



Filing Receipt

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ASTOUND BROADBAND RESPONSE

PROJECT NO. 56822

COMMISSION STAFF'S FIRST REQUEST FOR INFORMATION TO TARGETED TELECOMMUNICATION UTILITIES QUESTION NOS. STAFF 1-1 THROUGH 1-16

- Staff 1-1** Did you experience any disruption of service or service outages within the Impacted Area due to damage caused by Hurricane Beryl? If so, please describe the nature and causes of the outages, the duration of any outages, facilities affected by the outages, and efforts made by you and any involved third parties to restore service to customers in the Impacted Area. **Our Company experienced numerous outages during the duration of Hurricane Beryl and its aftermath. These outages (Shown Below) were prolonged because of the areas power grid.**
- Monday July 8th** – CenterPoint power outages – Customers were out of power in all our communities due to Hurricane Beryl landfall, We continued to generate power at all of our 17 hub sites with continuous monitoring and generator refueling. All areas gradually restored on commercial power between July 8th–July 16th.
- July 8th – July 9th** – Found a fallen tree during continuous ride out, that fell on a residential terminal this was repaired in two days prior to restoration of commercial power.
- July 7th – July 9th** – We had fiber cable on the ground from 8 CenterPoint poles broken during Hurricane Beryl, Fiber cable was intact and working until vehicles constantly running over them caused a 3 -4 hour outage before being restored. Commercial power was still down to all residential customers at this time.
- July 16th** – All commercial power restored all hubs back on CenterPoint power.
- Staff 1-2** Did you experience any disruption of service or service outages in areas of Texas outside the Impacted Area due to damage caused by Hurricane Beryl? If so, please describe the nature and causes of the outages, the duration of any outages, facilities affected by the outages, and efforts made by you and any involved third parties to restore service to customers in those affected areas. **CenterPoint's widespread outages affected our Central Office and data centers that we have presence for transport services, these facilities were maintained by backup Generators.**
- Staff 1-3** If any outages due to a third-party infrastructure issue were caused by the impact of Hurricane Beryl, please identify the third party and describe the issue(s) and what steps were taken to resolve it and restore service to customers. **CenterPoint Energy's wide spread power outages had our hubs and power supplies running on**

backup generators and batteries which had to be monitored 24 hours until power restored. We have approximately 150+ independent power supplies that energize our amplifiers that provide signal for data, voice & video after 3-4 hours of back up battery's service fails, We had to monitor CenterPoint very closely for restore so we would know when to verify our service. There was no tracking other than wait for phone calls to the call center/social media or constantly have technicians ride areas, as the CenterPoint Outage tracker was no longer working.

- Staff 1-4** Please describe the extent of any structural damage to your facility(s) due to Hurricane Beryl. Multiple issues with minor strand & lashing wire, trees and limbs laying on or against utilities primarily in Fort Bend County.
- Staff 1-5** Please identify the total number of customers affected by Hurricane Beryl-related outages, categorized by service type and zip code. service includes Data, Voice, video, available in these areas 77459 (GPON 1304 / HFC 1856) 77479 (GPON 2361) 77583 (GPON 1727) 77044 (HFC 548, GPON 19) 77406 (HFC 880, GPON 4005) 77429 (HFC 783, GPON 280) 77386 (GPON 1589) 77379 (HFC 551 GPON 24)
- Staff 1-6** Please provide a timeline outlining the progression of any Hurricane Beryl-related outages experienced by your utility from the initial disruption to complete restoration. Network distribution checks from July 8 – July 16, once deemed safe personnel started site visits and evaluations of all Astound owned facilities and network. Outages and possible vulnerabilities prioritized and resources dispatched as needed. Fuel deliveries scheduled, contractors engaged to secure areas of concern until all CenterPoint Pocket outages restored.
- Staff 1-7** Please identify any challenges or obstacles that hindered your service restoration efforts. The dispatching and replacing of broken/downed poles, fallen vegetation. CenterPoint power outage tracking, cell phone communication in areas was very intermittent.
- Staff 1-8** Please describe any communications you had with AEP, CenterPoint, Entergy, or TNMP in advance of Hurricane Beryl concerning potential loss of power or electric service. We had no prior advance communication with CenterPoint Energy
- Staff 1-9** Please detail the communication strategies you employed to inform your customers about the outage, restoration progress, and estimated timelines, including communication channels used. Sunday July 7th 2024 Messaging went live, Storm Warning expected to hit the gulf coast, this message was distributed on our Homepage, Facebook and Twitter (X) Houston, Katy, Cypress, Spring, Sugar Land, Missouri city, Also added was Prepare, Plan, Stay informed, Tropical storm updates continued from July 7th – July 9th 2024 for Houston and aforementioned towns.
- Staff 1-10** Please describe the customer support measures in place to address inquiries, concerns, and complaints related to the outages, specifying the availability of

