

Bulletin 2024-03

February 28, 2024

Updates to AUC application review process following generation approvals pause

The [Generation Approvals Pause Regulation](#), enacted by the Alberta government's [order-in-council](#), expires February 29, 2024. This regulation prohibits the AUC from issuing approvals for new power plants and hydro developments that produce renewable electricity over one megawatt while the approval pause period is in effect. On March 1, 2024, the AUC can recommence issuing decisions on power plant applications affected by the pause.

The AUC has [continued to process applications](#) up to the decision stage for new power plants that produce renewable electricity while the approval pause period has been in effect.

The AUC is continuing to work on the inquiry into the ongoing economic, orderly and efficient development of electricity generation in Alberta, at the direction of the Alberta government through an [order-in-council](#). The inquiry was separated into two modules (Module A and Module B) to explore the key issues identified in the order-in-council.

The Alberta government has indicated its intention to bring forward certain policy, legislative and regulatory changes. A summary of these changes and a [letter to the AUC](#) are [available here](#).

Interim Rule 007 information requirements will remain in effect

In September 2023, the AUC issued [interim information requirements](#) for new power plant applications, including wind, solar, thermal, hydroelectric and other power plants. Those requirements related to agricultural land, viewscales, reclamation security, and land use planning.

These interim information requirements will continue to be in effect for all current and prospective applications following the end of the pause.

Power plant applications affected by the pause will be assessed on individual merits

Further process may be required for applications currently before the AUC, depending on the circumstances of the application and the sufficiency of the existing evidentiary record. The AUC will issue correspondence on the record of each existing application confirming the next steps in the proceeding.

Should no further process be necessary, the AUC will issue decisions on current applications consistent with its [established performance standards for decision writing in AUC Rule 007](#). The AUC's correspondence on the record of each proceeding will confirm the relevant date (the close

of record) for the purposes of calculating those deadlines. The AUC will issue its decisions in advance of the deadlines established in its performance standards where possible.

AUC to initiate Rule 007 consultation

The AUC is initiating a stakeholder consultation on specific topics within Rule 007, including topics considered during Module A of the inquiry, topics which are the subject of the Alberta government's intended policy, legislative and regulatory changes, and other items. As part of its Rule 007 consultation, the AUC will consider whether some or all of the interim information requirements will be incorporated permanently into its application requirements for new wind, solar, thermal, hydroelectric and other power plants.

Further information for the Rule 007 consultation process, including specific topics, timelines and participation methods will be released in due course.

Specific inquiries about the Rule 007 consultation can be directed to Laura Johnson, regulatory program manager, at laura.johnson@auc.ab.ca.

Alberta Utilities Commission