POWERING THE FUTURE

Battery Energy Storage Systems:

Understanding Key Concepts and Applications

White paper by
Hassan Obeid

Figure-1: Cummins 1MW/1MWh BESS Solution

Abstract

Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) have emerged as a pivotal technology in modern energy management, offering a solution to the intermittent nature of renewable energy sources and enhancing grid stability. This paper provides a comprehensive overview of BESS, detailing their advantages, applications, and critical parameters to monitor for optimal performance. Additionally, it explains key concepts such as C-rate and the distinction between kilowatts (kW) and kilowatt-hours (kWh), fundamental to understanding battery operation and capacity.

With the global shift towards renewable energy sources, the need for reliable energy storage has become more pronounced. BESS play a crucial role in addressing this need by storing excess energy generated during periods of low demand and releasing it during peak demand periods. This capability not only enhances the efficiency of energy use but also contributes to the stability and reliability of the power grid.

Advantages of Battery Energy Storage Systems

BESS offer a multitude of advantages that enhance the efficiency, reliability, and economic viability of modern energy grids. These systems play a critical role in managing the complexities associated with integrating renewable energy sources, maintaining grid stability, and providing backup power during outages. Below are some key benefits of BESS, highlighting their impact on various aspects of energy management:

GRID STABILIZATION

BESS can provide immediate response to grid disturbances, helping to maintain voltage and frequency stability. This is particularly important in grids with a high penetration of intermittent renewable energy sources such as wind and solar power.

ENERGY ARBITRAGE

Energy arbitrage involves storing energy when it is cheap and plentiful (typically during off-peak hours) and selling it back to the grid when prices are higher (during peak demand). This can lead to significant cost savings and improved economic returns for energy providers.

RENEWABLE INTEGRATION

BESS facilitate the integration of renewable energy sources by smoothing out the variability in power generation. They can store excess energy during sunny or windy periods and release it when production is low, ensuring a constant supply of renewable energy.

BACKUP POWER

In the event of a grid outage, BESS can provide a reliable source of backup power. This is critical for critical infrastructure such as hospitals, data centers, and military installations where uninterrupted power supply is essential.

PEAK SHAVING

By discharging during peak demand periods, BESS can reduce the load on the grid, thereby lowering electricity costs for consumers and reducing the need for utilities to invest in additional generation capacity. See Figure 2.

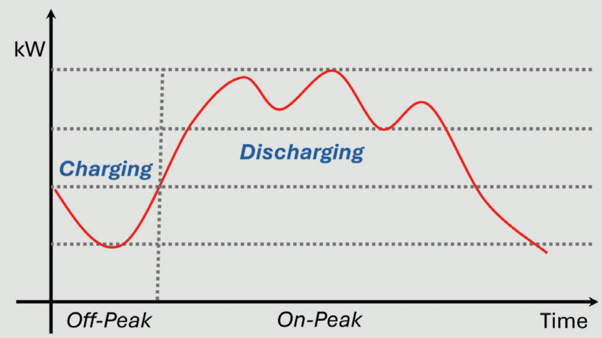


Figure-2: Energy Storage Systems for Peak Shaving

FREQUENCY REGULATION

Frequency regulation involves the continuous second-by-second adjustment of power to maintain the system frequency at the nominal value (50 or 60 Hz) and ensure grid stability. If demand exceeds supply, the system frequency drops, leading to potential brownouts and blackouts. Conversely, if utilities generate more power than needed, the system frequency rises, which can damage connected electrical devices. BESS can deliver regulating power with sub-second response times, making them highly valuable for grid-balancing purposes.

Applications of Battery Energy Storage Systems

BESS have versatile applications across various sectors, providing significant benefits from individual households to large-scale utility operations. These systems enhance energy efficiency, improve power quality, and support the integration of renewable energy sources. By addressing specific energy needs and challenges, BESS contribute to a more resilient and sustainable energy infrastructure. Below are key applications of BESS, illustrating their impact and utility across different contexts:

- **Residential:** Residential BESS systems allow homeowners to store energy generated from rooftop solar panels, reducing dependence on the grid and lowering electricity bills. They also provide backup power during outages.
- **Commercial and Industrial:** In commercial and industrial settings, BESS can be used for demand charge management, reducing peak load charges, and improving power quality. They also enhance energy security by providing backup power.
- **Utility-Scale:** Utility-scale BESS are deployed by energy providers to balance supply and demand, support grid stability, and integrate renewable energy sources on a large scale. They are critical in grid-scale energy storage solutions.
- **Microgrids:** BESS are integral to microgrids, which are localized grids that can disconnect from the traditional grid to operate autonomously. This is particularly useful in remote areas and for critical infrastructure.
- **Off-Grid:** BESS are increasingly vital for off-grid applications, providing reliable and sustainable energy solutions in remote areas. These systems store excess energy generated from renewable sources like solar and wind, ensuring a steady power supply even when generation is intermittent. BESS in off-grid applications reduces reliance on fossil fuels and mitigates the environmental impact of traditional generators.
- **Transmission/Distribution System Deferral:** The electrical grid's transmission and distribution infrastructure must be designed to accommodate peak demand, which often only occurs for three to four hours a dozen times or so annually. When expected growth in peak electricity demand surpasses the existing grid's capacity, significant investments are required to upgrade equipment and develop new infrastructure. This need is particularly urgent with the increasing construction of EV charging stations, which necessitates substantial enhancements to the electrical grid to handle the additional load. Deploying BESS can mitigate or even eliminate the need for these costly grid investments by addressing peak demand with stored energy. This approach reduces congestion and enhances the overall utilization of transmission and distribution assets.

