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BEFORE THE ARIZONA CORPORATION COMMISSION

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COMMISSIONERS

JEFF HATCH-MILLER, Chairman  
 WILLIAM A. MUNDELL  
 MARC SPITZER  
 MIKE GLEASON  
 KRISTIN K. MAYES

IN THE MATTER OF THE GENERIC  
 PROCEEDING CONCERNING ELECTRIC  
 RESTRUCTURING ISSUES.

DOCKET NO. E-00000A-02-0051

IN THE MATTER OF THE GENERIC  
 PROCEEDING CONCERNING THE ARIZONA  
 INDEPENDENT SCHEDULING  
 ADMINISTRATOR.

DOCKET NO. E-00000A-01-0630

DECISION NO. 68485

OPINION AND ORDER

DATE OF HEARING: September 5 (pre-hearing conference), 11, and 12, 2003

PLACE OF HEARING: Phoenix, Arizona

ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE: Teena Wolfe

APPEARANCES: Mr. Michael W. Patten, ROSHKA, HEYMAN & DeWULF, PLC, on behalf of Tucson Electric Power Company;

Mr. Michael Grant, GALLAGHER & KENNEDY, PA, on behalf of Arizona Electric Power Cooperative;

Ms. Karilee S. Ramaley, PINNACLE WEST CAPITAL CORPORATION, and Mr. Jeffrey B. Guldner, SNELL & WILMER, LLP, on behalf of Arizona Public Service Company;

Mr. C. Webb Crockett, FENNEMORE CRAIG, PC, on behalf of Arizonans for Electric Choice and Competition;

Mr. Daniel W. Douglass, LAW OFFICES OF DANIEL W. DOUGLASS, on behalf of Constellation NewEnergy, Inc. and Strategic Energy, LLC;

Mr. Scott S. Wakefield, Chief Counsel, on behalf of the Residential Utility Consumer Office;

Mr. Patrick J. Sanderson, on behalf of the Arizona Independent Scheduling Administrator Association; and

Mr. Jason Gellman, Staff Attorney, Legal Division, on behalf of the Utilities Division of the Arizona Corporation Commission.

1 **BY THE COMMISSION:**2 **I. PROCEDURAL HISTORY**

3 On July 24, 2001, at an Open Meeting of the Arizona Corporation Commission  
4 (“Commission”), the Commissioners directed the Hearing Division to open a docket concerning the  
5 Arizona Independent Scheduling Administrator (“AISA”). On August 24, 2001, pursuant to the  
6 Commissioners’ direction, a Procedural Order was issued opening the above-captioned Generic  
7 Proceeding Concerning the AISA docket and setting forth a list of issues regarding the AISA for  
8 parties to address in written comments. That Procedural Order also directed the Commission’s  
9 Utilities Division Staff (“Staff”) to summarize the parties’ comments and provide its own  
10 recommendations.

11 In accordance with the August 24, 2001 Procedural Order, comments were filed on September  
12 4, 2001, by Arizonans for Electric Choice and Competition (“AECC”), Arizona Competitive Power  
13 Alliance (“Alliance”), Arizona Public Service Company (“APS”), APS Energy Services (“APSES”),  
14 Tucson Electric Power Company (“TEP”), Arizona Consumer-Owned Electric Systems, the  
15 Residential Utility Consumer Office (“RUCO”), Citizens Communications Company, Arizona  
16 Electric Power Cooperative, Inc. (“AEPCO”), and the Arizona Independent Scheduling  
17 Administrator (“AISA”).

18 On November 13, 2001, Staff filed its summary of the comments and recommendations.

19 By Procedural Order issued February 8, 2002, the Generic Proceeding Concerning the AISA  
20 docket was consolidated with Docket Nos. E-00000A-02-0051, E-01345A-01-0822, E-01933A-02-  
21 0069, and E-01933A-98-0471.

22 On March 14, 2003, the Commission issued Decision No. 65743, its “Track B” Decision in  
23 these dockets. Among other issues addressed, Decision No. 65743 directed Staff to file an update to  
24 its November 2001 Staff Report in the AISA docket, and directed the Commission’s Hearing  
25 Division to notice a proceeding in compliance with A.R.S. § 40-252 with notice and an opportunity to  
26 be heard to the affected parties concerning the continuation of the AISA.

27 A Procedural Order was issued on June 18, 2003 setting the hearing to commence on  
28 September 11, 2003, and establishing related procedural deadlines.

1 Notice of the hearing was published as required.

2 A hearing was held on September 11 and 12, 2003, as required by Decision No. 65743, before  
3 a duly authorized administrative law judge of the Commission. APS, TEP, AEPCO, AECC,  
4 Constellation New Energy, Inc. ("CNE"), RUCO and Staff appeared. TEP, AEPCO, APS, CNE,  
5 AECC, and Staff presented evidence. Following the hearing, on September 29, 2003, Staff docketed  
6 a supplemental filing regarding the costs incurred by the AISA for the filing of the AISA protocols  
7 before the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission ("FERC"). On October 6, 2003, AEPCO filed  
8 comments on Staff's supplemental filing. On October 23, 2003, counsel for AECC filed comments  
9 in response to AEPCO's October 6, 2003 filing.

