

News Release

March 31, 2017

Alberta Utilities Commission tasked with distributed generation review to inform policy on Alberta's clean, affordable energy efforts

Alberta to consult and provide report on smaller-scale renewables and alternative generation close to users.

Calgary, Alberta.... Alberta's independent utilities regulator has been assigned a broad review and consultation on matters around renewable and alternative distributed electricity generation in Alberta. Distributed generation includes generally small-scale technologies including solar, wind and hydro used to produce electricity at, or close to, the end users of power and often by the end users of power themselves.

The goal of the Alberta Utilities Commission's review is to provide the provincial government with insight into how broader deployment of distributed generation focused on renewable and alternative energy sources might be implemented. Promoting renewable electricity is a key part of the province's Climate Leadership Plan and meeting its 30 per cent renewables target. The review was assigned by the Alberta cabinet to inform policy development, through an inquiry mechanism in the Alberta Utilities Commission's enabling legislation.

Highlights of the terms of reference can be found in the attached backgrounder. The AUC will seek and consider input and consultation from a broad array of stakeholders. The AUC review's full terms of reference and other related materials and information can be found on a dedicated AUC website at www.auc.ab.ca under the items of interest section. This page will be updated as further details emerge.

The formal structure, schedule and approach of the AUC's review process is now being developed. It will provide options for stakeholder input that will include written submissions and meetings with a three-member Commission panel. The AUC will provide an interim report on the review to the Minister of Energy by July 31, and final report will be delivered by December 29, 2017. The final report will not include recommendations.

The AUC panel will conduct the review, establishing a proceeding schedule, and identifying effective channels for stakeholder input including public input. When these steps are completed the AUC will issue a stakeholder bulletin followed by a formal public notice.

The AUC is an independent, quasi-judicial agency of the province of Alberta that is committed to delivering innovative and efficient regulatory solutions. The AUC regulates the utilities sector, natural gas and electricity markets to protect social, economic and environmental interests of Alberta where competitive market forces do not.

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Backgrounder

Highlights of the AUC's terms of reference to review distributed generation include considering:

- The current status of renewable and alternative distribution-connected generation in Alberta.
- The current state of Alberta's distribution systems, billing and settlement systems, and supporting acts, regulations and rules.
- Enablers and barriers for broader deployment of alternative and renewable distribution-connected generation, in Alberta.
- Methods for assessing costs and benefits of infrastructure investments that may enable and facilitate broader deployment of alternative and renewable distribution-connected generation and efficient energy use.
- Current and potential regulatory approaches to consider alternative and renewable distribution-connected generation when planning the development of distribution networks.
- Opportunities to improve processes for connecting alternative and renewable distribution-connected generation.
- The potential to align the planning and development of Alberta's distribution systems and broader deployment of alternative and renewable distribution-connected generation with government objectives of providing clean, affordable and reliable energy to Albertans.