Key components of Battery Energy Storage Systems:

BESS are complex assemblies of various components that work in unison to store and deliver electrical energy efficiently and safely. Each component plays a critical role in the overall functionality and performance of the system. Understanding these key components is essential for grasping how BESS operates and the various benefits they provide. Below is a description of the primary components that constitute a BESS:

1. BATTERY CELLS/MODULES/RACKS:

The core of a BESS, battery cells are the fundamental units where energy is stored electrochemically. Cells are grouped into modules for easier handling and management. Multiple modules are then assembled into racks for a more structured and efficient configuration (see Figures-3.1 to 3.3). Common types include Lithium-ion, Lead-acid, Nickel-Cadmium, and newer technologies such as solid-state batteries.

Batteries come in various form factors, each with unique characteristics, advantages, and disadvantages. The three common form factors are: cylindrical, prismatic, and pouch.

2. BATTERY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (BMS):

A critical component that monitors and manages the performance of the battery cells. The BMS operates at three hierarchical levels: cell level, module level, and rack level. Each level plays a crucial role in monitoring, controlling, and ensuring the safety and efficiency of the entire battery system. By effectively managing these three levels, the BMS ensures the safe, reliable, and efficient operation of the BESS, maximizing its performance and lifespan.

CELL LEVEL:

At the cell level, the BMS focuses on individual battery cells. Key responsibilities include:

- **Voltage Monitoring:** Continuously measuring the voltage of each cell to ensure it stays within safe operating limits.
- **Temperature Monitoring:** Tracking the temperature of each cell to prevent overheating and thermal runaway.
- **Balancing:** Ensuring uniform charge and discharge rates across all cells to maximize performance and longevity. This is often achieved through passive or active balancing techniques.
- **State of Charge (SoC) and State of Health (SoH) Estimation:** Calculating the remaining capacity and health of each cell to provide accurate data for higher-level management and decision-making. Further details on these two items will be discussed later in the paper.

Figure-3.1 Prismatic Cell

Figure-3.2 Battery Module

Figure-3.3 Battery Pack

MODULE LEVEL:

At the module level, the BMS manages a group of cells assembled together. Key responsibilities include:

- **Aggregate Monitoring:** Collecting and processing data from individual cells to provide a comprehensive overview of the module's status.
- **Thermal Management:** Implementing cooling or heating systems to maintain an optimal temperature range for the entire module.
- **Fault Detection and Management:** Identifying and responding to any abnormalities or faults within the module, such as over-voltage, under-voltage, or temperature extremes.
- **Communication:** Relaying information from the cell level to the rack level, facilitating coordinated control and management.

RACK LEVEL:

At the rack level, the BMS oversees multiple modules configured into racks. Key responsibilities include:

- **System Integration:** Coordinating the operation of multiple modules to ensure balanced performance and optimized energy storage and delivery.
- **Load Management:** Managing the flow of electricity in and out of the rack to meet demand while maintaining system stability.
- **Safety and Protection:** Implementing safety protocols to protect against electrical faults, thermal issues, and other hazards. This includes emergency shutdown procedures and fault isolation.
- **Energy Management:** Optimizing energy usage and storage based on demand, availability, and efficiency considerations.
- **Communication with Higher-Level Systems:** Interfacing with the overall energy management system of the facility or grid to provide data and receive control commands.

3. POWER CONVERSION SYSTEM (PCS):

This system includes inverters and rectifiers that convert direct current (DC) from the batteries to alternating current (AC) for grid use, and vice versa. The PCS is essential for integrating the BESS with the electrical grid or other power systems. The inverters can either be grid-following or grid-firming. Grid-following inverters need an already established AC system or bus to synchronize with, allowing them to supply real kilowatts (kW) and reactive power (kVARs). In contrast, grid-firming inverters can create their own AC bus voltage and frequency and connect to a de-energized bus, providing greater flexibility and support in maintaining grid stability.

4. THERMAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM:

Batteries need to operate within specific temperature ranges to maintain efficiency and longevity. The thermal management system, which includes cooling and sometimes heating mechanisms, ensures that the batteries remain within optimal temperature ranges.

Energy storage systems can be cooled using either air or liquid methods, each with distinct advantages. Air-cooled BESS systems utilize an HVAC system to circulate air around the batteries, dissipating heat through convection to maintain optimal temperature. This method is generally simpler, less costly, and requires less maintenance but may be less effective in high-temperature environments. In contrast, liquid-cooled BESS systems use a liquid coolant, such as water or glycol, to absorb and transfer heat away from the batteries. This method is more efficient at managing high heat loads and provides more uniform temperature control, enhancing battery performance and lifespan, but it is typically more complex and expensive to implement and maintain.

