

Notice of amendment

Commission expands scope of distribution system inquiry to include natural gas

Proceeding 24116 Distribution System Inquiry

The Alberta Utilities Commission, the independent utilities regulator, is broadening the scope of its self-initiated inquiry into Alberta's electric distribution system to include natural gas distribution systems. The Commission is including natural gas distribution systems on the basis that emerging technologies and innovations may transform both the electric and natural gas distribution networks.¹

On December 12, 2018, the Commission issued a notice of application for Proceeding 24116, inviting parties to provide comments on the matters the Commission intended to examine in an inquiry into Alberta's electric distribution system. Further details were provided in Bulletin 2018-17.² The Commission has now expanded the scope of the inquiry to become a distribution system inquiry, renamed the **Distribution System Inquiry** and has set out the scope and process of the inquiry in its letter dated March 29, 2019.³

Participation

The Commission has pre-registered AltaGas Utilities Inc. to participate in this inquiry. The other natural gas distribution company regulated by the Commission, ATCO Gas Ltd., has previously registered in the inquiry. Other parties interested in the evolution of the gas distribution system are invited to register.

If a party that has yet to register for the inquiry wishes to participate, that party should file a statement of intent to participate by **4 p.m. on April 12, 2019**. If a party is represented by another party, the contact information for that representative should be included. If a submission is being made on behalf of a group, the contact person for the group and the details of the group members should be provided. Parties with similar interests are encouraged to participate as a group. All interested parties are encouraged to register to participate using the Commission's eFiling System. Parties that have already registered in Proceeding 24116 do not need to re-register. All registered parties will participate in the process schedule outlined in the Commission's letter dated March 29, 2019.

¹ Exhibit 24116-X0106, AUC letter – Scope and process for the Distribution System Inquiry, March 29, 2019.

² Bulletin 2018-17, Electric Distribution System Inquiry, December 6, 2018.

³ Exhibit 24116-X0107.

To register for the inquiry, please visit the AUC website and log in to the eFiling System to file your submission for Proceeding 24116. If required, the submission can be filed with the AUC by mail or fax. Please contact the AUC's information services group at info@auc.ab.ca or 310-4AUC (4282) if you require assistance with the eFiling System or if you do not have internet access, and they will assist you with your submission. For efficiency, please identify any communication with the AUC about this inquiry by indicating the proceeding number.

To learn more about the inquiry, contact Randy Lucas at 780-422-2072 or email your questions to randy.lucas@auc.ab.ca.

Cost recovery

Parties who have been directed to participate in the inquiry by the Commission, including AltaGas Utilities Inc. and ATCO Gas Ltd., may apply for recovery of their costs, which will be assessed in accordance with Rule 022: *Rules on Costs in Utility Rate Proceedings*.

Cost claims from other parties will be assessed in accordance with the eligibility criteria, cost recovery principles and the scale of costs set out in Rule 022. The Commission is prepared to modify the eligibility criteria set out in Rule 022 for the purposes of enabling certain parties to participate in this inquiry who would otherwise be financially unable to do so, where the Commission considers their participation may assist it in its understanding of the matters to be addressed in the inquiry. Submissions must demonstrate a substantial interest in, and the potential to significantly contribute to, the Commission's understanding of the issues to be addressed in the inquiry.

The Commission will determine costs eligibility on a case-by-case basis upon receiving submissions from interested parties. The process for these submissions is set out in its March 29, 2019 letter.

Privacy

To support an open and transparent process, information you send to the AUC will be publicly available through the AUC's eFiling System. If there is confidential information you would like to file, a request must be made in advance of filing your submission.

Issued on March 29, 2019.

Alberta Utilities Commission
Douglas A. Larder, QC, General Counsel