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To the CTOTF User Group:

There is an old adage, “be careful what you ask for, you may get it.” The same can be said for our combustion turbine generation fleet which; with the availability of low-cost fuel, increasing regulation on solid-fuels, and the increasing presence of renewables, is rapidly transitioning to a generation workhorse - with likely more to come. Combined cycle capacity factors of seventy plus percent, once infrequent, are now not only increasingly commonplace but often in the 90% range. Peaking units, often idle except for the coldest or hottest of days, are now increasingly used for daily peaks and system regulation.

With this transition, everything changes - capital project economics, outage schedules and duration, spare part inventories, parts' repair cycles, outage staffing availability, material modifications, repair shop facilities, cost (value) of trips and unplanned outages, even crane availability, and of course budgets. The list of impacts is as broad and unique as is the list of our companies and our specific generation assets. Faced with new challenges, the value of user associations that can offer immediate response to both technical and business questions is higher than ever; a dilemma exacerbated by the on-going retirement of experienced staff causing remaining staff to be spread even thinner across an increasingly broader and more complex work scope. As this technical needs ever intensifies, once again, enter CTOTF.

Anticipating the retirement of technical staff and expansion of the combustion turbine industry in terms of number of units, models, and actual generation resource utilization, CTOTF undertook a proactive expansion several years ago to include the entire generation facility - both simple and combined cycle systems - within both its roundtable and on-line bulletin board discussions. Taking the initiative one step further, additional roundtables regarding industry issues as well as general operations, maintenance and business practices were added and have proved to be of significant and increasingly unique value as the complexity of decisions increases. The latest expansion, undertaken in 2011 and continuing in 2012, reflects the concept of common technologies, systems, and components that exist at all plants with CTOTF serving as the individual user's “*extended technical services department*”. Undertaken within the collective wisdom of the CTOTF Leadership Committee,

this initiative has proved to be of profound value that greatly simplifies the perceived complexities of generation fleets comprised of multiple models. The agenda of our Spring Forum to be held at historic Williamsburg will continue to build upon this generic plant concept while continuing to address the specifics of individual engines and related equipment.

Also included in the Forum's agenda are additional CT Tech courses, the terrific Vendor Fair, and the *Combined Cycle Journal's* "Best Practices" awards featuring winner presentations. Our newly updated CTOTF web-site includes the current agenda as well as additional information regarding the history of CTOTF and how to gain access to the presentation library and active communications bulletin board.

The combustion turbine industry is entering yet another era of growth and a greatly expanded, but somewhat unexplored, primary role in preserving the reliability of the electrical grid. While an exciting role, it's also one that demands more of both our equipment and staff resources. CTOTF is a resource that you can't do without. As such, I hope to see both familiar and new faces at Williamsburg as we continue the proven path of achievement through collective contribution and effective coordination.

My very best regards,
Bob
Chairman, CTOTF