5. SAFETY AND PROTECTION SYSTEMS:

These systems include various safety mechanisms like fuses, circuit breakers, fire suppression systems, and emergency shutdown protocols to protect the BESS from faults and hazards such as short circuits, overvoltage, and thermal runaway. Other protection elements include over/under voltage and frequency, synch-check, and ground-fault protection.

6. UNINTERRUPTED POWER SUPPLY (UPS):

A UPS can be included in a BESS to enable black-start capabilities, ensuring data recording and fault handling under emergency conditions. This addition provides backup power to maintain critical functions and allows the system to restart independently.

7. ENCLOSURE:

The physical housing that protects the battery modules and other components from environmental factors like dust, moisture, and physical damage. It also ensures that the system is safe for operators and the public.

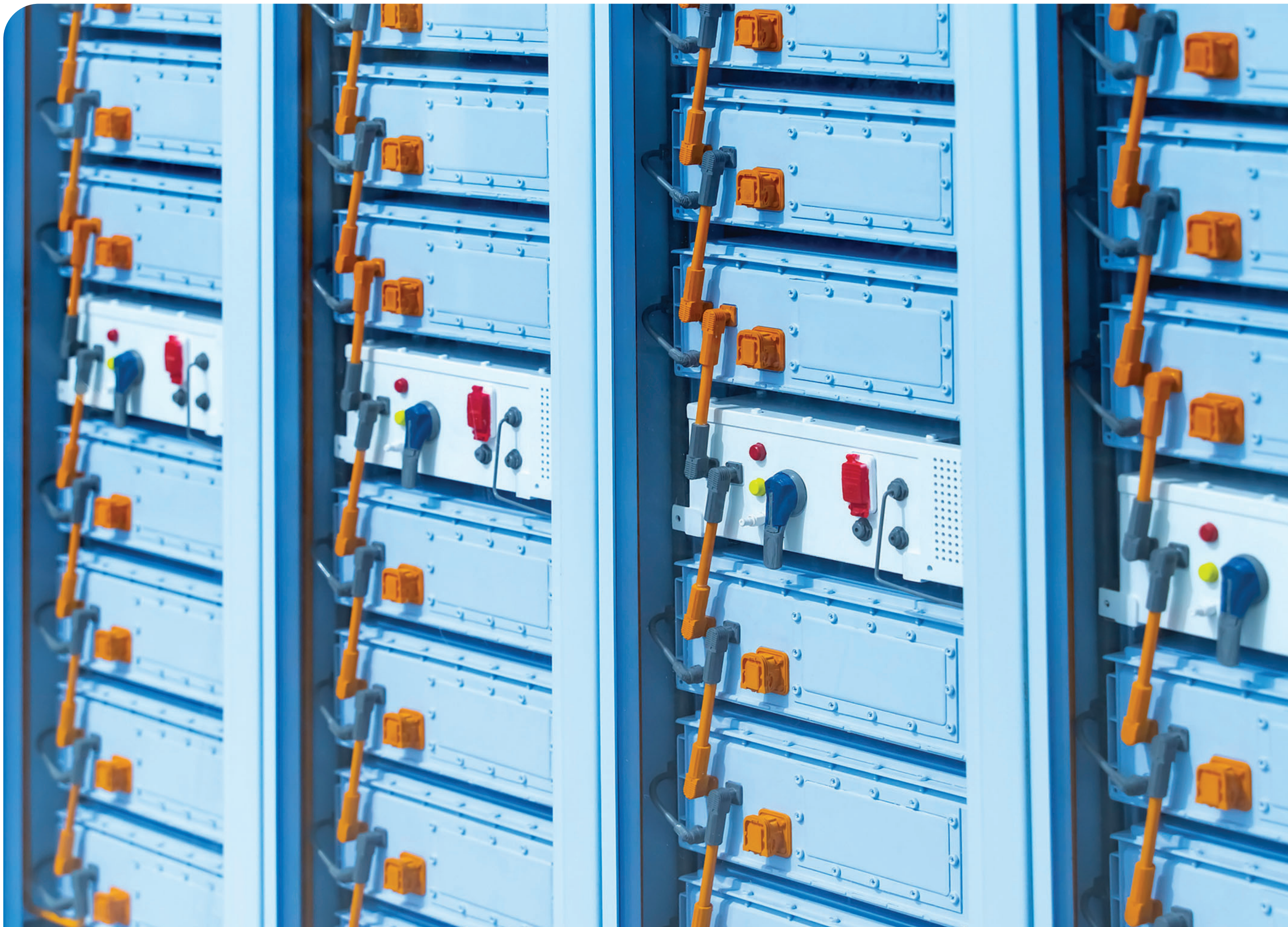
8. AUXILIARY SYSTEMS:

These include additional support systems like ventilation, humidity control, and backup power supplies to ensure that the BESS operates reliably under all conditions.

9. BESS CONTROL SYSTEM:

The BESS control system serves as the central hub that integrates the BESS with other parts of the system such as the grid, microgrid or other distributed energy resources. It consolidates information from the BMS the PCS. All control, monitoring, and communication of the BESS are managed through this centralized control system.