10 On February 2, 2005, AEPCO docketed a Supplemental Filing and Request for Official  
11 Notice, requesting that the Commission take official notice of the Arizona Court of Appeals' January  
12 25, 2005 mandate in *Phelps Dodge Corporation, et al. v. AEPCO, et al.*, 207 Ariz. 95, 83 P.3d 573  
13 (2004) ("*Phelps Dodge*").<sup>1</sup>

14 On February 18, 2005, a Procedural Order was issued directing that responses to AEPCO's  
15 February 2, 2005 filing be filed by Staff and by other parties who wish to be heard on the issue by  
16 March 11, 2005, and that responses include recommendations regarding the effect of the Arizona  
17 Court of Appeals' January 25, 2005 mandate in *Phelps Dodge* on these AISA proceedings

18 AECC, the Alliance,<sup>2</sup> AISA, APS, TEP, the Grand Canyon State Electric Cooperative  
19 Association, Inc., on behalf of Duncan Valley Electric Cooperative, Graham County Electric  
20 Cooperative, Inc., Mohave Electric Cooperative, Inc., Navaopache Electric Cooperative, Inc.,  
21 Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative, Inc., and Trico Electric Cooperative, Inc. (collectively,  
22 "Cooperatives"), and Staff filed Responses as directed by the February 18, 2005 Procedural Order.

23 Following those filings, the matter was taken under advisement.

## 24 II. BACKGROUND OF THE AISA

25 As part of the development of Arizona's Retail Electric Competition Rules (A.A.C. R14-2-

26 <sup>1</sup>The January 25, 2005 mandate states that by order dated January 4, 2005, Arizona Supreme Court No. T-01-0001-CV,  
27 the Arizona Supreme Court denied the petition for review in that case.

28 <sup>2</sup>The Alliance's filing stated that its members include Calpine, Constellation New Energy, Duke Energy North America, LLC, New Harquahala Generating Company, LLC, PPL Montana, LLC, Sempra Energy Resources, Shell Trading, Southwestern Power Group II, LLC, and Strategic Energy.

1 1601 *et seq.*)(“Rules”), it was determined that in order to have non-discriminatory retail access,  
2 Arizona would establish an independent scheduling administrator that would perform certain  
3 functions until such time as a Regional Transmission Organization (“RTO”) was in place (May 30,  
4 2003 Staff Report, Exh. S-1, at 1). Section 1609 of the Rules (“Rule 1609”) required Affected  
5 Utilities owning or operating Arizona transmission facilities to form the AISA and make a filing for  
6 Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (“FERC”) approval. The responsibilities of the AISA were  
7 set forth in Section (D) of Rule 1609, and included: 1) implementation and oversight of the  
8 nondiscriminatory application of operating protocols to ensure fair and equitable transmission access;  
9 2) provision of a dispute resolution process to resolve any claims of discriminatory treatment in the  
10 reservation, scheduling, use and curtailment of transmission services; 3) calculation of Available  
11 Transmission Capacity (“ATC”) for Arizona transmission facilities and development and operation of  
12 a statewide overarching Open Access Same-time Information Service (“OASIS”); 4) taking of  
13 transmission reservation and scheduling requests; and 5) implementation of a transmission planning  
14 process to assure adequate future capacity.

15 The AISA was formed, and through a stakeholder process, developed the AISA tariff which  
16 was approved by FERC. The AISA’s Board of Directors determined that the implementation of the  
17 AISA Protocols Manual should be in a phased approach (Exh. S-1 at 2). Stage 1 of Phase I began  
18 upon FERC’s acceptance and approval of the AISA tariff filing (*id.*). Phase I, Stage 1 AISA  
19 functions include Alternative Dispute Resolution (“ADR”); limited Protocols Manual oversight; and  
20 monitoring of OASIS and Allocated Retail Network Transmission (“ARNT”) (*id.* at 3).

21 Stage 2 of Phase I will become effective only upon a determination of the AISA’s Board of  
22 Directors that more staff is needed to move from a limited Protocols Manual oversight to a more  
23 active administration, which would include the monitoring by the AISA of compliance with FERC’s  
24 standards of conduct related to access to transmission and the operation of the transmission system  
25 (*id.* at 2-3.). Phase II functions will be implemented only after action by the AISA Board of Directors  
26 (*id.* at 2). Phase II functions include monitoring of ATC releases and responsibility for OASIS/ATC  
27 calculations; utilization of standardized procedures for transmission reservation and scheduling;  
28 implementing a statewide transmission planning process; administering a statewide OASIS;

1 overseeing transmission provider determinations of total retail committed use reservations; and  
2 ARNT and Energy Imbalance ("EI") trading and ARNT auction settlement.

### 3 **III. CURRENT STATUS OF THE AISA**

4 The AISA's Board of Directors voted at the April 25, 2003 AISA Board Meeting to downsize  
5 the operations of the AISA, with the downsizing to take effect June 1, 2003 (Exh. S-1 at 3). The  
6 downsizing included the reduction of 1.25 full time employees, a reduction in office space, and  
7 reductions in insurance and accounting costs, resulting in a 54 percent reduction in the annual AISA  
8 budget from \$322,650 to \$154,270 (*id.*).

9 The AISA's Board of Directors voted at the May 14, 2003 AISA Board Meeting to modify its  
10 Articles of Incorporation to remove a sunset clause which previously indicated that the corporation  
11 would cease to exist on September 15, 2003. The new wording, approved by the Board of Directors,  
12 states that the AISA will exist until a FERC-approved Regional Transmission Organization is  
13 operational and serving Arizona (*id. at 2-3*).