support channels and response times. Astound Broadband continued to provide customer care support and field operations support during the duration of the storm and thereafter, we continued to operate our care support lines as well as Monitor using our diagnostic tools for HFC/GPON to determine status of our end user devices to verify when power restored devices came back online, If any issues were found, maintenance teams in the field would give it immediate attention.

- Staff 1-11** Please outline any proactive outreach efforts your utility makes to vulnerable customers (e.g., elderly, disabled) who may require additional assistance during a weather emergency. We have a Retirement community in our Spring Texas area, on Monday July 8 we sent a Technician to the site, He reported they were running on their building generators, we continued to monitor for power recovery.
- Staff 1-12** Please describe the lessons learned from Hurricane Beryl's impact on your facilities, network infrastructure, and service delivery. Maintaining and testing your aggregation sites backup power and network diversity are by far the most important of all items leading into any weather event. With our primary deployment of FTTH (Fiber to the Home), commercial power impacts to service are significantly lessened when a provider maintains power at their core sites and customers/residents having access to Home Stand-By Generators and portable generators.
- Staff 1-13** Please outline any plans or initiatives to enhance your network's resilience to future natural disasters, including specific infrastructure upgrades or redundancy measures. Prior to all forecasted weather events routine checks for fuel capacity and power transfers are completed. All sites are inspected for vulnerabilities, locked down and secured. All portable generators both diesel and gasoline are tested, fueled and staged for deployment as required. Construction completes a 100% evaluation of our Backbone, Long Haul and Distribution utilities and dispatches construction crews to secure areas of concern or any vulnerabilities. As soon as the weather event passes and deemed safe all required personnel will complete a full inspection of all sites and outside plant documenting any abnormalities and required action needed dispatching resources immediately to resolve. Sites visits and utility drive-outs will take place daily after an event until the network integrity has been 100% stabilized and back to business as normal.
- Staff 1-14** Please describe any investments in emergency preparedness and response capabilities, such as backup power systems, redundant communication channels, or disaster recovery plans. Fixed diesel and natural gas generators on all aggregation sites, battery banks for commercial power transitions, weekly scheduled exercising and maintained quarterly. 4 to 6 hours of battery backup on all HFC (COAX) power supplies, tests and maintained yearly. Portable diesel and gasoline generators deployed as needed.
- Staff 1-15** Please provide a summary of any vegetation management program run by your utility to ensure adequate right of way clearance for your communications facilities. CenterPoint Energy generally maintains the overhead within our service areas. If

our network is compromised by vegetation, Astound will dispatch Aerial Construction to remove and dispose of all vegetation within the area(s) in question.

Staff 1-16 Has your utility conducted any studies that examine the costs and benefits of burying communications facilities in weather-volatile areas of the state? If so, please provide an executive summary from the most recent study. Currently we maintain 70% Aerial on Backbone/Long Haul with 30% underground, we do have multiple utility companies on these poles including CenterPoint Energy; All Customer Transport/Distribution is 100% underground.