Each component plays a crucial role in ensuring that the BESS operates efficiently, safely, and reliably, enabling it to provide valuable services such as energy storage for renewable integration, peak shaving, load balancing, and backup power.



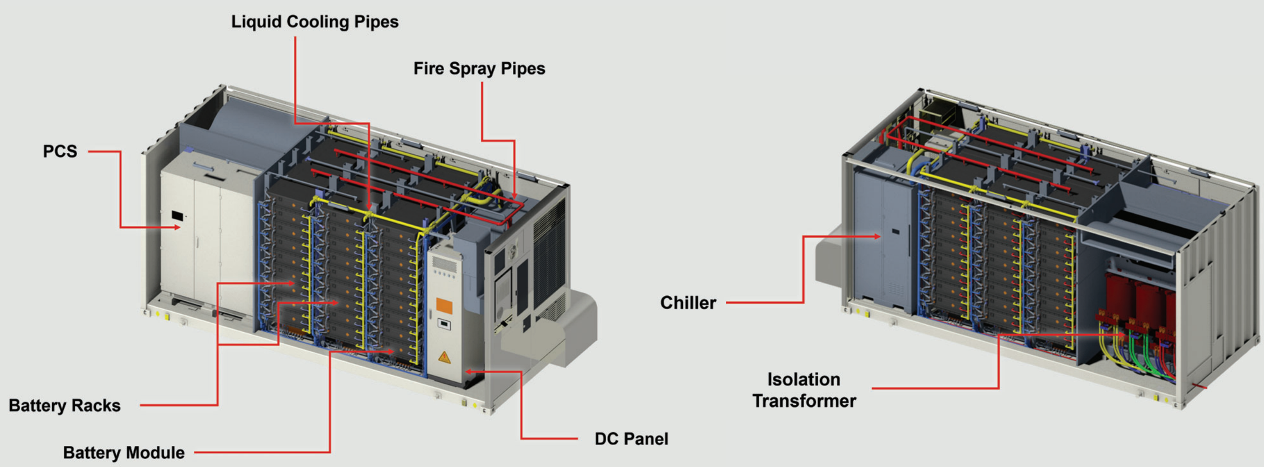


Figure-4.1 and 4.2 BESS Major Components

Battery Energy Storage Systems key characteristics:

Understanding the key characteristics of BESS is essential for optimizing their performance and ensuring their efficient operation. These characteristics define the capabilities and limitations of BESS, influencing their application and effectiveness in various scenarios. Below are the primary attributes that play a crucial role in the functioning of BESS:

- **Rated power capacity:** is the total possible instantaneous discharge capability in kW or MW of the BESS, or the maximum rate of discharge that the BESS can achieve, starting from a fully charged state.
- **Energy capacity:** is the maximum amount of stored energy stored or consumed in kWh or MWh.
- **Charge/Discharge Rate (known as C-rate or storage duration):** A C-rate measures the rate at which a battery is discharged relative to its maximum capacity. It is defined as the reciprocal of the time (in hours) needed to fully discharge the battery. A 1C rate indicates that the battery will be fully discharged in one hour. For example, a battery with 1-MW of power capacity and 2-MWh of usable energy capacity has a storage duration of two-hours. The rate at which the battery is charged or discharged significantly impacts its performance and lifespan. Rapid charging or discharging can cause overheating and decrease efficiency.

Note: The three previously mentioned characteristics will be discussed in more detail later in the paper.

- **State-of-Charge (SoC):** is the equivalent to a fuel gauge for a battery. SoC indicates the current charge level of the battery or how much energy is available in the battery at a given moment as a percentage of its total capacity. Monitoring SoC is essential to prevent overcharging or deep discharging, which can damage the battery. SoC is not directly measurable and can be determined using any of these methods:
  - **Coulomb Counting:** Tracking the amount of charge entering and leaving the battery.
  - **Voltage Measurement:** Using the battery's voltage to estimate the SoC, often combined with temperature and current measurements for accuracy.
  - **Model-Based Estimation:** Using algorithms and battery models to estimate SoC based on various parameters and historical data.

Accurate SoC measurement is crucial for the efficient and safe operation of BESS, ensuring that energy storage systems deliver optimal performance and longevity.

- **State-of-Health (SoH):** measures a battery's lifetime capacity. Brand new batteries have a SoH of 100%, but this decreases over time. For electric vehicle (EV) batteries, a SoH of 70% or 80% marks the end of their useful life. For stationary products, a SoH of 60% or 70% marks the end of their useful life. This is a critical factor in sizing BESS for end-of-life capacity and load planning. Each year, the capacity of a BESS decreases, making it essential to understand this trend for future load planning. Often, BESS systems are oversized to account for future capacity loss (SoH degradation).

  SoH is often summarized in terms of the present total capacity and internal resistance. SoH is an important parameter for assessing the performance, efficiency, and reliability of the battery system over time. The SoH is typically expressed as a percentage, where 100% represents the battery's condition when it was new, and lower percentages indicate degradation.

