

# **Algoma Power Inc (API) – Major Event Day Report**

## **(November 27, 2019)**

### **Introduction**

An early winter storm descended upon the Algoma region on November 27<sup>th</sup>, bringing rain, heavy wet snow, freezing rain and winds gusting up to 78km/h. The most significant impact was experienced by the trees and power lines in the area being laden with heavy, wet snow. Although all regions within API's service territory felt the effect, the most affected area was east of Sault Ste Marie. The Goulais and Batchawana areas north of Sault Ste Marie did have some large scale outages as well.

### **Prior to the Major Event**

Did the distributor have any prior warning that the Major Event would occur?

The only warning regarding the potential that the Major Event would occur were weather forecasts that predicted the potential for winter storm-like effects. Environment Canada issued a generalized Special Weather Statement prior to the onset of the deteriorating conditions.

If the distributor did have prior warning, did the distributor arrange to have extra employees on duty or on standby prior to the Major Event beginning? If so, please give a brief description of arrangements.

Not Applicable (N/A)

If the distributor did have prior warning, did the distributor issue any media announcements to the public warning of possible outages resulting from the pending Major Event? If so, through what channels?

N/A

Did the distributor train its staff on the response plans for a Major Event? If so, please give a brief description of the training process.

API has a Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery Plan that is periodically updated and reviewed at the management level. This plan is designed to assist in the response to natural disasters, accidents, major outages, environmental disasters, municipal emergencies, and cyber-attacks. This plan is available to all staff both via API's corporate intranet, and hard copy. For major outages, this plan covers responsibilities

and procedures for all outage restoration and communication efforts, and consolidates contact information for internal staff and key external agencies.

The scope of the outage described in this report did not invoke API's Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery Plan.

*Did the distributor have third party mutual assistance agreements in place prior to the Major Event? If so, who were the third parties (i.e other distributors, private contractors)?*

API has service agreements in place with its affiliates, Canadian Niagara Power and Cornwall Electric. These agreements would allow for mobilization of resources between LDC's when warranted by the impact of any particular event or series of events. The geographic diversity of the three LDC's mitigates the risk that any single weather event or natural disaster would simultaneously affect all three areas. API has also worked in the past with neighbouring utilities such as Sault PUC, as well as private utility-based contractors, to provide and receive support during unique events.

### **During the Major Event**

*Please explain why this event was considered by the distributor to be a Major Event.*

API considered this a Major Event due the uncontrollable nature of the storm's intensity and the resulting substantial impact on API's network and customer base. The magnitude of the number of interruptions and significant response required confirmed API's perspective that this episode should be categorized as a Major Event.

*Was the IEEE Standard 1366 used to identify the scope of the Major Event? If not, why not?*

Yes – the IEEE Standard 1366 was applied to determine the scope and ensuing categorization of the incident as a Major Event.

*Please identify the Cause of Interruption for the Major Event as per the table in section 2.1.4.2.5.*

All interruptions associated with the event were coded as: Code 6 (Adverse Weather – wet snow), with one exception – a Code 1 (Scheduled Outage) event, which was a planned outage that occurred early in the morning of the Major Event Day, just prior to the onset of the impactful weather.

*Were there any declarations by government authorities, regulators or the grid operator of an emergency state of operation in relation to the Major Event?*

There were no declarations published.

When did the Major Event begin (date and time)?

The first interruption was reported @ 05:58 on November 27, 2019.

What percentage of on-call distributor staff was available at the start of the Major Event and utilized during the Major Event?

100% of the On-Call staff were available at the start, and utilized during the Major Event.

All available API Lines crews – as well as all API Forestry crews – were deployed for the restoration effort. Additionally, Supervisory and office/other staff were engaged to assist with the response and ongoing management of the event.

Did the distributor issue any estimated times of restoration (ETR) to the public during the Major Event? If so, through what channels?

API did not issue any ETR's during the Major Event.

If the distributor did issue ETRs, at what date and time did the distributor issue its first ETR to the public?

N/A

Did the distributor issue any updated ETRs to the public? If so, how many and at what dates and times were they issued?

N/A

Did the distributor inform customers about the options for contacting the distributor to receive more details about outage/restoration efforts? If so, please describe how this was achieved.

No information regarding options for contacting the distributor to obtain further details about outage/restoration efforts was presented to API customers during the Major Event. Customers were reminded about the toll-free contact number to be used in order to report power outages/trouble through Twitter, Facebook and media releases.

Did the distributor issue press releases, hold press conferences, or send information to customers through social media notifications? If so, how many times did the distributor issue press releases, hold press conferences or send information to customers through social media notifications? What was the general content of this information?

API posted 15 general updates (without ETR's) on the progress of its restoration efforts as well as safety messages, through the company Twitter feed, over the course of the Major Event Day and the following two days, as the effects of the storm lingered for several days. As well, 12 of the same style of updates were posted on the company Facebook page during the same timeframe. In addition, there was one media release on November 27<sup>th</sup> – giving a general update – published through local online sources. There were no press releases or press conferences.

What percentage of customer calls were dealt with by the distributor's IVR system (if available) versus a live representative?

API does not employ an IVR system. All calls are handled by live representatives as they became available.

Did the distributor provide information about the Major Event on its website? If so, how many times during the Major Event was the website updated?

API posted 15 general updates (without ETR's) on the progress of its restoration efforts, as well as safety messages, through the company Twitter feed. This feed is also published on the main page of the company website.

Was there any point in time when the website was inaccessible? If so, what percentage of the total outage time was the website inaccessible?

To API's knowledge, the website was accessible for the entire duration of the Major Event.

How many customers were interrupted during the Major Event? What percentage of the distributor's total customer base did the interrupted customers represent?

A total of 5440 customers were affected at some point by a power outage during the Major Event. This represents approximately 46.27% of API's total customer base.

How many hours did it take to restore 90% of the customers who were interrupted?

It took approximately 11 hours to restore 90% of the customers who were interrupted. For the outages affecting the remaining 10%, several had a duration longer than 24 hours.

Was any distributed generation used to supply load during the Major Event?

No distributed generation was employed during this Major Event.

Were there any outages associated with Loss of Supply during the Major Event? If so, please report on the duration and frequency of Loss of Supply outages.

There were no Loss of Supply outages experienced during this Major Event.

In responding to the Major Event, did the distributor utilize assistance through a third party mutual assistance agreement?

API did not utilize assistance through a third party mutual assistance agreement. All restoration efforts were carried out by API staff. A Forestry contractor already engaged in work for API had crews diverted to the restoration efforts.

Did the distributor run out of any needed equipment or materials during the Major Event? If so, please describe the shortages.

API did not run out of any needed equipment or materials throughout the Major Event.

## **After the Major Event**

What steps, if any, are being taken to be prepared for or mitigate such Major Events in the future (i.e. staff training, process improvements, system upgrades)?

As with previous Major Events, API will engage representatives from all departments through a meeting to de-brief on all aspects of the Major Event – including outage response, effective use of available resources and technological support.

What lessons did the distributor learn in responding to the Major Event that will be useful in responding to the next Major Event?

There were no specific lessons learned from the response to this Major Event, which would be applicable to a response to the next Major Event.

Did the distributor survey its customers after the Major Event to determine the customers' opinions of how effective the distributor was in responding to the Major Event? If so, please describe the results.

No survey was conducted by API to gauge customer opinion regarding the response to this Major Event.

There were several unsolicited examples of positive feedback communicated by appreciative customers, to thank API for their restoration efforts.

There was also one negative message received from a customer that was not happy with the leftover impact from Forestry restoration efforts performed on their property – this was addressed by API as soon as was feasible.