### 14 **IV. RECOMMENDATIONS/POSITIONS OF THE PARTIES AT THE HEARING**

#### 15 **A. AEPCO**

16 AEPCO believes that the AISA is not needed now and will not be needed in the future to  
17 facilitate retail competition, and that even though AISA has downsized its budget, it still provides no  
18 benefits to ratepayers (Tr. at 11). AEPCO's witness estimated at the time of the hearing that AEPCO  
19 had directly expended approximately \$100,000 in forming and supporting the AISA, aside from  
20 amounts expended on staff time and related expenses (Direct Testimony of Larry D. Huff, Exh.  
21 AEPCO-1 at 3). AEPCO stated that continued involvement and funding by the Affected Utilities is  
22 not necessary to the continuation of the AISA (*id. at 4*), and argued that ratepayers should not be  
23 called upon to pay annually for the AISA if it is not necessary. AEPCO believes that the affected  
24 utilities have discharged their obligations in relation to the AISA under Rule 1609, because the AISA  
25 has been formed, the protocols have been designed and adopted by FERC, and an implementation  
26 plan has been filed.

27 AEPCO asserted that protocol oversight is not a necessary function of the AISA. AEPCO  
28 argued that the AISA is not needed to implement and oversee operating protocols because the

1 protocols have been incorporated into APS' and TEP's open access transmission tariffs ("OATTs"),  
2 and because its affiliate Southwest Transmission Cooperative ("SWTC") plans to incorporate the  
3 protocols in its OATT at such time that its member distribution cooperative service territories are  
4 opened for competition (Exh. AEPCO-1 at 7). AEPCO asserted that there has been no difficulty  
5 administering the protocols, which AEPCO believes worked satisfactorily when direct access was  
6 occurring in the year 2000. AEPCO also stated that oversight is unnecessary because utilities cannot  
7 unilaterally change the AISA protocols in their OATTs without FERC approval, and that the FERC  
8 approval process would provide notice and an opportunity for comment, objection, and intervention.  
9 AEPCO also argued that because Salt River Project does not utilize the AISA protocols, statewide  
10 protocol uniformity does not exist.

11 AEPCO further asserted that dispute resolution is not a necessary function of the AISA,  
12 because it is nonbinding, and dissatisfied parties can escalate disputes to FERC. AEPCO stated that  
13 under utilities' OATTs, over which FERC has jurisdiction, there is a local, mandatory, meet-and-  
14 confer process, and binding alternative dispute resolution. AEPCO stated that if disputes regarding  
15 retail distribution direct access issues arise, parties can bring complaints before this Commission  
16 under Section A of Rule 1609 which requires open and nondiscriminatory access to transmission  
17 systems, or as unbundled distribution tariff violations. AEPCO further asserted that FERC has a  
18 dispute resolution hotline, which AEPCO believes can be used to resolve disputes, and that the FERC  
19 formal complaint process is also available to aggrieved parties. AEPCO stated that while several  
20 hundred competitive customers went to direct access in 2000, the AISA was never called on to  
21 resolve a dispute at a time when AEPCO believes possible confusion or dispute over the protocols  
22 was at its greatest.

23 AEPCO recommended that the Commission issue an Order that AEPCO has fulfilled its  
24 responsibilities under Rule 1609 in relation to the AISA (Exh. AEPCO-1 at 4). AEPCO believes that  
25 its participation in the AISA imposes costs on its members and their member/owners without  
26 providing benefits (Exh. AEPCO-1 at 5). AEPCO concedes, however, that the AISA is an  
27 organization independent of the Commission or the Affected Utilities (AEPCO-1 at 6).  
28

1           **B. TEP**

2           TEP stated that it has supported the AISA from its inception both financially and through  
3 participation on the AISA board, and that the AISA has played an important role in developing key  
4 protocols to facilitate retail direct access. TEP stated that given the ongoing review of the Electric  
5 Competition Rules and the background of the AISA, TEP supports Staff's recommendation that the  
6 AISA be continued at its reduced staffing level during the review of the Electric Competition Rules.

7           TEP recommended, however, that should the AISA's functions be expanded [beyond the  
8 current Phase I, Stage 1 AISA functions] prior to completion of the Rules' review, that a cost-benefit  
9 analysis be required to address whether such expansion is appropriate. TEP's witness testified that  
10 the transmission planning function contemplated by Rule 1609 is being performed by the Central  
11 Arizona Transmission Study ("CATS") process, the Western Area Transmission Study ("WATS")  
12 group and the SSG-WI Planning Work Group. He stated that the need for the AISA to engage in  
13 transmission planning is precluded by the work being done by those organizations, and that it would  
14 probably not be cost effective for the AISA to perform a transmission planning function (Tr. at 42).

15           TEP also stated that as the AISA developed protocols to enable retail competition that are  
16 now incorporated into both TEP's and APS' OATTs, suspension of the AISA during the  
17 consideration of the Rules would not necessarily injure retail electric competition, in the event the  
18 Commission decides that the current cost of the AISA exceeds the benefits that it is providing. TEP  
19 added that other dispute mechanisms exist to resolve future disputes if any actually arise prior to  
20 completion of the Rules review.