  Capacity fade in BESS refers to the gradual loss of a battery's ability to store and deliver energy over time. This phenomenon occurs due to various factors, including:

  1. **Cycle Life:** The number of charge and discharge cycles the battery has undergone. Each cycle contributes to the wear and tear of the battery's materials, reducing its overall capacity over time.
  2. **Depth of Discharge (DoD):** The extent to which the battery is discharged relative to its total capacity. Higher DoD typically accelerates degradation. DoD is discussed in the next section.
  3. **Temperature:** Operating temperature significantly impacts battery health. High temperatures can speed up chemical reactions that degrade battery materials, while low temperatures can reduce the battery's efficiency.
  4. **Charge/Discharge Rates:** The rate at which the battery is charged and discharged. High rates can increase internal resistance and heat, leading to faster degradation.
  5. **Calendar Aging:** The natural aging process of the battery over time, regardless of usage. This includes chemical reactions within the battery that occur even when it is not in use.
  6. **Voltage Management:** Maintaining the battery within its recommended voltage range is crucial. Overcharging or deep discharging can cause significant stress and reduce the battery's lifespan.
  7. **Internal Resistance:** As the battery ages, its internal resistance increases, which can lead to reduced efficiency and higher heat generation during operation.
  8. **Manufacturing Quality:** Variations in manufacturing processes can affect the consistency and reliability of batteries, impacting their initial SoH and longevity.
  9. **Environmental Conditions:** Factors such as humidity, vibration, and exposure to corrosive environments can also influence the battery's health.
  10. **Maintenance and Usage Patterns:** Regular maintenance and optimal usage patterns, including avoiding extreme operating conditions, can help in preserving the SoH of the BESS.

  Monitoring the SoH of a BESS is crucial for:

  - **Predictive Maintenance:** Anticipating and addressing potential failures before they occur.
  - **Performance Optimization:** Ensuring the battery system operates at peak efficiency.
  - **Safety:** Preventing hazardous conditions such as overheating or thermal runaway.
  - **Cost Management:** Planning for replacements and extending the battery's operational life to optimize costs.

  SoH is typically monitored using sensors and diagnostic software integrated into the BMS, providing real-time data and analysis to system operators.

- **Depth-of-Discharge (DoD):** is a measure of how much energy has been used from a battery relative to its total capacity. It is typically expressed as a percentage, indicating the proportion of the battery's total capacity that has been discharged. For example, if a BESS with a total capacity of 200 kWh is discharged by 50 kWh, the DoD would be calculated as:

  $$DoD = \left(\frac{50kWh}{200kWh}\right) x\, 100 = 25\%$$

  This means 25% of the battery's capacity has been used.

Key aspects of Depth of Discharge (DoD)

1. RELATIONSHIP TO STATE OF CHARGE (SOC):

SoC: Represents the remaining energy in the battery. If a battery has a 70% SoC, it means 70% of the battery's capacity is still available, and the DoD would be 30%.

2. IMPACT ON BATTERY LIFE:

1. **Higher DoD:** Frequently discharging a battery to a high DoD (e.g., 80-100%) can accelerate wear and reduce the overall lifespan of the battery.
2. **Lower DoD:** Maintaining a lower DoD (e.g., discharging only 20-30% of the battery's capacity) can extend the battery's lifespan and improve its performance over time.

Lithium Iron Phosphate (LiFePO4) batteries can be discharged to a depth of 100%, outperforming any other battery technology currently available. This capability allows these batteries to be safely discharged to their full capacity. However, to extend the lifespan of these batteries, most manufacturers recommend maintaining a discharge depth of 80% to 95%. Even if occasionally the full 100% capacity is utilized, the battery will not be damaged. Lead-acid batteries have the worst DoD among all battery types. They have a DoD range of 50-80%, depending on the type (e.g., flooded vs. deep cycle). However, it is recommended to avoid discharging below 50% to prevent accelerated degradation.

3. OPTIMAL USE:

Balancing DoD: To optimize the longevity and performance of the battery, it is crucial to balance the DoD. This often involves not fully discharging the battery and maintaining a moderate DoD during regular operations.

4. APPLICATIONS:

1. **Energy Management:** DoD is a critical parameter in energy management systems, helping to schedule charging and discharging cycles efficiently.
2. **Predictive Maintenance:** Monitoring DoD helps in predicting battery maintenance needs and preventing premature failure.

Monitoring and managing DoD is crucial for ensuring the efficient and sustainable operation of battery energy storage systems. Properly managed DoD can lead to improved battery performance, longer life, and better return on investment for energy storage solutions.

- **Self Discharge:** BESS self-discharge happens when the battery's stored energy diminishes due to internal chemical reactions, even when not actively used for the grid or a customer. This self-discharge, quantified as a percentage of charge lost over a specific time frame, lowers the available energy for discharge and is a crucial factor to consider in batteries designed for long-duration applications.
- **Round-Trip Efficiency (RTE):** RTE, expressed as a percentage, is the ratio of energy discharged from the battery to the energy charged into it. This measure can reflect the total DC-DC or AC-AC efficiency of the battery system, accounting for losses from self-discharge and other electrical inefficiencies. While battery manufacturers often highlight DC-DC efficiency, utilities usually prioritize AC-AC efficiency, as they focus on the battery's performance at the point of interconnection to the power system, which operates on AC. It is critical that the RTE includes all the components in the BESS system such as PCS, cables, isolation transformers, and all other parts up to the point-of-connection.

