
Editorial

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Electrical power distribution systems are experiencing a deep restructuring process worldwide. The number of generators directly connected to these systems has considerably increased. These generators are classified as distributed generators. The interest in the usage of distributed generators has increased owing to technological advances, governmental incentives, concerns about environmental impacts, increase in demand and the need for primary energy sources diversification. However, the connections of these generators directly to medium voltage networks lead to many technical challenges. For example, islanding detection capability is an essential requirement for connecting these generators properly. Islanding occurs when a portion of the distribution system becomes electrically isolated from the rest of the power system, yet continues to be energised by distributed generators connected to the isolated subsystem.

Various technical interconnection guides recommend that immediately after an islanding situation, all the distributed generators must be automatically disconnected from the distribution system and remain disconnected until the normal grid supply is restored. Such action is necessary to avoid damage to loads and generators, as well as to guarantee personal safety. The coordination and selectivity of the protection system must also be evaluated in the presence of distributed generators, since the power and current flows are no longer unidirectional.

Another challenging aspect is the steady-state voltage control in distribution systems with distributed generators, because these generators may interfere with the typical network controllers. Historically, power distribution engineers had not been concerned about stability issues because of the passive behaviour of medium voltage networks. However, this is no longer a reality, and angle and voltage stability issues must be analysed.

The objective of this special issue is to provide a means for the publication and interchange of information, on an international basis, on control and protection of distribution systems with high penetration level of distributed generation.