

Bulletin 2015-09

March 26, 2015

Performance standards for processing rate-related applications

In response to our stakeholder survey conducted over the past few years, you told us that an important area for improvement is the speed and efficiency of our processes involving applications and hearings.

In Bulletin 2010-16 the Alberta Utilities Commission outlined new performance standards for processing gas and electric rate-related applications. These performance standards were intended to provide consistent and predictable timelines and performance measures for a full cycle application process, from the time an application is filed with the AUC until a decision is issued.

After a number of years working with these performance standards, the AUC conducted an internal review of the identified application processes and associated performance standards. The review revealed an application process type not currently captured in our performance standards. The Commission's experience is that while a number of applications require an interrogatory process, a process step for argument and reply argument is not required.

For this reason, the AUC has introduced a new process and associated performance standard for this application process type. This new process type is referred to as the "basic written process" and it is shown in Table 1 of the appendix. The new process type will be effective for applications filed on or after April 1, 2015.

Each new application will continue to be assigned to one of the process types outlined in Table 2 of the appendix. This assignment may change if more process steps are required to consider the application. As is our practice today, our intention is to meet the performance standard for the record development phase 80 per cent of the time.

The AUC will continue to identify the process type that will be used to process an application in the initial process letter that is issued and any changes to the process type will be communicated in subsequent process letters, as applicable.

The record development timelines were established based on the assumption that the AUC will receive a thorough and detailed application. The timelines do not take into account process steps in addition to those outlined in Table 2 (such as technical meetings, negotiated settlements, supplemental interrogatory processes and motions for various matters), which could extend the overall timeline. In order to succeed in meeting these target performance standards, the

Commission requires the commitment and cooperation of applicants and other stakeholders who participate in our proceedings to meet the timelines set out in a proceeding's schedule.

The Commission remains committed to issuing disposition documents (disposition letters or decision reports) for all rate-related applications within the target timelines outlined in Table 1.

Most water-related applications will continue to follow the performance standards outlined in the Rule 011¹ process.

We welcome your questions about this new standard and any of our other processes. We are here to assist you and I encourage you to contact Mike Hagan at 780-427-9369, or by email at mike.hagan@auc.ab.ca to discuss our performance standards.

(original signed by)

Robert D. Heggie
Chief Executive

¹ *Rate Application Process for Water Utilities.*

Appendix 1

Table 1: Performance standards for processing rate-related applications

	Process type					
	No notice ²	Notice only	Not applicable	Minimal written process	Full written process	Full process
Original types						
New type			Basic written process			
Process phase	(Calendar days)					
Record development ³	2 - 4	16 - 24	45 - 75	79 - 108	124 - 172	143 - 205
Disposition document completion ⁴	3 - 6	30 - 45	40 - 55	90	90	90
Full cycle	5 - 10	46 - 69	85 - 130	169 - 198	214 - 262	233 - 295

Table 2: Record development process steps by process type

Process step	Process type					
	No notice ²	Notice only	Basic written process	Minimal written process	Full written process	Full process
Notice issued		x	x	x	x	x
Statement of intent to participate		x	x	x	x	x
Process schedule			x	x	x	x
Information requests/responses to/from the applicant			x	x	x	x
Submissions on need for additional process steps			x			
Intervener evidence					x	x
Information requests/responses to/from the interveners					x	x
Rebuttal evidence					x	x
Oral hearing						x
Argument				x	x	x
Reply argument				x	x	x

² No formal notice and normally no external process. This process is mainly used for the monthly regulated retail energy charges for natural gas and electricity.

³ These record development target timelines are based on receiving a thorough and detailed application and do not include any time for process steps that are not considered typical and which could extend overall timelines, such as technical meetings, negotiated settlements, supplemental information requests/responses and motions.

⁴ A decision report or disposition letter.