  The round-trip efficiency should exceed 85% at the point of connection, subject to site-specific conditions.
- **Cycle Life Aging in Batteries:** Cycle life aging refers to the degradation that occurs in a battery as it undergoes charge and discharge cycles during its operation. This process gradually reduces the battery's capacity and performance over time. Five main factors influence the rate of degradation (See Figure-5.1 and 5.2):

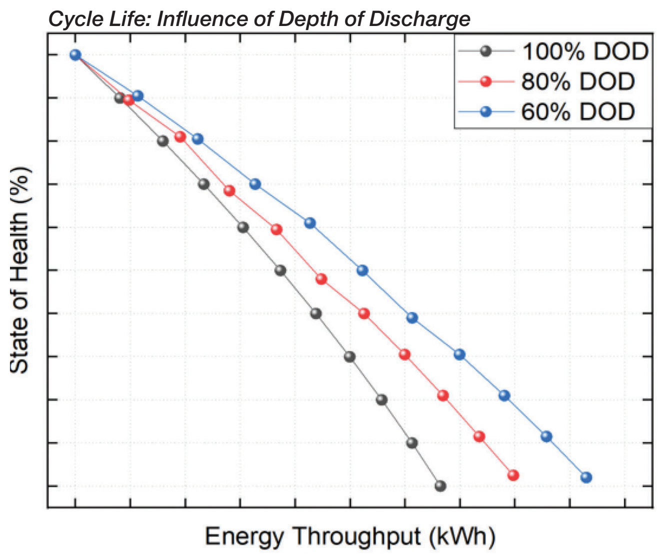


Figure-5.1 Cycle Life: Influence of DoD

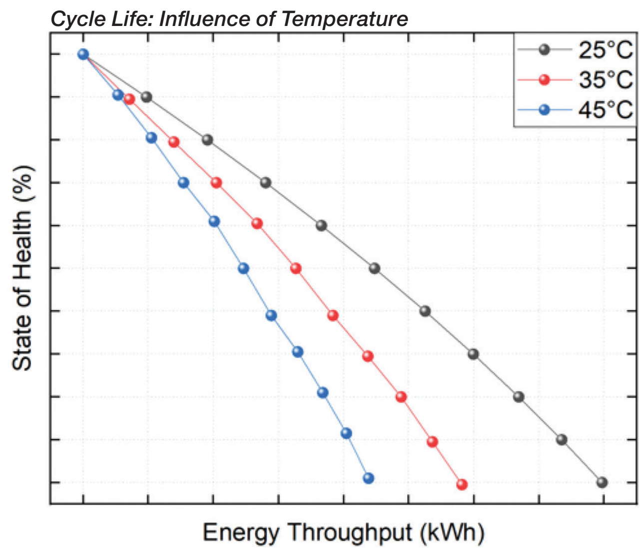


Figure-5.2 Cycle Life: Influence of Temperature

Depth of Discharge (DoD):

- **Impact:** Higher DoD means the battery is discharged to a lower level before recharging, which can significantly accelerate degradation.
- **Mechanism:** Deep discharges cause more stress on the battery materials, leading to faster wear and reduced cycle life.

Charge and Discharge Rates (C-rate):

- **Impact:** Higher C-rates (fast charging and discharging) increase the rate of degradation.
- **Mechanism:** Rapid charging or discharging generates more heat and induces mechanical stress within the battery cells, causing faster deterioration of the active materials and electrolyte.

Temperature:

- **Impact:** Both high and low temperatures can adversely affect battery life.
- **Mechanism:** High temperatures accelerate chemical reactions that degrade the battery's internal components, while low temperatures can cause increased internal resistance and slower chemical reactions, leading to inefficiencies and potential damage.

State of Charge (SoC) Range:

- **Impact:** Operating a battery at extreme high or low SoC levels can accelerate aging.
- **Mechanism:** Keeping the battery fully charged or deeply discharged for prolonged periods increases stress on the battery materials, leading to a loss of capacity and increased internal resistance.

Cycle Frequency:

- **Impact:** The more frequently a battery is cycled, the faster it will degrade.
- **Mechanism:** Each charge and discharge cycle causes physical and chemical changes within the battery cells. Frequent cycling leads to the accumulation of these changes, reducing the overall lifespan of the battery.