21           **C. APS**

22           APS stated that it has actively supported and it continues it support the AISA. APS also  
23 stated that it provided the bulk of the AISA's initial funding; helped to develop the AISA direct  
24 access protocols; has incorporated those protocols into its FERC-approved OATT; and that APS  
25 continues to be the largest ongoing contributor of funding for the AISA.

26           APS pointed out that the AISA has accomplished the important goal of developing the direct  
27 access protocols, and that from its inception, the AISA was intended to be a transitional entity that  
28 ultimately would be superseded by an RTO. According to APS, other goals set out in Rule 1609 are

1 being phased in by APS and other western utilities. APS stated that it and a number of utilities  
2 throughout the western United States have agreed to implement an independently operated OASIS in  
3 order to streamline nondiscriminatory access to transmission and promote bilateral energy markets  
4 through the west, and that this common OASIS should increase effectiveness and ease of use by  
5 providing a common energy bulletin board to facilitate transactions, ancillary services and congestion  
6 management throughout the western states. APS asserted that the common OASIS not only  
7 accomplishes the goal set out in Rule 1609 of an overarching statewide OASIS, but expands that  
8 OASIS to cover several states, including Arizona, and stated that it includes significant public power  
9 entities both in Arizona and outside of Arizona that would not be required to participate, and are not  
10 participating, in the AISA.

11 APS agreed with Staff that in light of continually changing circumstances, and in light of the  
12 divergent views and opinions of the parties, the purpose and role of the AISA going forward should  
13 be objectively reevaluated when the Commission undertakes its review of the Electric Competition  
14 Rules. APS stated that it therefore supports the Staff recommendation to continue with the  
15 downsized AISA until the review of the Electric Competition Rules is completed, and that it looked  
16 forward to participating in that process.

17 **D. AECC**

18 AECC stated that it is a coalition of a number of entities, which includes industrial users,  
19 large commercial users, medium and small businesses, and various associations, and by its  
20 participation, the business community was represented in this proceeding, and is in support of the  
21 continuation of the AISA. AECC stated that if the Commission is to keep retail electric competition  
22 as a consumer choice in Arizona, it is essential that the AISA organization continue to exist so that  
23 the consumers of the State of Arizona will receive the advantages that were negotiated and bargained  
24 for.

25 AECC believes that the AISA benefits consumers by facilitating open, nondiscriminatory  
26 access to the transmission system, which is key to competition, because it insures a fair allocation of  
27 transmission capacity. AECC stated that as a result of AECC's participation in settlement  
28 negotiations with APS, and TEP, provisions in the APS and TEP [stranded costs] settlement

1 agreements, as approved by the Commission, require the utilities to continue to support the AISA.

2       Regarding dispute resolution, AECC stated that disputes may not have arisen yet, due to  
3 competition within the State of Arizona being deterred by the existence of stranded cost charges.  
4 AECC believes that when competition begins, it will be more desirable to have the ability to resolve  
5 disputes locally, before the AISA as a neutral third party, as opposed to having a federal agency  
6 involved.

7       AECC does not believe the evidence presented in this proceeding is sufficient to warrant the  
8 elimination of the AISA. AECC would prefer that the AISA continue until such time as there is an  
9 RTO, in accord with the original intent of the organization of the AISA. However, in the alternative,  
10 AECC joins APS and TEP in their support of Staff's recommendation to continue the AISA in a  
11 downsized mode until the AISA can be reviewed along with a review of the Electric Competition  
12 Rules.

13               **E. CNE**

14       CNE echoed AECC's position that AISA represents the fruits of a rather hard-fought  
15 stakeholder process, and stated that it would be extremely time-consuming and costly to try to  
16 replicate that effort. CNE stated that in comparison to the AISA, access to the FERC as a vehicle for  
17 dispute resolution offers in many ways a more costly and time-consuming methodology, which in  
18 itself could offer a barrier to competition. CNE also believes that it would be difficult in the absence  
19 of AISA to get the investor-owned utilities to modify their OATTs; that the potential therefore exists  
20 for a growing inconsistency among the tariffs of the utilities; and that coping with that inconsistency  
21 would be a barrier to competition.

22       CNE argued that the fundamental issue in this proceeding, however, is not dispute resolution  
23 or the ease or difficulty of utilities modifying their OATTs, but whether or not Arizona wants to  
24 foster and encourage retail competition and provide its ratepayers with customer choice and the cost  
25 savings that schools, universities, and hospitals can obtain through participating in retail competition.  
26 CNE asserted that the organizations that say AISA is not needed are organizations that will be  
27 adversely impacted by competition. CNE stated that it wishes to be an active market participant and  
28 bring cost savings to customers in Arizona. CNE recommended that the AISA be retained and

1 maintained.

2 **F. RUCO**

3 RUCO stated that it could support Staff's proposal to maintain the abbreviated AISA pending  
4 the Commission's reevaluation of the Rules. RUCO added that its support is qualified in that it could  
5 not support the maintenance of the AISA in perpetuity if the Rules review is an extremely lengthy  
6 process.

