

DOE IT Conference opening remarks  
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Michael S. HacsKaylo  
Administrator, Western Area Power Administration

Good morning! On behalf of the four power marketing administrations and my three fellow administrators, I'd like to welcome all of you to Denver for the Department of Energy's annual information technology conference. I understand the Power Marketing Administration Information Technology Alliance chief information officers chose Denver as the location for this conference, not because it's home to Western Area Power Administration, but because Tulsa, Oklahoma, where Southwestern Power Administration is headquartered, is just a short flight away, and Denver is halfway between Portland, Oregon—home to Bonneville Power Administration—and Elberton, Georgia—where Southeastern Power Administration is headquartered.

The Denver metro area also is home base for several DOE activities. These include the Rocky Flats Environmental Technology Center, the National Renewable Energy Laboratory, the Golden Field Office, and the Denver Regional Office. The variety of these organizations and our diverse missions testify to the broad reach of the Department's program responsibilities.

It may not seem like the Power Marketing Administrations have a lot in common with the labs or the former nuclear weapons complex or even the support offices, but we all use information technology and IT systems as vital tools to accomplish our specific parts of the DOE mission. It's true that the PMAs don't use supercomputers to model nuclear reactions or design high tech ways to clean up the waste from building weapons. But information technology is no less important to operating and maintaining the reliability and security of our nation's complex, interconnected, high voltage electric transmission system. And that's what the PMAs do.

Together, the PMAs—Bonneville, Southeastern, Southwestern and Western—sell an average of 154 billion kilowatthours of electricity every year. That power is generated at 131 Federally owned hydropower plants in 30 states. We serve, for the most part, 1,370

wholesale customers across more than  $\frac{3}{4}$  of our nation. They, in turn, serve millions of retail consumers across much of rural, small town America. The PMAs also own and operate a vast 33,500-mile complex of high voltage transmission lines used to deliver this electricity to the cities and towns, state and Federal agencies, rural electric cooperatives, public utility districts, Native American tribes and other customers who purchase our cost-based hydropower. Energy revenues amount to more than \$3 billion a year.

The PMAs use specialized, dedicated IT networks called supervisory control and data acquisition systems to control power grid and generator operations. We use sophisticated software to track and electronically tag tens of thousands of transactions for organizations wanting to move electricity across our transmission system.

Our staffs record power sales in complex power billing applications so that customers can reconcile how much power they bought from us, or sold to us, on an hourly basis. We import the financial sales data into enterprise resource systems so we can track our budgets and to ensure we are meeting our requirement to repay the Federal investment in power systems originally built using taxpayer dollars.

I know you have a packed agenda and will be hearing about a few of these and other specialized applications and how DOE employees are using technology and IT tools to improve government services. But before I close, I'd like to take just a moment to share with you one example of how the PMA IT community, working together, has found a way to do business better.

Last year, the PMA CIOs worked together to design a cybersecurity peer review process.

Their approach was particularly innovative and cost-effective, bringing together subject matter experts from the PMAs to do the review work on each other's complex mission critical control center operations. Since the subject matter experts were somewhat familiar with their sister agencies' operations, systems and facilities, the reviews were done quickly and with no disruption to real-time, 24-7 operations.

The reviews also allowed our staffs to build rapport among peers who don't often get to share ideas with one another, except in industrywide work groups. DOE's CIO and Inspector General also provided support and observed the cybersecurity peer audits to ensure they were independent and objective. And comparing this approach with using outside consultants to do these audits, the PMAs saved considerable dollars for our rate-payers. This issue of cost is very important to the PMAs, since all of our costs – both annual costs and capital costs – go into the rate base and are paid for by the power and transmission customers.

I know each of you is being challenged to find innovative, cost-effective solutions to complicated problems. I also know that working with your colleagues both within your organization and across the DOE complex, you'll be able to provide services that help the rest of us across the Department accomplish our missions.

On behalf of the PMAs and especially from those of us who are home-based around the mile high city, welcome to Denver. And while you're here, please take a moment to learn about your colleagues and what their challenges are. Just as electrical cables are stronger when they are woven together, so is the DOE IT community stronger when you join together to tackle the issues faced every day. This is the secret to achieving IT excellence in a changing world.

Thank you again for your time this morning, learn lots and enjoy our mile high atmosphere.