

# INTERNATIONAL STANDARD

# NORME INTERNATIONALE



**Communication networks and systems for power utility automation –  
Part 7-420: Basic communication structure – Distributed energy resources  
logical nodes**

**Réseaux et systèmes de communication pour l'automatisation des systèmes  
électriques –  
Partie 7-420: Structure de communication de base – Nœuds logiques de  
ressources énergétiques distribuées**



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## INTERNATIONAL ELECTROTECHNICAL COMMISSION

**COMMUNICATION NETWORKS AND  
SYSTEMS FOR POWER UTILITY AUTOMATION –**

**Part 7-420: Basic communication structure –  
Distributed energy resources logical nodes**

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## INTRODUCTION

Increasing numbers of DER (distributed energy resources) systems are being interconnected to electric power systems throughout the world. As DER technology evolves and as the impact of dispersed generation on distribution power systems becomes a growing challenge - and opportunity, nations worldwide are recognizing the economic, social, and environmental benefits of integrating DER technology within their electric infrastructure.

The manufacturers of DER devices are facing the age-old issues of what communication standards and protocols to provide to their customers for monitoring and controlling DER devices, in particular when they are interconnected with the electric utility system. In the past, DER manufacturers developed their own proprietary communication technology. However, as utilities, aggregators, and other energy service providers start to manage DER devices which are interconnected with the utility power system, they are finding that coping with these different communication technologies present major technical difficulties, implementation costs, and maintenance costs. Therefore, utilities and DER manufacturers recognize the growing need to have one international standard that defines the communication and control interfaces for all DER devices. Such standards, along with associated guidelines and uniform procedures would simplify implementation, reduce installation costs, reduce maintenance costs, and improve reliability of power system operations.

The logical nodes in this document are intended for use with DER, but may also be applicable to central-station generation installations that are comprised of groupings of multiple units of the same types of energy conversion systems that are represented by the DER logical nodes in this document. This applicability to central-station generation is strongest for photovoltaics and fuel cells, due to their modular nature.

Communications for DER plants involve not only local communications between DER units and the plant management system, but also between the DER plant and the operators or aggregators who manage the DER plant as a virtual source of energy and/or ancillary services. This is illustrated in Figure 1.