7 **G. Staff**

8 Staff stated that while the existence of the AISA is not in itself sufficient to ensure the  
9 development of retail competition, Staff believes that keeping the AISA is necessary to ensure retail  
10 competition. Staff stated that the AISA was designed to be the body to ensure that the ongoing need  
11 for equitable access to transmission is met until the establishment of an RTO; that an RTO does not  
12 currently exist, and that it does not appear that Arizona will have a fully operational RTO prior to  
13 2011. Staff stated that fair, equal, nondiscriminatory access to transmission and localized, expedient  
14 dispute resolution regarding transmission access are essential elements necessary to retail  
15 competition, and the AISA was designed to address these functions (Tr. at 31). Staff stated that it  
16 does not believe that the utilities' adoption of the AISA protocols in their FERC OATTs completes  
17 the ongoing AISA process of ensuring fair and equitable access to retail transmission.

18 Staff acknowledged the existence of several different ways to address dispute resolution,  
19 including calling a FERC hotline, utilizing a formal dispute resolution at FERC, or utilizing a local  
20 dispute resolution process in Arizona over the protocols developed by the AISA. Staff believes that  
21 there is merit in having the AISA deal with dispute resolution over the AISA protocols in order to  
22 enable retail competition in Arizona.

23 Staff stated that in addition to the two essential functions of ensuring fair and equitable access  
24 to retail transmission and provision of local dispute resolution, the AISA, pending a fully operational  
25 RTO, can offer a measure of uniformity in utilities' OATTs, which Staff believes is important in  
26 order to give competitive providers the confidence they will need to enter the Arizona market.

27 Staff stated that it does not disagree that the AISA may need to be examined to determine  
28 what may need to be modified, or whether some of what were envisioned to be essential functions of

1 the AISA, such as transmission planning or a statewide OASIS, can be performed by entities other  
2 than the AISA. Staff stated that it is important, however, that the essential functions are being carried  
3 out in order to ensure that retail competition can occur.

#### 4 V. POST-HEARING FILINGS

5 On February 2, 2005, AEPCO docketed a Supplemental Filing and Request for Official  
6 Notice, and served each party listed on the June 18, 2003 Procedural Order. By its filing, AEPCO  
7 requested that official notice be taken of the Arizona Court of Appeals' January 25, 2005 mandate in  
8 *Phelps Dodge*. The Court of Appeals' January 25, 2005 mandate states that by order dated January 4,  
9 2005, Arizona Supreme Court No. T-01-0001-CV, the Arizona Supreme Court denied the petition for  
10 review in *Phelps Dodge*. AEPCO took the position that in light of the fact that the Court of Appeals  
11 opinion declaring the AISA requirements of A.A.C. R14-2-1609 to be invalid has become final, this  
12 proceeding on the AISA is now moot.

13 Parties filing responses to AEPCO's post-hearing filing include the Alliance,<sup>3</sup> AISA, APS,  
14 AECC, the Cooperatives, TEP, and Staff.

15 The Cooperatives requested in their filing that the Commission adopt AEPCO's position that  
16 this proceeding is now moot.

17 APS stated that it has actively supported formation of the AISA, and that APS provides  
18 funding for the AISA and helped develop the AISA direct access protocols. APS does not believe  
19 that the court's invalidation of the specific regulation relating to the AISA, in and of itself,  
20 necessarily moots the issues raised in this proceeding.

21 TEP stated that *Phelps Dodge* makes it clear that the provisions of Rule 1609 that provide for  
22 the creation of the AISA are not valid or enforceable. TEP stated that this calls into question the  
23 status of the sections of the TEP 1999 Settlement Agreement in Decision No. 62103 relating to the  
24 AISA, and TEP's duties and responsibilities in connection therewith. TEP asserted that it is  
25 appropriate for the Commission to provide notice of the steps it will take, if any, regarding: 1) the  
26 AISA-related Electric Competition Rules; and 2) any terms of settlement agreements (such as the

27 <sup>3</sup> The Alliance's post-hearing filing stated that its members include Calpine, Constellation New Energy, Duke Energy  
28 North America, LLC, New Harquahala Generating Company, LLC, PPL Montana, LLC, Sempra Energy Resources, Shell  
Trading, Southwestern Power Group II, LLC, and Strategic Energy.

1 TEP 1999 Settlement Agreement) that are based upon the invalidated AISA-related Rules.

2 The Alliance stated that its members believe retail access will provide significant consumer  
3 benefits, and that retail access cannot exist without non-discriminatory open access to transmission.  
4 The Alliance stated that such access cannot exist without an independent, authoritative, FERC-  
5 empowered, Commission-supported agency, and that until an RTO is operational, the AISA is that  
6 agency. The Alliance asserted that dissolving the AISA would be a step backward in competition in  
7 electricity and non-discriminatory access, and that it would be a mistake for the Commission to  
8 discontinue support of the AISA.

