

# NERC's Rare Level 3 Alert Highlights Growing Operational Strain on the US Grid

FOSTER CITY, CA, UNITED STATES, May 17, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- For the first time in more than a decade, the North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC) has issued a rare Level 3 alert requiring grid operators and transmission entities to implement immediate actions addressing the risks posed by large computational loads, particularly data centres and other rapidly fluctuating high-demand infrastructure.

The alert follows multiple incidents across the Eastern and Texas interconnections in which large computational loads unexpectedly disconnected from the grid, creating sudden imbalances that system operators had limited ability to anticipate or absorb in real time.

NERC's latest reliability assessments also point to accelerating grid pressure driven by rapid growth in electricity demand from data centres and AI-related computational infrastructure. Several North American assessment regions are now projected to face elevated or high reliability risk over coming years as large-load growth outpaces infrastructure readiness and operational visibility capability.

## The Operational Visibility Problem

Arnowa said the reliability challenge is no longer simply about adding generation capacity, but about improving real-time operational visibility across increasingly dynamic and distributed loads.

Many utility monitoring environments were originally designed around more predictable industrial and commercial demand profiles. Large computational loads, including hyperscale data centres and AI infrastructure, can now create rapid and substantial load changes that conventional monitoring and operational systems may struggle to model or respond to effectively in real time.

NERC's Level 3 alert specifically calls for improved modelling, monitoring, communications, disturbance analysis, and operational coordination associated with computational loads.

Arnowa said this is creating growing demand for operational intelligence systems capable of continuously monitoring large-load behaviour, identifying anomalous patterns before disconnection events occur, and integrating that visibility into broader operational and balancing

decisions.

The company's Arnowa Analytics Platform combines real-time operational monitoring, AI-driven anomaly detection, predictive analytics, and distributed energy coordination across transmission-connected and distribution-connected infrastructure environments.

The platform integrates with existing SCADA, DERMS, and EMS environments to improve operational visibility across large commercial, industrial, and distributed energy loads without requiring complete replacement of existing operational systems.

"NERC's Level 3 alert is not a warning about a theoretical future scenario. It is a response to operational events that have already occurred," said Dr Dubey, Partner at Arnowa. "Grid operators increasingly need real-time visibility into how large and highly dynamic loads behave across the network. The operational challenge is no longer simply forecasting demand growth. It is maintaining stability and coordination across infrastructure that is becoming significantly more distributed and less predictable."

### Regulatory and Commercial Pressure Is Increasing

Arnowa said regulatory and commercial pressure around operational grid intelligence is increasing rapidly as utilities, market operators, and governments respond to rising data centre demand and large-load integration challenges.

Several US market operators and regulators have already begun introducing new requirements and planning frameworks specifically targeting large-load integration, curtailment capability, operational coordination, and virtual power plant participation.

The company said the operational gap between a network event occurring and operators having sufficient visibility to respond is becoming increasingly significant for utilities, infrastructure operators, and large energy users managing distributed and highly dynamic loads.

Arnowa operates across Australia, the USA, the UK, and international markets supporting utilities, infrastructure operators, industrial organisations, energy service providers, and distributed infrastructure environments managing increasingly complex operational energy systems.

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