

Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Advisory Committee, *Charter IV*, Recommendation Fact Sheet

Recommendation #11 [Approved May 10, 2018]:

We recommend that the U.S. Department of Commerce host a series of webinars as “virtual trade missions” to enhance exports of U.S. renewable energy, energy efficiency, demand management, and energy storage products and services (“RE&EE products & services”) that address rapidly emerging grid needs.

Sub-Committee: Market Access

Background Information:

Energy grids worldwide are undergoing unprecedented change at a rapid pace. A host of new generation technologies are being deployed at scale, predominantly RE&EE products & services. At the same time, energy customers that historically served only as energy consumers are becoming energy producers as well through deployment of distributed energy resources (generally RE&EE products & services). While the majority of these changes are positive, they can pose significant challenges for grid reliability and energy costs.

The United States has been exceptionally successful in deploying and integrating RE&EE products & services while maintaining grid reliability and low energy costs. This success has garnered worldwide acclaim. However, the individual U.S. companies that contributed to this success are not widely known internationally. Markets for RE&EE products & services are among the fastest growing in the world. Enhancing Commerce Department marketing efforts through virtual missions would help U.S. companies achieve global market shares proportionate to their technological leadership and accomplishments.

“Virtual trade missions” can offer focused information exchanges, including opportunities to follow up on conventional trade missions by providing in-depth, interactive discussions on topics raised during in-person trade mission meetings. These webinars can also enable export-building discussions between U.S. experts who could not personally attend missions and their counterparts working with potential buyers in target countries. The virtual missions should focus on priority regions to coordinate with physical missions, better tailor content and agenda to the needs of audiences and to minimize time zone and other logistical complications.

Virtual missions can help open priority global markets to U.S. RE&EE products & services in several key ways:

- Link U.S. RE&EE products & services to the overall U.S success in adopting and integrating these technologies
- Firmly establishing U.S. companies as the leaders and most desirable providers of RE&EE products & services
- Enable interactive, in-depth technical discussions between experts that build on the more general introductory discussions typical of in-person trade mission meetings
- Building relationships between U.S. RE&EE experts and counterparts in foreign energy utilities and governmental entities, at low cost and with minimal resource investment
- Highlight successful examples of RE&EE product & service deployment, educating potential purchasers and demonstrating the expertise of U.S. companies.

The first of these webinars can build on the recent U.S. Commerce Department Smart Grid and Storage Mission to India (March 2018), which raised numerous detailed questions regarding energy storage technologies, deployment strategies and “use cases,” interaction with other grid elements, and economics. Other webinars would profitably target Africa, Southeast Asia, and South America.

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Expected Impact on Export Competitiveness:

Expanded markets globally for U.S. RE&EE energy products and services that increase energy supply while enhancing reliability and controlling costs. Establishing U.S. companies as leaders and the most desirable providers of the products and services needed for rapidly evolving energy supplies.

Specific Agencies Responsible for Implementation: U.S. Department of Commerce

Metric to Track Success:

U.S. Department of Commerce would assess participation in the webinars, field follow-up inquiries, and monitor increased exports of U.S. RE&EE products & services highlighted in the webinars.