9 The AISA stated that the *Phelps Dodge* decision has no effect upon the legal status of the  
10 AISA as a FERC-regulated entity operating exclusively under a FERC-approved tariff, and that the  
11 issues raised in this docket remain extant. The AISA pointed out that when FERC approved its tariff,  
12 it was aware of the ongoing litigation regarding the validity of Rule 1609 in the *Phelps Dodge* case,  
13 and that FERC specifically found that the AISA had an independent right to seek FERC approval of  
14 its tariff, regardless of the continued validity of Rule 1609. The AISA also stated that *Phelps Dodge*  
15 has no impact on either the continued economic viability of the AISA does not lessen in any way the  
16 continued public benefits associated with maintaining Commission support of the AISA. The AISA  
17 stated that the obligations of APS and TEP to continue their support of the AISA, to comply with the  
18 AISA's Protocols Manual, which they have incorporated as part of their OATTs, and to fund the  
19 activities of the AISA are not affected by *Phelps Dodge's* invalidation of Rule 1609, and that APS  
20 and TEP currently provide 90% of the AISA's annual funding.<sup>4</sup>

21 AECC asserted that AEPCO is incorrect in claiming that this proceeding is moot following  
22 the finality of *Phelps Dodge*, and that the Commission's consideration of the AISA in this docket  
23 remains relevant as a matter of public policy. AECC stated that the AISA exists to support the  
24 Commission's policy of providing customers with retail choice, and that the invalidation of Rule  
25 1609 eliminated neither the AISA nor the obligations of APS and TEP to participate in the AISA  
26 pursuant to their respective settlement agreements that the Commission approved in 1999. AECC  
27

28 <sup>4</sup> The AISA stated in its filing that the balance of the funding is currently provided by AEPCO and UNS Electric, Inc.

1 pointed out that the settlement agreements' AISA provisions do not reference Rule 1609 and are not  
2 dependent in any way on a specific mandate in the Electric Competition Rules to participate in the  
3 AISA. AECC stated that while *Phelps Dodge* may have precluded the Commission from mandating  
4 participation in the AISA for a utility not otherwise so obligated, the Commission is not precluded  
5 from supporting the continuation of the AISA as a matter of public policy, or from requiring the  
6 parties to approved settlement agreements to adhere to the terms of the agreements. AECC asserted  
7 that the implementation and oversight of operating protocols for retail access service is best  
8 administered and modified by an independent body such as the AISA rather than through unilateral  
9 OATT filings by individual transmission providers. AECC believes that although the underlying  
10 economics have not supported using direct access service in Arizona in recent years, it remains a  
11 valuable option going forward. AECC recommended that the Commission issue the following  
12 findings in this docket:

- 13 1. The AISA is a FERC-jurisdictional entity that was created to ensure non-  
14 discriminatory access to transmission for retail access service in Arizona  
15 in furtherance of the Commission's policy of offering the choice of retail  
16 direct access service to customers.
- 17 2. APS and TEP have entered into Commission-approved Settlement  
18 Agreements with parties that obligate APS and TEP to support the AISA,  
19 independent of the requirements in A.A.C. R14-2-1609.
- 20 3. The AISA ensures non-discriminatory access to transmission for retail  
21 service in Arizona in the absence of a Regional Transmission  
22 Organization.
- 23 4. The AISA Board has responded to the current lack of retail direct access  
24 activity in Arizona by downsizing the AISA to the minimum size  
25 practicable that still retains the critical mass needed to keep the entity  
26 intact. This approach appropriately keeps the option of direct access  
27 available to Arizona customers, to be utilized as the opportunity to shop  
28 improves.
5. The continued participation of APS and TEP in the AISA, in compliance  
with their respective Settlement Agreements, is in the public interest.
6. APS, TEP, and other Affected Utilities shall continue to be allowed to  
recover the prudent costs of participation in the AISA, as provided in the  
applicable cost recovery mechanisms approved by the Commission in

1 other dockets.

2 Staff stated that the issue in this proceeding – whether to continue the AISA – is still open and  
3 not rendered moot by *Phelps Dodge*. Staff stated that APS and TEP have existing obligations to  
4 support the AISA that are independent of Rule 1609, and that those obligations therefore survive  
5 *Phelps Dodge*. Staff asserted that while *Phelps Dodge* invalidated the administrative rule that  
6 required the establishment of the AISA, it did not invalidate the AISA itself, which exists  
7 independently of A.A.C. R14-2-1609 (C) through (J). Staff further stated that even if the  
8 Commission were to decide to withdraw support for the AISA, it is likely that FERC action may be  
9 required to completely terminate the AISA, and that such action would likely have to be initiated by  
10 the AISA's Board of Directors.

## 11 VI. CONCLUSION

12 In promulgating the Retail Electric Competition Rules, we expressed support for the  
13 development of a FERC-approved RTO, Independent System Operator (ISO), or, absent an RTO or  
14 ISO, an AISA, because “such organizations are necessary in order to provide nondiscriminatory retail  
15 access and to facilitate a robust and efficient electricity market”(A.A.C. R14-2-1609(C)). Following  
16 promulgation of Rule 1609, the AISA formed, formulated its tariff in a stakeholder process,  
17 submitted that tariff to FERC, and received tariff approval of the tariff from FERC. Also following  
18 promulgation of Rule 1609, APS and TEP entered into settlement agreements that contained  
19 provisions relating to their participation in and support of the AISA.<sup>5</sup>

20 Subsequent to the AISA's formation, FERC's approval of the AISA tariff filing, and  
21 Commission approval of the APS and TEP settlement agreements, the Arizona Court of Appeals held  
22 in *Phelps Dodge* that the promulgation of A.A.C. R14-2-1609 (C) through (J), which call for the  
23 creation of the AISA, lacked authority.

24 We agree with APS that *Phelps Dodge*'s invalidation of the specific regulation relating to the  
25 AISA does not in and of itself necessarily moot the issues raised in this proceeding. While we agree  
26 that *Phelps Dodge* may have rendered the provisions of Rule 1609 that provide for the creation of the  
27 AISA invalid or unenforceable as a rule requirement, the ruling came after the AISA was formed and

28 <sup>5</sup> Decision No. 61973 (October 6, 1999)(APS); Decision No. 62103 (November 30, 1999)(TEP).

