

**PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION**

505 VAN NESS AVENUE  
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94102-3298



January 7, 2021

**SUBJECT:** Proposed Independent Evaluator List for Public Comment

To Whom It May Concern:

The California Public Utilities Commission's (CPUC's) Wildfire Safety Division (WSD) and the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection's (CAL FIRE) Office of the State Fire Marshal (OSFM) have sought participation from individuals with experience in assessing the safe operation of electrical infrastructure to form a list of qualified Independent Evaluators (IEs). This correspondence is to announce that the proposed list of IEs has been established and that the WSD and OSFM are actively seeking public comment on the matter.

**Background**

In accordance with Public Utilities Code (PU Code) 8386.3(c)(2)(A), by March 1, 2021 the CPUC's WSD, in consultation with CAL FIRE, shall make available a list of qualified IEs with experience in assessing the safe operation of electrical infrastructure. Each electrical corporation shall engage an IE listed pursuant to subparagraph (A) to review and assess the electrical corporation's compliance with its' wildfire mitigation plan (WMP). The engaged IE shall consult with, and operate under the direction of, the WSD of the Commission. Costs incurred for hiring listed IEs shall be the sole responsibility of the electrical corporation and not the Commission or CAL FIRE.

**Legislative Review**

- PU Code 8386.3(c)(2)(B)(i), (ii), (iii) and (iv) state, "(i)...The independent evaluator shall issue a report on July 1 of each year in which a report required by paragraph (1) is filed. As a part of the independent evaluator's report, the independent evaluator shall determine whether the electrical corporation failed to fund any activities included in its plan.  
(ii) The Wildfire Safety Division shall consider the independent evaluator's findings, but the independent evaluator's findings are not binding on the division, except as otherwise specified.  
(iii) The independent evaluator's findings shall be used by the Wildfire Safety Division to carry out its obligations under Article 1 (commencing with Section 451) of Chapter 3 of Part 1 of Division 1.  
(iv) The independent evaluator's findings shall not apply to events that occurred before the initial plan is approved for the electrical corporation."

- PU Code 8386.3(c)(3) states, “The commission shall authorize the electrical corporation to recover in rates the costs of the independent evaluator.”
- In summary, PU Code 8386.3(c)(5)(C) requires the IE to perform the following tasks:
  - Task 1 – Consult with the WSD on compliance assurance auditing that will be performed,
  - Task 2 – Perform compliance assurance auditing, including field inspections,
  - Task 3 – Draft and provide to the WSD a report on audit findings, including deficiencies of underfunded WMP activities,
  - Task 4 – Draft and provide to the WSD a report on deficiencies of electrical corporation’s and expected resolution timelines, and
  - Task 5 – Track and report deficiencies of audit findings.

**Proposed Independent Evaluator List for Public Comment**

Below is the proposed list of Independent Evaluators. Each IE team has been assessed and approved based on the criteria found within the Request for Qualifications (RFQ) 20NC0427 that was posted to [www.CaleProcure.ca.gov](http://www.CaleProcure.ca.gov) from 10/21/2020 – 11/20/2020.

<b>Primary: 4LEAF, Inc.</b>
<b>Team Members:</b> AerialZeus, LLC // Innoventum Consulting, LLC // Safety Compliance Management // and JH Land Consultants, LLC

<b>Primary: Bureau Veritas North America, Inc.</b>
<b>Team Members:</b> All Valley Engineering Corporation, Inc. // Soaring Eagle Imagining // TW Powerline Construction // C2 Group // Aspen Helicopters, Inc.

<b>Primary: Green Grid, Inc.</b>
<b>Team Members:</b> Hotshot Arbor Care, LLC and Pride Resource Partners, LLC

<b>Primary: Mountain G. Enterprises, Inc.</b>
<b>Team Members:</b> Ultieg and Panhandle Utility Services, LLC

<b>Primary: NV5, Inc.</b>
<b>Team Members:</b> Guidehouse, Inc. (Navigant)

<b>Primary: Sargent &amp; Lundy, LLC</b>
<b>Team Members:</b> Icon Utility Services (a.k.a. Icon Building Supplies, Inc.)

## Conditions for Hire

All proposed IEs, unless otherwise stated, are approved to perform the work as stipulated in PU Code 8386.3(c)(5)(C) and as outlined in the scope of work in RFQ 20NC0427.

## Public Comment

The Proposed Independent Evaluators List is presented to stakeholders for public comment. The WSD plans to review and incorporate public comments in late January/early February 2021 and release the final list of Independent Evaluators no later than March 1, 2021.

Stakeholders may submit comments to the Director of the WSD on the draft proposed list of Independent Evaluators by **February 4, 2021**. Comments can be submitted to [wildfiresafetydivision@cpuc.ca.gov](mailto:wildfiresafetydivision@cpuc.ca.gov) and reference “*Proposed Independent Evaluator List*.”

For questions regarding the information contained within this letter, please contact **Tara Rasmussen, Contracts Specialist** in the WSD, at [Tara.Rasmussen@cpuc.ca.gov](mailto:Tara.Rasmussen@cpuc.ca.gov), with a copy to [wildfiresafetydivision@cpuc.ca.gov](mailto:wildfiresafetydivision@cpuc.ca.gov).

We look forward to any questions or comments.

Respectfully,



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**Caroline Thomas Jacobs**  
Director, Wildfire Safety Division  
California Public Utilities Commission

*In partnership with*



1/7/2021

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**Erick Puckett**  
Division Chief, Utility Fire Mitigation  
California Department of Forestry and  
Fire Protection