Understanding BESS C-rate:

The C-rate is a measure of the rate at which a battery is charged or discharged relative to its maximum capacity. For example, a C-rate of 1C means the battery will be fully charged or discharged in one hour. A C-rate of 0.5C indicates it will take two hours to fully charge or discharge, while a C-rate of 2C signifies it will take only half an hour. The formula is:

T = Time

Cr = C-Rate

T = 1 / Cr (to view in hours), or T = 60 min / Cr (to view in minutes). For example: see Figure-6 for examples of correlating C-rate to time:

C-rate	Time
0.05c	20 hours
0.1c	10 hours
0.2c	5 hours
0.25c	4 hours
0.5c	2 hours
1C	1 hour
2C	30 mins
5C	12 mins
10C	6 mins
20C	3 mins
120C	30 seconds

Figure-6 C-Rate and Associated Time (Charge/Discharge)

Batteries with a low C-rate take longer to charge but can provide power for an extended period. Conversely, batteries with a high C-rate can deliver a large current quickly, making them suitable for high-power, short-duration applications such as grid frequency regulation; however, they cannot sustain this power output for as long as batteries with a lower C-rate. For example, at a 5C rate, a battery provides five times its rated power but only for 12 minutes.

There are two primary limitations to how quickly a battery can be charged:

- **Thermal Heating:** Excessive heat generation can damage the battery and reduce its lifespan.
- **Mass Transfer Limitations:** The physical movement of ions within the battery can limit the charging rate.

Monitoring and managing the C-rate is essential for optimizing battery performance and longevity. It is crucial to note that while the C-rate can be reduced, it cannot exceed the battery's rated capacity. For instance, if a system is rated at 1C, it can be charged or discharged at lower C values, such as 0.5C or 0.25C, but it cannot be operated at higher C values, such as 2C or 3C.

Effectively managing the C-rate ensures the battery operates within safe limits, preventing damage and prolonging its useful life.

C-RATE IN TERMS OF AMPERE-HOUR (AH):

C-Rate- can be expressed in constant current charge/discharge vs. its capacity:

$$Current\ (I) = CRate\ x\ Capacity\ (Ah)$$

For example, for a battery with a capacity of 100Ah:

1C MEANS:

- 100Ah*1C = 100A discharge current is available
- 100Ah/100A = 1 hour discharge time capable
- **The battery can be used for 60 minutes (1h) with load current of 100A**

2C MEANS:

- 100Ah*2C = 200A discharge current is available
- 100Ah/200A = 0.5 hours discharge time capable
- **The battery can be used for 30 minutes (0.5h) with load current of 200A**

0.5C MEANS:

- 100Ah*0.5C = 50A discharge current is available
- 100Ah/50A = 2 hours discharge time capable
- **It means the battery can be used for 120 minutes (2h) with load current of 50A**

5C MEANS:

- 100Ah*5C = 500A discharge current is available
- 100Ah/500A = 0.2 hours discharge time capable
- **The battery can be used for 12 minutes (0.2h) with load current of 500A**

C-rate application summary in BESS:

- **Energy Applications:** Typically use lower C-rates (0.2C to 1C) for steady and prolonged energy supply. For Example, peak-shaving and demand response,
- **Power Applications:** Often require higher C-rates (1C and above) for quick bursts of power. For example, frequency regulation.

Difference between kW and kWh

Understanding the distinction between kilowatts (kW) and kilowatt-hours (kWh) is crucial for effectively managing and optimizing energy systems, especially in BESS applications. Though related, these units measure different aspects of power and energy. Knowing the difference is essential for accurately assessing energy needs, system capacities, sizing, applications, and operational costs. It also aids in making informed decisions about energy usage, efficiency, and sustainability.

Kilowatt (kW) is a unit of power, representing the rate at which energy is consumed or generated. It indicates how quickly energy is being used at any given moment. For example, a 10 kW system can deliver 10 kilowatts of power instantly. In essence, kW measures the instantaneous rate of power flow, showing how quickly energy can be delivered or received from the battery.

Kilowatt-hour (kWh) is a unit of energy, representing the total amount of energy consumed or generated over time. It indicates the cumulative energy usage or production. For instance, if a 10 kW system runs for one hour, it will consume or generate 10 kWh of energy. In essence, kWh measures the total amount of energy that is stored or delivered over a period of time, showing how much energy the battery can store or deliver.

In summary:

- **kW (Kilowatt):** Measures the instantaneous rate of power flow. This value can be changed up to the maximum rating.
- **kWh (Kilowatt-hour):** Measures the total amount of energy over time. This value is fixed.