1 had its tariff filing approved by FERC, and does not render the independent existence of the AISA  
2 invalid. While *Phelps Dodge* may preclude this Commission from mandating participation in the  
3 AISA for a utility not otherwise so obligated, we are not precluded from supporting the continuation  
4 of the AISA as a matter of public policy.

5 We find that *Phelps Dodge* has no impact on the continued economic viability of the AISA,  
6 and that it does not reduce the continued public benefit associated with maintaining Commission  
7 support of the AISA at its current level of operations. The AISA currently provides the important  
8 public benefit of keeping the possibility of retail access available to Arizona consumers at a minimal  
9 cost, by providing potential competitors with the necessary assurance that they will have fair and  
10 equitable access to transmission until an RTO is formed and approved by FERC to take over that  
11 function. The AISA provides this assurance by providing limited AISA Protocols Manual oversight  
12 and monitoring of OASIS and ARNT, and by providing a local, independent dispute resolution forum  
13 that parties may choose to avail themselves of in the event of a dispute over the protocols, OASIS, or  
14 ARNT. As Staff noted, however, while the AISA is essential to allowing the development of retail  
15 competition, the existence of the AISA has not been sufficient in itself to ensure retail competition.  
16 In recognition of the current lack of retail electric competition, the AISA is currently operating in a  
17 downsized mode which is less costly than its operations were at the beginning of this proceeding. As  
18 we noted above, the AISA's downsizing resulted in a 54 percent reduction in the annual AISA budget  
19 from \$322,650 to \$154,270.

20 TEP recommended that should the AISA's functions be expanded beyond the current Phase I,  
21 Stage 1 AISA functions prior to completion of the Rules' review, that a cost-benefit analysis be  
22 required to address whether such expansion is appropriate. Staff stated that Stage 2 of Phase I of the  
23 AISA will become effective only upon a determination of the AISA's Board of Directors that more  
24 staff is needed to move from a limited Protocols Manual oversight to a more active administration,  
25 which would include the monitoring by the AISA of compliance with FERC's standards of conduct  
26 related to access to transmission and the operation of the transmission system. As TEP is a member  
27 of the AISA, TEP has the ability to request a cost-benefit analysis prior to an AISA Board  
28 determination that expansion is appropriate.

1 TEP asserted that it is appropriate for the Commission to provide notice of the steps it will  
 2 take, if any, regarding 1) the AISA-related Electric Competition Rules; and 2) any terms of  
 3 settlement agreements (such as the TEP 1999 Settlement Agreement) that are based upon the  
 4 invalidated AISA-related Rules. Staff stated that its review of the Electric Competition Rules is  
 5 ongoing, and that it plans to address AISA-related rules during that review. The outcome of that  
 6 proceeding is unknown, and parties wishing to submit comments on that proceeding should make  
 7 their filings in the rulemaking docket. Regarding the terms of the TEP 1999 Settlement Agreement,  
 8 appropriate Commission action will be taken if the Commission receives a specific request regarding  
 9 Decision No. 62103 from a party to that Decision.

10 \* \* \* \* \*

11 Having considered the entire record herein and being fully advised in the premises, the  
 12 Commission finds, concludes, and orders that:

13 **FINDINGS OF FACT**

14 1. On August 24, 2001, pursuant to the Commissioners' direction to the Hearing  
 15 Division at a July 24, 2001 Open Meeting of the Commission, a Procedural Order was issued opening  
 16 the above-captioned Generic Proceeding Concerning the AISA and setting forth a list of issues  
 17 regarding the AISA for parties to address in written comments. The Procedural Order also directed  
 18 Staff to summarize the parties' comments and provide its own recommendations.

19 2. On September 4, 2001, comments were filed by AECC, the Alliance, APS, APSES,  
 20 TEP, Arizona Consumer-Owned Electric Systems, RUCO, Citizens Communications Company,  
 21 AEPCO, and the AISA.

22 3. On November 13, 2001, Staff filed its summary of the comments and  
 23 recommendations.

24 4. By Procedural Order issued February 8, 2002, the Generic Proceeding Concerning the  
 25 AISA docket was consolidated with Docket Nos. E-00000A-02-0051, E-01345A-01-0822, E-  
 26 01933A-02-0069, and E-01933A-98-0471.

27 5. On March 14, 2003, the Commission issued Decision No. 65743, its "Track B"  
 28 Decision in these dockets. Among other issues addressed, Decision No. 65743 directed Staff to file

1 an update to its November 2001 Staff Report in the AISA docket, and directed the Commission's  
2 Hearing Division to notice a proceeding in compliance with A.R.S. § 40-252 with notice and an  
3 opportunity to be heard to the affected parties concerning the continuation of the AISA.

4 6. Notice of the hearing was published as required.

5 7. A hearing was held on September 11 and 12, 2003, as required by Decision No.  
6 65743. APS, TEP, AEPCO, AECC, CNE, RUCO and Staff appeared. TEP, AEPCO, APS, CNE,  
7 AECC, and Staff presented evidence.

