



February 12, 2018

## **Letter from the Board President - Annual Membership Meeting for 2018**

After several years of strategic planning and extensive discussions, the Board has reached unanimous agreement on important changes that will keep the organization at the leading edge of the energy industry. To put these changes into effect, the ballot is a little different this year, as we will both elect new Directors and vote to amend the Articles of Incorporation. I want to provide you with more information about both of these important parts of the ballot and what they mean for the organization.

First, the amendment will change the name to the “Energy Systems Integration Group” and expand the purpose to “... *educate the global energy sector and public about various energy systems and energy-related technologies and to promote the practical, economic, reliable and sustainable development and use of those technologies.*”

Let me say a few words about the change from “Utility Variable-Generation” to “Energy Systems” in the name. Utilities will remain core to our organization, our mission and our governance. Our utility members see that their role is evolving and broadening, with many utilities now preferring to be called energy companies, and other types of energy companies are also emerging and engaging in our discussions.

Our work on integrating wind and solar energy will also continue. This has always been a core part of our purpose and mission, but integration questions are also evolving and broadening. Our members have made huge strides on integrating and operating wind and solar power plants. Today’s questions are more about how to plan and operate the system as a whole, and increasingly about coordinating electricity, natural gas, transportation, distributed resources and other energy-related aspects in our engineering landscape. The “integration of energy systems” is appropriate for what we do, and the emerging research field of “energy systems integration” will provide a framework for what we will care about in the future, so this new name will be appropriate for many years to come.

Second, as amended, there will be a single class of “Regular Member” that includes all types of organizations. The “Utility Wind Interest Group” was originally incorporated with separate classes of members for investor-owned members, public power members and rural cooperative members. Additional classes were later added for transmission system operators and related corporations. As noted above, the Board realized that all of these members are energy organizations, the roles and types of energy organizations are becoming increasingly diverse, and working through the future technical and engineering challenges will require us to engage with all types of energy organizations. Providing a place where technically-oriented folks can openly discuss things based on engineering experience and technical principles, often in a way that is more difficult to do in other formal policy, regulatory or stakeholder settings, is an important aspect of what we do.



## Utility Variable-Generation Integration Group

*Charting the Future of Wind and Solar Power Integration and Operations*

Simplifying the Articles to have a single class of Regular Member will both remove complexity and create parity between all participants in our discussions.

This change has several other advantages. First, because all members are equal, a common set of categories and a unified dues structure will apply to all organizations. Rather than one set of categories and dues for utility members and another for corporate members, all members are now “energy organizations” on a uniform basis. The dues structure is based solely on the size of the organization in terms of its annual budget or revenues. Some organizations may see a small increase or decrease in their 2019 annual dues because of the merging of the categories, but this was designed as a revenue-neutral change overall. We do not anticipate any net increase in the revenue from this simplification of the dues structure, and we will work with you if you have concerns.

Another advantage is that the single class of members also provides more flexible on the board, allowing us to recruit the range of experience and skills that are valuable for a vibrant organization. As you can see from the slate of nominees for board seats this year, we plan to bring expertise to the board from a wide range of skills and background, including those with expertise in utility, RTO/ISO, corporate, OEM, consulting, academia, research, public policy, corporate sustainability, board governance, organizational funding, and membership issues.

The Board will be focused more clearly on the governance and operations of the Energy Systems Integration Group, and we are creating a new Advisory Council to focus on our collaborative and educational mission. I am a huge believer in the value of collaboration, and I would like to see closer relationships and cooperation with other organizations and the joint development of our complementary missions. The Advisory Council will include members from our utility associations (including EEI, APPA and NRECA), DOE and the national labs, NERC, academia, engineering associations (including IEEE and others), regulatory organizations, international organizations, and other partner groups.

The ballot is posted with this letter and you can vote via email to [info@uvig.org](mailto:info@uvig.org) prior to the Annual Meeting or by paper ballot at the Annual Meeting itself. Please remember that membership in UVIG is by organization (with one vote per member organization).

Please contact me with any questions. Your vote is important, and please use it to join me in creating the Energy Systems Integration Group.

Sincerely,

Mark Ahlstrom  
President of the Board  
[Mark.Ahlstrom@windlogics.com](mailto:Mark.Ahlstrom@windlogics.com)