

I2T Innovation Summit

July 17, 2018

### **Welcoming speech**

Good morning and welcome to I2T Summit. At WAPA Inclusion and Innovation are reflected in our core values: “Be curious, learn more, do better. Repeat.” The Summit highlights the exceptional creativity and problem solving skills of our employees who strive to increase efficiency and effectiveness across the workplace and improve the quality of our service to customers. Today we celebrate a culture of innovation at WAPA and recognize employees who challenge the status quo every day and continually search for ways to do their job better, upholding our commitment to organizational excellence.

At WAPA we firmly believe that everyone has the opportunity to turn on an innovation mindset. Whether you are in the office or out in the field, an engineer or attorney, an extrovert or introvert, a left or right brain thinker. We all have the capacity to innovate. When you tap into diverse mindsets, skills and experience and weave that into an inclusive work culture, you unlock the power of innovation and the potential of our talented workforce.

A large number of home-grown innovations have been implemented to create a safer work environment, reduce operational costs and provide greater value to our customers. Rocky Mountain linemen created the Burb-o-lifter tool to help crews easily and safely lift overhead static wire. Desert Southwest employees developed a virtual video system to view system conditions without going out into the field. A cross-functional team developed a WAPA-wide approach to automate the collection of dissolved gases and measure the health of transformers.

Now you may think that pairing government and innovation is an oxymoron – a statement that seems to say two opposite things. However, these are changing times and government organizations need to respond promptly with new methods and mindsets to meet the regulations, expectations and technological advancements we face today. Our insights, our experience and our responsibility to our employees, customers and industry place us in a critical position, particularly with utilities who do not face the same legislative and regulatory pressures as we do. On August 21 we will share our innovations and insights with WAPA leaders, utility executives and subject matter experts at the WAPA Technology and Security Symposium being held at HQ.

I cannot emphasize it enough that there is exceptional value to supporting innovation. It is critical to our success and integral to our reputation as an industry thought leader in powering the energy frontier. Engaging our customers, our employees and our industry pays huge dividends, resulting in improved operations, enduring financial support and lower costs. When we innovate, we solidify our role and our value to the industry, creating greater benefits to the customers we serve.

We strive to provide greater value in everything we do. Committed employees have helped us avoid or save more than \$55 million in costs; satisfied customers bring us ongoing financial and program support; and through collaboration with industry stakeholders we adopt leading practices, maintain critical partnerships and turn today's challenges into tomorrow's leading practices.

When we share information with industry, we stimulate beneficial technology transfer between WAPA and our stakeholders. In fact, many of the technological advancements being pursued by our customers and federal partners were proposed and recognized at previous I2T events.

Whether it is markets, new technologies, cyber threats, distributed and renewable energy resources, AI or any one of the host of developments and pressures on the industry, we become stronger when we work together. Through support and involvement in events like I2T, WAPA will continue to be recognized as a leader in innovation and a key player to ensure our industry remains relevant and vital to the future energy needs of the West.

Thank you for your attendance and participation. I am sure you will enjoy today's I2T Summit experience and leave here inspired by our culture of innovation, proud of our employees' achievements and challenged to create better solutions.