



## **LinkGuard™ cybersecurity solution selected for testing by DOE NREL for the energy sector**

**January 2023, Chantilly, VA.** The National Renewable Energy Lab (NREL) of the US Department of Energy (DOE) has selected Blue Ridge Networks' LinkGuard cybersecurity solution to be tested in their Clean Energy Cyber Accelerator (CECA) Cohort 1 cyber accelerator range. LinkGuard was one of three companies selected from numerous applicants for this evaluation. Several prominent energy and electrical utility companies have provided funding for this initiative and will observe LinkGuard performance throughout the testing period.

The purpose of this testing is to evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of LinkGuard to protect operational technology (OT) network infrastructure for the energy sector, particularly with respect to its unique authentication methodologies. LinkGuard "cyber-cloaks" protected network operations eliminating risk of external discovery and data exfiltration by bad actors. It operates independently and autonomously with no outside third-party dependencies and is adaptable for both private and public network implementations. It easily "overlays" legacy OT systems to deliver secure OT/IT interoperability with no integration or configuration complexity and negligible operational or sustainment overhead. It is protocol agnostic with respect to communications media and does not require any IP address changes to implement its self-contained Zero Trust Breach Prevention protection. LinkGuard works over any Wide Area Network (WAN) medium available including Wifi, cellular, and satellite (with multiple hops) and is robust enough to handle even low bandwidth connections.

LinkGuard effectiveness will be evaluated utilizing an NREL test network that includes a Primary SCADA Control Center network, an Enterprise network, several Substation networks, a Remote Management network, and an External Attacker network. Network traffic support will be validated for Distributed Network Protocol 3, Lightweight Directory Access Protocol, Remote Desktop Protocol, File Transfer Protocol, Telnet Protocol, and Network Time Protocol. All endpoints will be interconnected via a dedicated WAN. LinkGuard protection effectiveness will be evaluated for many different simulated cybersecurity attacks and exfiltration attempts. These tests will include evaluation of privilege escalation, evasion, lateral movement, collection, inhibit response function, impair process control, and manipulation of process control functionality. The testing is expected to take about 3 months to complete.

Further information regarding this initiative is available in the DOE press release:

<https://www.nrel.gov/news/press/2022/press-release-first-clean-energy-cybersecurity-accelerator-participants-begin-technical-assessment.html>

See [www.blueridgenetworks.com](http://www.blueridgenetworks.com) or call Blue Ridge Networks at 1-800-722-1168 for more information on LinkGuard Zero Trust Breach Prevention protection for your OT network.