

Announcement

November 30, 2020

AUC moves forward on multiple efficiency improvements as progress encouraged by government

Checklist applications expanded, external efficiency recommendations being implemented, AUC efficiency web portal launched

The Alberta Utilities Commission is moving forward with a series of initiatives to improve the efficiency of its processes and procedures, and reduce regulatory burden. This reflects stakeholder priorities, supports the Alberta government's goal of reducing regulatory burden, and supports government expectations the AUC continue to improve the efficiency and timeliness of AUC proceedings.

The new initiatives come as the AUC's progress in improving the effectiveness and efficiency of regulatory approval processes was acknowledged, and further efforts encouraged, by Associate Minister of Natural Gas and Electricity Dale Nally [in a letter to AUC Chair Carolyn Dahl Rees](#).

First, the AUC is [expanding its successful checklist or trusted traveller approach](#) for certain low-risk facility applications from Alberta's established electricity and gas utility pipeline companies. The approach, launched in May, has cut processing time by two-thirds for established applicants and reflects the direct and practical application of the principles of proportionality and timeliness embodied in Alberta's *Red Tape Reduction Act*.

Second, the Alberta Utilities Commission has established a committee with industry and stakeholder representation to support implementing expert recommendations to increase efficiency and reduce regulatory lag in how the AUC deals with utility rate applications. The recommendations were released October 22 in the [Report of the AUC Procedures and Processes Review Committee](#) from three regulatory legal experts, and centred on AUC adopting an assertive case management approach.

Third, the AUC has launched today an efficiency web portal as part of its website at www.auc.ab.ca, that focuses on the organization's challenges, initiatives and successes in reaching its efficiency objectives. In its [2019-2022 strategic plan](#), and as part of its ongoing efficiency agenda, the AUC has made a commitment to reduce regulatory burden and improve the efficiency of its processes and procedures.

The AUC efficiency web portal includes information for the public and stakeholders on the AUC's plan to improve efficiency and reduce regulatory burden; on its commitments, initiatives

and monthly updates and reporting to government; and on how the AUC measures and reports progress. The portal can be found here: <https://www.auc.ab.ca/Pages/Efficiency-and-reducing-regulatory-burden.aspx> or accessed from the black bar at the top of the [external website](#).

These steps reflect the commitment made October 22 by AUC chair Carolyn Dahl Rees in a letter to stakeholders “to make the most of our resources and powers, drive effectiveness and innovation, and reduce red tape and regulatory burden.” Dahl Rees noted the AUC’s dedication to implement transformational change requires support and collaboration from all stakeholders “for the benefit of the utilities sector and the broader public.”

AUC simplified checklist application approach expedites results

The AUC’s checklist approach, which eliminates a formal application process for established applicants, will now be extended to also include select Alberta Electric System Operator abbreviated needs identification document applications. Since May the checklist or trusted traveller approach has been available for minor electric transmission substation and line alterations and time extensions and has been used at least 21 times.

- Twenty of the 21 applications were approved in five or less business days (95 per cent) with the average turnaround time being 4.4 days.
- Average processing time has been cut by approximately two-thirds, a 67 per cent improvement in efficiency.
- Prior to the change, applicants had to file a formal application and all supporting documents such as environmental evaluations, participant involvement program summaries, etc.

Implementing expert recommendations to increase efficiency and reduce lag in rates proceedings

To action the expert committee recommendations released October 22 the AUC established an external task force led by AUC General Counsel Doug Larder to propose necessary changes to AUC administrative rules. The stakeholder group is formulating proposed rule changes for submission by the end of the year.

The AUC’s new efficiency web portal

To provide an easily accessed central source for the AUC’s plans and objectives – and most importantly, its results - on reaching its stakeholder-shared efficiency objectives, the AUC’s efficiency portal has been developed and will be regularly updated to allow stakeholders and the public to:

- View the AUC’s latest efficiency initiatives.
- Explore the AUC’s plan to improve efficiency and reduce regulatory burden.
- Learn about the organization’s commitments, initiatives and its monthly reporting to government.

- Understand how the AUC measures and reports progress in meeting its strategic plan efficiency objectives and government red tape reduction targets.

The AUC understands that continuously improving its processes is key to its role as an effective regulator. This is directly reflected in the [AUC 2019-2022 Strategic Plan](#). The AUC is working to be one of the fastest regulators in North America.

The AUC has sharpened its focus on streamlining its processes and reducing regulatory burden. The AUC's three-year strategic plan and day-to-day operational plan includes a major commitment to efficiency and limiting regulatory burden. The AUC's initiatives are developed, shaped and confirmed through stakeholder engagement to reflect their priorities.