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TO MAILING LIST:

The Alberta Energy and Utilities Board (EUB/Board) announces a consultation process and invites all stakeholders to provide feedback to the EUB on its initiative to:

- Standardize the format and content of wire-owner's wholesale invoice billing through the use of electronic business transactions;
- Align consumption and wholesale billing information; and
- Implement a bill-ready wholesale invoice billing process.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

As part of the Government of Alberta's strategy to encourage participation in the restructured electricity market in Alberta, and in response to the Retailer Information Management Committee's November 2002 Final Report, the Board has announced the commencement of an initiative to set the minimum obligations that a wire owner must meet in determining the wholesale financial settlement information to be provided to electricity retailers.

All customers are entitled to timely and accurate billing. Consequently, entities under the EUB's jurisdiction that carry out the functions of an owner of an electric distribution system will be required to provide wholesale financial settlement information in a standardized format.

## 2. LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

With the proclamation of the new *Electric Utilities Act*, S.A. 2003, c. E-5.1, on June 1, 2003 (EUA), the Board has gained the legislative authority to make and enforce rules respecting service quality standards. Section 129 of the EUA gives the EUB the explicit authority to make rules respecting service quality standards, including the billing and billing services to be provided.

## 3. DEVELOPMENT OF THE STANDARDS

In response to the Retailer Information Management Committee's (RIMC) November 2002 Final Report, the Board is inviting interested stakeholders to provide input regarding the mandatory information required, the electronic business transaction that facilitates the communication of the information as well as the business rules that govern the use of the transaction. The EUB will also directly contact the interested stakeholders to invite their participation.

The RIMC Final Report contained recommended transaction formats based on the ATCO Electric wholesale billing model. Stakeholders should likewise review the use of this billing model, and any appropriate changes required to it.

#### **4. NEXT STEPS**

To assist in expediting the establishment of standardized wholesale financial settlement format and content, and the means of communicating this information to retailers, the EUB intends to hold regular weekly meetings with interested stakeholders by way of teleconferencing and video conferencing. The purpose of the weekly meetings will be to develop the detailed business processes and define the electronic transactions necessary to support a standardized format.

EPCOR Distribution Inc (EPCOR) is currently leading an initiative to standardize billing information for retailers in its service area. The EUB will be assuming EPCOR's lead role and will be expanding the initiative to cover all of the wire owners under the EUB's jurisdiction.

The EUB may require the services of an external project manager to assist with the development of the electronic business transactions and the documentation of the related business processes and rules.

Questions may be directed to Fino Tiberi at (403) 297-3542.

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