

KIUC Provides Update on Generation

Līhu'e, Kaua'i, HI – 07/22/2019 – Kaua'i Island Utility Cooperative has identified the cause of the failure of the Kapaia generating unit, which tripped off-line on Sunday, and estimates it will be back in service by the end of this week.

The 27.5 megawatt combustion turbine, the largest unit in KIUC's generation fleet, suffered a cable failure, causing a fault and an arc flash in the internal 13.8kv bus bars for the generator breaker. After fault, the generator breaker tripped open. This resulted in a cascading effect on other generation sources and caused a 2.5 hour island wide outage that was resolved around 5:00 p.m. yesterday.

Although power was restored and grid operations were maintained during Sunday's evening peak usage period, rolling blackouts were necessary late in the evening and throughout the day today. Contributing to the shortage of generation were three units at the Port Allen Generating Station that were already out of service for either repair or scheduled maintenance.

"We've made good progress today in returning one of our Port Allen diesel generators back into service, and the Green Energy Team biomass plant is now capable of operating up to full capacity," said KIUC's President and Chief Executive Officer, David Bissell. Another Port Allen Generator, the island's third largest unit, is expected to be repaired tomorrow once parts arrive from the mainland.

KIUC members responded today by reducing energy usage. Rolling blackouts were utilized throughout the day with most members experiencing a 30 minute outage every three to four hours.

"The lack of sun today was a real challenge, as we had virtually no production from our large solar facilities," said Bissell. "On top of that, we have increased demand from residential and commercial rooftop solar customers whose systems aren't producing."

KIUC will continue rolling blackouts this evening until 11:00 p.m., and possibly tomorrow morning depending on weather conditions. Members can expect to have at least four hours of power this evening, followed by an outage of no more than 30 minutes.

Members are encouraged to conserve energy. Limiting use of heavy appliances such as stoves, washers and dryers during peak times would be especially helpful. Air conditioners should be set to higher temperatures or turned off.

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It is likely that the need for rolling blackouts will not extend past tomorrow. However, logistic or mechanical issues combined with continued expected cloudy weather could cause an extension of the blackouts.

“We appreciate our members’ cooperation and continued patience,” stated Bissell. “Our crews are working hard to bring our generation units back on line safely and quickly.”

The public is encouraged to follow KIUC’s Facebook page for the latest information:
<https://www.facebook.com/KauaiCoop/>

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Workers at the Kapaia Power Station inspect damage from Sunday’s trip event



A damaged cable caused the fault that led to the island wide outage on Sunday, July 21