8 8. Following the hearing, on September 29, 2003, Staff docketed a supplemental filing  
9 regarding the costs incurred by the AISA for the filing of the AISA protocols before the FERC.

10 9. On October 6, 2003, AEPCO filed comments on Staff's supplemental filing.

11 10. On October 23, 2003, counsel for AECC filed comments in response to AEPCO's  
12 October 6, 2003 filing.

13 11. On February 2, 2005, AEPCO docketed a Supplemental Filing and Request for  
14 Official Notice, requesting that the Commission take official notice of the Arizona Court of Appeals'  
15 January 25, 2005 mandate in *Phelps Dodge*.

16 12. On February 18, 2005, a Procedural Order was issued directing that responses to  
17 AEPCO's February 2, 2005 filing be filed by Staff and by other parties who wish to be heard on the  
18 issue by March 11, 2005, and that responses include recommendations regarding the effect of the  
19 Arizona Court of Appeals' January 25, 2005 mandate in *Phelps Dodge* on these AISA proceedings.

20 13. AECC, the Alliance, AISA, APS, TEP, the Cooperatives and Staff filed Responses to  
21 AEPCO's February 2, 2005 filing.

22 14. The AISA ensures non-discriminatory access to transmission for retail service in  
23 Arizona in the absence of a FERC-approved RTO.

24 15. The AISA Board has responded to the current lack of retail direct access activity in  
25 Arizona by downsizing the AISA to the minimum size practicable that still retains the critical mass  
26 needed to keep the entity intact. This approach appropriately keeps the option of direct access  
27 available to Arizona customers, to be utilized as the opportunity to shop improves.

28 16. APS, TEP, and other Affected Utilities should continue to be allowed to recover the

1 prudent costs of participation in the AISA, as provided in the applicable cost recovery mechanisms  
2 approved by the Commission in other dockets.

3 17. Staff's recommendation to continue support for the AISA in its current downsized  
4 mode pending Commission review of the Retail Electric Competition Rules is reasonable and should  
5 be adopted.

6 **CONCLUSIONS OF LAW**

7 1. The AISA is a FERC-jurisdictional entity that was created to ensure non-  
8 discriminatory access to transmission for retail access service in Arizona in furtherance of the  
9 Commission's policy of offering the choice of retail direct access service to customers.

10 2. The AISA exists independently of A.A.C. R14-2-1609 (C) through (J).

11 3. The Commission has jurisdiction over the subject matter of this proceeding.

12 4. *Phelps Dodge* does not preclude Commission support for the continuation of the AISA  
13 as a matter of public policy.

14 **ORDER**

15 IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that the Affected Utilities as defined by the Commission's  
16 Retail Electric Competition Rules shall continue to be allowed to recover the prudent costs of  
17 participation in the Arizona Independent System Administrator, as provided in the applicable cost  
18 recovery mechanisms approved in other Commission dockets.

19 IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Commission's Utilities Division Staff shall include, in  
20 its recommendations to the Commission resulting from its review of the Retail Electric Competition  
21 Rules, a recommendation regarding provisions concerning the Arizona Independent System  
22 Administrator.

23 IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that Staff shall conduct a review of the issues involved in this  
24 proceeding and shall file, in 24 months, a report in this docket that includes its analysis, and a  
25 recommendation based on that analysis, regarding Commission support for the continuation of the  
26 Arizona Independent System Administrator as a matter of public policy.

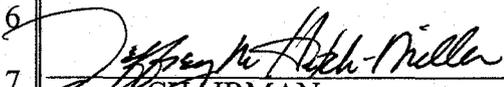
27 ...

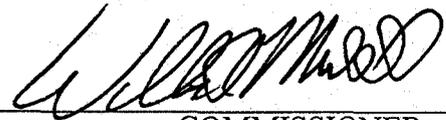
28 ...

1 IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that consistent with this Decision, Docket No. E-00000A-01-  
2 0630 shall remain open for the filing of Staff's report and further Commission consideration.

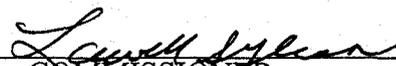
3 IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that this Decision shall become effective immediately.

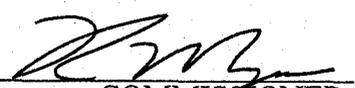
4 BY ORDER OF THE ARIZONA CORPORATION COMMISSION.

5  
6   
7 CHAIRMAN

  
COMMISSIONER

8  
9   
10 COMMISSIONER

  
COMMISSIONER

  
COMMISSIONER

11  
12 IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I, BRIAN C. McNEIL, Executive  
13 Director of the Arizona Corporation Commission, have  
14 hereunto set my hand and caused the official seal of the  
15 Commission to be affixed at the Capitol, in the City of Phoenix,  
16 this 23<sup>rd</sup> day of Feb., 2006.

  
17 BRIAN C. McNEIL  
18 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

19 DISSENT \_\_\_\_\_

20 DISSENT \_\_\_\_\_

21 TW:mj

1 SERVICE LIST FOR:

THE GENERIC PROCEEDING CONCERNING  
ELECTRIC RESTRUCTURING ISSUES and THE  
GENERIC PROCEEDING CONCERNING THE  
ARIZONA INDEPENDENT SCHEDULING  
ADMINISTRATOR

4 DOCKET NO.

DOCKET NOS. E-00000A-02-0051;  
E-00000A-01-0630

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