

## **Vegetation Management Program Annual Audit 2023**

### **VM Line Clearance**

1. Is the VM program effective at ensuring vegetation meets required clearance specifications?

BVES has various routine QC inspections, which includes monthly inspections of completed work, weekly assigned inspections through Kintone, and specialized patrols like LiDAR drone flights. All contribute to ensuring vegetation meets required clearance specifications.

2. Is the VM program on track with the programmed schedule?

In addition to adhering to the programmed schedule of the VM program's routine cycle, call outs for danger trees, and cycle buster vegetation was also mitigated.

3. Is the VM program effective in reducing contact with bare wire conductors?

The various inspections in place are effective in reducing contact with bare wire conductors. Any discrepancies found were documented, assigned, and mitigated.

4. Are any changes to the VM clearance standards delineated in Section 3 necessary?

No changes to the VM clearance standards in Section 3 are necessary at this time, however the clearance standards delineated in Section 3 must be achieved and maintained in order to have a successful VM program.

5. Is the VM clearance contractor(s) executing work in accordance with the VM contract(s)?

The VM clearance contractor, Mowbray's Tree Service does execute work in accordance with the VM contract. Which includes, a safe work environment free of incidents/accidents, traffic control, preplanning, notification, and execution of the work assigned. The majority of discrepancies are minor and mitigated in a timely manner.

6. Are changes to the VM Contract Scope of Work needed?

No changes to the VM Contract Scope of Work is needed at this time. Clearance standards must be achieved and maintained in order to have a successful program.

## **VM Inspections**

1. Are VM inspections (patrol, detailed, LiDAR, etc.) being conducted in accordance with the Company's effective Wildfire Mitigation Plan?

The VM inspections include detailed inspections of overhead conductors and equipment, ground patrols, LiDAR inspections with a secondary ground verification are conducted in accordance with the Company's Wildfire Mitigation Plan.

2. Are the results of VM inspections being documented, tracked, and resolved in a timely manner in accordance with GEO-95 Rule 18?

When a safety hazard is identified during an inspection it is documented. Depending on the Level of priority it is tracked and monitored for future mitigation adhering to GO-95 Rule 18 A. (2). The challenge is the significant number of dead, dying, diseased trees within the service area and how they should be prioritized for mitigation.

3. For each type of inspection performed, assess whether or not the inspection is effective and useful to assisting in achieving the VM program objectives?

Ground inspections are effective in obtaining a 360 degree assessment of vegetation and to identify and document any safety hazards and report any findings. LiDAR inspections are accurate and assist in collecting data on equipment and detect Level 1 & 2 clearances. Ground verification of LiDAR proved to be effective as well.

4. Should additional inspections be performed?

The frequency and various types of inspections performed have proven to be effective this year.

5. Is the scheduling of inspections appropriate or should the schedule be modified?

The scheduling of inspections is appropriate and requires no modification at this time.

## **VM QC Checks**

1. Are VM QC Checks being performed in accordance with the requirements of this policy and procedure (Section 5.3)?

The VM QC Checks being performed go above the requirements of the policy and procedure. The frequency of checks allows for discrepancies to be mitigated in a timely manner.

2. Are personnel performing VM QC Checks sufficiently knowledgeable and qualified to perform the checks?

VM QC Checks are performed by qualified personnel who are sufficiently knowledgeable in overhead electric facilities and associated equipment, vegetation growth rates, species, and understand California's laws and regulations.

3. Are VM QC Checks documented?

All VM QC Checks are documented in digital form, either through Kintone or an issued spreadsheet of monthly completed work performed by the VM line clearance contractor.

4. Are discrepancies identified in VM QC Checks being tracked and resolved in a timely manner in accordance with GO-95 Rule 18?

If any discrepancies are identified in the VM QC Checks they are documented and tracked through Kintone or the issued monthly Completed Work spreadsheet. Discrepancies are mitigated in accordance with GO-95 Rule 18.

5. Are VM QC Checks effective at identifying vegetation clearance issues?

Several factors, such as above average rainfall, fast growing species, customer refusal, and not achieving proper clearance, all can contribute to vegetation clearance issues. VM QC Checks are effective at identifying any clearance issues.

6. Should modifications to Appendix B VM QC Check Instructions be made?

No modifications to Appendix B VM QC Check Instructions are recommended at this time.

### **VM Quarterly Reports**

1. Are the VM Quarterly Reports being conducted per Section 4.1.24?

All VM Quarterly Reports are being conducted per Section 4.1.24 of BVES's Policy and procedures.

2. Are the VM Quarterly Reports useful in providing management an assessment of the VM program?

The VM Quarterly Reports are useful in providing management an assessment of the VM program by involving a description of work performed (number of trims, removals), amount of miles cleared, accidents/incidents, budget, number of QC audits conducted, by who, dates of the QC, and significant findings.

3. Should changes be made to the content and/or periodicity of the VM Quarterly Report?

No recommendations for changes to the content and/or periodicity of the VM Quarterly Report at this time.

## **VM Program**

1. Overall, were the Company's VM Program objectives achieved?

The VM program reached all of its WMP goals. Zero vegetation caused outages since February 2023, all work completed on schedule with no incidents/accidents reported, all minor issues found on QC checks mitigated timely and all within budget.

2. Are changes recommended to the VM Program Policy and Procedures?

No changes to the VM Program Policy and Procedures are recommended at this time.

3. Are changes in the Company's execution of its VM Program warranted?

I would like to express one recommendation for improvement in 2024. I believe a more aggressive approach on removals focusing on problem vegetation will help the VM Program become more proactive and will also reduce call outs.

Audit conducted by area Forester Brenda Steinert

