

AUC Policy for Third Party Complaints

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The AUC is an independent, quasi-judicial agency of the Government of Alberta.
- 1.2. The AUC provides expert analysis of energy markets, market rules and reliability standards, and market data, while supporting an adjudicative forum to ensure market integrity.
- 1.3. The AUC makes decisions on the need, siting, construction, alteration, operation and decommissioning of natural gas and electricity transmission facilities. The AUC regulates power plants to ensure they are sited, constructed, altered, operated and decommissioned in a safe and environmentally responsible manner.
- 1.4. The AUC regulates investor-owned natural gas, electric and water utilities, and certain municipally-owned electricity utilities to ensure customers receive safe and reliable service at just and reasonable rates.
- 1.5. The AUC develops and amends rules that support the orderly operation of the retail and natural gas markets, specifically rules related to energy load settlement and billing processes, service quality and standards for market participants, and technical standards related to the safe and efficient use of the utilities' physical facilities and equipment.
- 1.6. The AUC has received complaints from third parties about the conduct of companies and persons under the Commission's jurisdiction. Typically, allegations of this type can be addressed in two ways. Complainants may be able to report their allegations internally to the company's senior management if they are employees. Alternatively, a complainant may make a complaint to the AUC. This document addresses how the AUC will handle a complaint alleging wrongdoing or misconduct by a company it regulates.
- 1.7. This policy does not apply to a customer concern regarding utility services as described in a utility company's rates, terms and conditions of service or billing practices. These matters are dealt with by the Commission's Consumer Relations Group.

2. Definitions

- 2.1. For the purposes of this policy and procedures:

AUC means the Alberta Utilities Commission

Complaint means an allegation of wrongdoing or misconduct on the part of an entity that is subject to the jurisdiction of the AUC.

Complainant means a person who has made a complaint whether the person has remained anonymous or named, but does not include an AUC employee or Commission member.

3. Receiving, reviewing and investigating complaints

- 3.1. The AUC will investigate complaints that are serious and made in good faith and that are within the AUC's jurisdiction. Complaints that are criminal in nature may be provided to police authorities for their review. Upon completion of any police review, the AUC may examine the complaint for matters within its jurisdiction.
- 3.2. Upon receipt of a complaint, the AUC, through its Chief Executive, General Counsel and Executive Director, Market Oversight and Enforcement will determine whether the complaint includes sufficient information to substantiate the claim or warrant further investigation. If the AUC decides that the complaint does not warrant any further action, it will advise the complainant, if the identity of the complainant is known.
- 3.3. If the complainant has disclosed his or her identity the AUC will keep that information confidential during its initial assessment, unless otherwise agreed.
- 3.4. If it is determined that an investigation will proceed and the complainant has disclosed his or her identity, the AUC will decide whether to disclose that person's identity to the subject of the investigation for the purposes of conducting a fair investigation. Anonymity is not guaranteed.
- 3.5. If an investigation proceeds, the AUC will decide whether it will conduct the investigation, with the assistance of AUC staff or whether the investigation will be conducted by an independent third party. The AUC will consider the subject matter, the individuals and organizations involved, the type of expertise needed to conduct the investigation and whether additional protections for confidentiality are needed.
- 3.6. The Chief Executive shall from time to time advise the AUC's Chair of the status of the assessment and investigation of a complaint.

- 3.7. Following the conclusion of any investigation the Chief Executive may issue a reporting letter to all affected parties summarizing the investigation steps, outcome and follow-up action items, if any.

4. Public reporting

- 4.1. The AUC will publish a report on its website providing a brief description of the complaints it has received and their respective outcomes. Individual names may not be disclosed in the report.

5. Submitting a complaint

- 5.1. Complaints are to be sent by mail or email to:

Alberta Utilities Commission
1400, 600 – 3 Avenue SW
Calgary, AB T2P 0G5
Attention: JP Mousseau, General Counsel (private and confidential)
jp.mousseau@auc.ab.ca