engagement in the Indian electricity sector
- 5) Facilitate Renewables, Storage and Energy Efficiency
- 6) Engage with Government, Policy-makers, Regulators, and other statutory bodies to develop policies and frameworks for sustainable business models

#### **4. GOALS**

##### **4.1 Overarching Goals**

- Presentation of requirements and recommendations to both technology/solution providers as well as Government, Policy-makers, Regulators, and other statutory bodies, both at the State and Central level
- Assist Utilities, policy makers, government, vendors, partners and stakeholders to assess new technologies and innovations in their benefits
- Assist utilities to align with National Policies and Mission(s)
- Help develop Standards encouraging innovations, scaling up and cost effectiveness suitable for the Indian scenario
- Encourage development of low cost new technologies for Indian scenarios
- Consciously work towards implementing energy efficiency measures and demand management
- Develop and encourage models for Renewable Energy Sources , Electric Vehicles and Storage
- Encourage investment in the Distribution Sector by government and partners to improve performance
- Help capacity building in the areas of Smart Grid in India through facilitating talent management including through workshops, events, and other media/materials

##### **4.2 Consumer Outreach Goals**

- Help formulate methods and policies for consumer empowerment and engagement in the decision making process to make distribution sustainable (spanning economics, environment, and equity)
- Partner with consumers encouraging them to adopt affordable cost reflective model to enable quality power and improved quality of life
- Provide communication and feedback to consumers on different developments in the areas of electricity supply across the world and how innovations can improve consumer satisfaction if not “customer delight”
- Encourage consumers to adopt energy efficiency measures through communications, demonstrations, and other means
- Provide guidance for consumers to be active participants as “prosumers” (producers –consumers) especially through generating renewable energy
- Encourage consumers in adopting measures in improving the environment
- Conduct consumer surveys and take feedback time to time to understand their perceptions and requirements

##### **4.3 Technology and Organization Development Goals**

- Analysis of generic, specific, or representative technologies, processes, or deployments
- Encourage introduction of technologies and organizational revamps reflecting innovation, cost-effectiveness and scalability, such as smart grids, renewable energy, electric vehicles, microgrids, and retail separation of supply
- Encourage demand management including energy efficiency and Demand Response
- Encourage technologies which are environmentally friendly

- Facilitate in developing R&D in the areas of electricity supply for the India scenario

#### **4.4 Communication Goals**

- Cultivate mutual dialogues, sharing and closer business and working relationships within utilities and between utilities and technology partners.
- Consolidate, summarize and solicit opinions on issues relevant to the utilities and its sustainability.
- Reach out, document and encourage deployment of best practices for utilities in different areas of performance including training.
- Sharing of information by utilities and other relevant stakeholders, spanning lessons learned, best practices, challenges, wish lists, etc.
- Take guidance and provide opinions to regulators in the areas related to distribution including regulators in other cross dependent sectors like, transportation, environment etc.

### **5. SECRETARIAT**

The secretariat for the SUG will be the India Smart Grid Forum (ISGF), and given this is a voluntary association, there is no special licensing or registration of this body. Nonetheless, the members and participants pledge to ensure they shall not undertake any discussions or activities that violate any rules, regulations, or laws in force, including issues of anti-trust and monopolistic practices.

The Ministry of Power, Government of India, is the Patron of SUG.

### **6. MEMBERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE**

- 1) Membership is open to all utilities in India, with observer status available to others on a by-invitation basis; regulators have a special invitation to join as observers.
- 2) Norms for observers shall be notified by the Members within 3 months of commencement of formal association of SUG
- 3) There are no membership fees or charges except where agreed upon by members
- 4) By popular consensus, the founding Chairperson of SUG shall be Praveer Sinha, CEO & ED, Tata Power Delhi Distribution Ltd.
- 5) By popular consensus, Dr. Rahul Tongia, Fellow, Brookings India, and Advisor, ISGF, shall be the initial Advisor to SUG
- 6) Procedures for selection of leaders including Chairperson (after the Founding Chairperson) shall be notified by SUG
- 7) The term of the Chairperson of SUG shall be 3 years with an option of extending it by another 3 years based on the consensus of the members. Maximum term for an individual will be 2 terms of 3 years each, i.e., 6 years.
- 8) SUG shall periodically notify its Members and Observers of standard operating rules, which are based on collective principles.
- 9) In case there are formal resolutions where a vote is required, only Utility Members or others so-invited may cast a vote
- 10) The Charter of the SUG is subject to modification by consensus of simple majority of those present or participating remotely

11) Given the voluntary nature of the body, there is no formal quorum mechanism.

## **7. MODALITIES AND OPERATIONS**

- 1) ISGF shall provide secretariat services for SUG
- 2) Ministry of Power shall be the Patron of SUG, operating through the Joint Secretary, Director (Distribution), or other chosen representative
- 3) Ministry of New and Renewable Energy shall be a Special Member of SUG, operating through Joint Secretary or other chosen representative
- 4) Periodic meetings at a schedule to be determined by Members. The initial (2015-16) meetings period shall be quarterly and need-based.
- 5) Beyond general SUG-wide meetings, specific Committees can be formed to focus on any specific aspect as deemed important by Members
- 6) In addition to having face to face meetings, teleconference or A/V collaborations tools will be made available to SUG by ISGF
- 7) Members shall be responsible for bearing their own expenses for participation in meetings or other activities
- 8) Unless otherwise decided in advance, local logistics for any meeting shall be the responsibility of the host entity
- 9) All in-person meetings should have at least 2 weeks prior notice, if not more, and include a tentative agenda circulated in advance
- 10) The Governing Council of SUG shall consist of Chairperson of SUG, President of ISGF, Advisor of SUG, plus 2 chosen Members. This Governing Council shall have the power to make urgent decisions that will be put up to SUG for approval/ratification.

For any further information, please contact ISGF (Akshay Ahuja, [akshay@indiasmartgrid.org](mailto:akshay@indiasmartgrid.org)) or TPDDL ( Satyanarayan Mahapatra, [sn.mahapatra@tatapower-ddl.com](mailto:sn.mahapatra@tatapower-ddl.com))