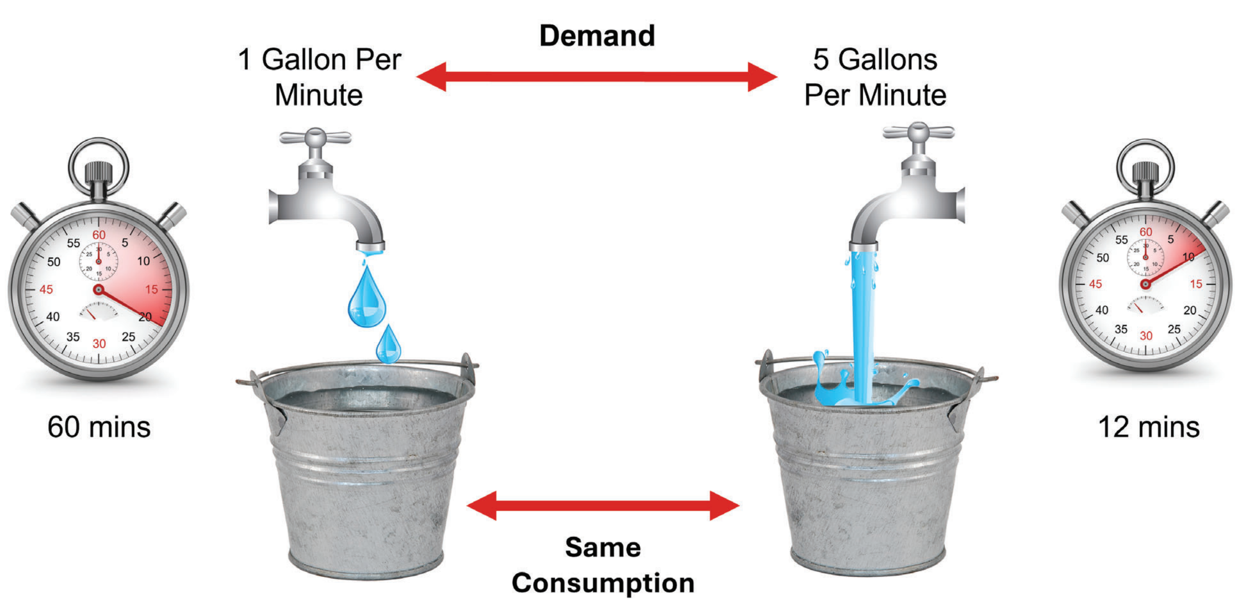


Figure-7 kW vs. kWh Water Analogy

Explanation of the analogy

DEMAND (FLOW RATE - KW):

- On the left, the faucet is flowing at a rate of 1 gallon per minute (gpm). This represents a lower power device, for example 1 kW.
- On the right, the faucet is flowing at a rate of 5 gallons per minute. This represents a higher power device, for example 5 kW.

CONSUMPTION (TOTAL VOLUME - KWH):

- Both buckets end up with the same amount of water. This represents the total energy consumed.

KEY POINTS:

- **Left Side (1 gallon per minute):** Even though the water flow (demand) is low (1 gpm or 1 kW), over time, it fills the bucket. If this faucet runs for 60 minutes, it will consume 60 gallons, analogous to 1 kW running for 60 minutes equaling 1 kWh.
- **Right Side (5 gallons per minute):** The water flow (demand) is high (5 gpm or 5 kW), but it runs for a shorter time. If this faucet runs for 12 minutes, it will also consume 60 gallons, analogous to 5 kW running for 12 minutes equaling 1 kWh.

Power-to-energy ratio

Battery systems are designed to maximize either the power rating or the energy rating, depending on their intended use. The power-to-energy ratio of a battery system provides a better understanding of its intended application and capability.

For frequency regulation, where the battery must charge and discharge multiple times over short durations, the system is designed with a higher power rating.

In contrast, for applications such as peak-shifting or providing backup power during grid outages, the battery must discharge over a longer period (e.g., 2–5 hours) and is therefore designed with a higher energy rating.

Summary:

Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) are integral to modern energy management, addressing the intermittent nature of renewable energy sources and enhancing grid stability. This paper has provided a detailed overview of BESS, highlighting their advantages, applications, and critical parameters essential for optimal performance. The discussion covered the technical aspects, such as the importance of C-rate and the distinction between kW and kWh, emphasizing their roles in battery operation and capacity.

BESS offer numerous benefits including grid stabilization, energy arbitrage, renewable integration, backup power, peak shaving, and frequency regulation. These advantages demonstrate BESS's pivotal role in managing energy effectively and sustainably. Their applications span residential, commercial, industrial, utility-scale, microgrids, and off-grid systems, each contributing significantly to energy efficiency and resilience.

Key components of BESS, such as battery cells/modules, Battery Management Systems (BMS), Power Conversion Systems (PCS), thermal management, safety systems, enclosures, auxiliary systems, and BESS control, collectively ensure the efficient, safe, and reliable operation of these storage systems. Understanding the characteristics of BESS, including rated power capacity, energy capacity, charge/discharge rate, State of Charge (SoC), State of Health (SoH), Depth of Discharge (DoD), self-discharge, round-trip efficiency, and cycle life aging, is crucial for optimizing their performance and longevity.

As the global shift towards renewable energy intensifies, the need for reliable energy storage solutions like BESS becomes more critical. They not only enhance the efficiency and reliability of power grids but also support the broader goal of transitioning to a sustainable energy future.

About the author

Hassan Obeid is a Global Technical Sales Leader – New Energy Solutions at Cummins Inc., focusing on technical vision, business strategy, and solving a wide range of complex problems. Hassan has been with Cummins since 2007 in various roles, including global technical advising, power systems design engineering, project engineering, and applications engineering. He has designed power systems involving switchgear, controls, paralleling, BESS, PEM hydrogen fuel cells, transfer switches, generator sets, DERs, microgrids, and digital solutions.

Additionally, Hassan has developed and conducted technical power seminars on several topics and products, including BESS, PEM hydrogen fuel cells, paralleling, grounding, power systems, and controls. He holds a bachelor's degree in Computer Science and a master's degree in Electrical Engineering from Minnesota State University, Mankato.

Hassan Obeid
Global Technical Sales Leader

New Energy Solutions