

Press Release

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UL Solutions and MESA Standards Alliance Launch Testing and Certification Service to Help Standardize Distributed Energy Communications

The new service helps speed the deployment of many different types of renewable energy and energy storage equipment by helping to assure that new distributed energy systems can easily integrate into utility systems.

San Francisco, CA – Feb. 14, 2023 – UL Solutions, a global leader in applied safety science, and the Modular Energy System Architecture (MESA) Standards Alliance, a leader in standardizing communications between utility systems and distributed energy resources (DER), announced an alliance to provide testing and certification of the MESA-DER profile. This profile is proposed to be incorporated into the IEEE P1815.2 standard, Standard Profile for Communications with Distributed Energy Resources, using IEEE 1815, Standard for Electric Power Systems Communications – Distributed Network Protocol (DNP3). Utilities in the U.S. commonly utilize DNP3, a set of communications protocols used between components in process automation systems, for their Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition System (SCADA). The MESA-DER profile organizes DER data in a standard structure to allow many types of distributed energy installations to be easily integrated and understood by utility SCADA systems. Electric utilities or aggregators can utilize MESA-DER to significantly lower their integration and implementation costs for large energy storage systems, microgrids, solar inverter power plants and other grid-scale DER.

“The MESA Standards Alliance has worked toward creating open, non-proprietary specifications and information models that utilities, DER developers and manufacturers alike can use to achieve interoperability for distributed energy. This milestone represents a significant step toward providing certainty to utilities that their projects can be integrated into their transmission and distribution systems efficiently. I encourage utilities across the country to take steps to ensure that their vendors are MESA-certified,” said Scott Gibson of Snohomish County Public Utility District, chair of the MESA Board of Directors.

“Duke Energy has long been a leader in deploying DER across our service area to lower costs and provide more reliability for our customers,” said Tom Fenimore, director of Smart Grid and Emerging Technologies at Duke Energy. “As the energy storage and DER industry take off and the number of component vendors proliferates, it is essential to have standardized communication protocols. The MESA-UL Solutions testing and certification program will be integral to confirming that the communication architecture for distributed energy systems is standardized.”

Michael Slowinske, director of principal engineering in the Energy and Industrial Automation group at UL Solutions, noted that the new testing and certification service could help advance the goal of reducing carbon emissions. “UL Solutions is helping clients to tackle a major challenge for the energy industry by providing testing and certification services that will help distributed energy products move toward integration into the grid more safely and efficiently,” Slowinske said. “Our testing and certification services are a key enabler for a safer smart grid and will help speed the adoption of clean energy resources, which can significantly contribute to meeting carbon emission reduction goals.”

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About UL Solutions

A global leader in applied safety science, UL Solutions transforms safety, security and sustainability challenges into opportunities for customers in more than 100 countries. UL Solutions delivers testing, inspection and certification services, together with software products and advisory offerings, that support our customers' product innovation and business growth. The UL Certification Marks serve as a recognized symbol of trust in our customers' products and reflect an unwavering commitment to advancing our safety mission. We help our customers innovate, launch new products and services, navigate global markets and complex supply chains, and grow sustainably and responsibly into the future. Our science is your advantage.

About the MESA Standards Alliance

The MESA Standards Alliance is an industry association comprised of electric utilities and technology suppliers whose mission is to accelerate the growth of distributed energy resources and energy storage through the development of open and non-proprietary communication specifications. Members include a growing list of leading utilities and distributed energy and storage solution providers who work together to build interoperability into their respective products and ensure they are architected for grid system integration. More information: www.MESAStandards.org.