2007 NSUARB-P-886

NOVA SCOTIA UTILITY AND REVIEW BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF: The *Public Utilities Act,* R.S.N.S. 1989, c.380 as amended

IN THE MATTER OF: An Application by Nova Scotia Power Incorporated for Approval of Certain Revisions to its Rates, Charges and Regulations

RESPONSE TO INFORMATION REQUEST

TO: NSPI

FROM: CME

Question IR-47: **Reference CME IR-1**

Under the section titled "Fuel Procurement", reference is made that NSPI has "numerous agreements with banks, and other utilities and commodity suppliers". In past downgrades in credit ratings, what negative impacts did NSPI suffer (decreases in credit limits, additional security, terminations, fees, etc) and what was the economic quantification of each of those? Also, please provide the correspondence and supporting documentation related thereto.

Response IR-47: Please refer to Stutz IR-8.

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RESPONSE TO INFORMATION REQUEST

TO: NSPI

FROM: CME **REDACTED**

Question IR-48: **Reference CME - IR-2**

What does NSPI propose as a mechanism for dispute resolution in the event the parties disagree as to the Reconciliation Value or on a mutually agreed schedule for payment?

Response IR-48: The goal of the true-up mechanism is to reconcile differences that may result between the credit/debit algorithm of the ELI 2P-RTP tariff and the actual avoided or incremental costs experienced by the Company. The true-up would ensure that the stated intentions of SEB and the Board (i.e. that there be no transfer of costs) are met with certainty, and that 2P-RTP customers and the utility are treated fairly.

If Flatline Loadshape is used in Fuel Cost Determination
Using a flat line load shape to calculate actual SEB related fuel costs for 2007, the true-up need only address any differences between the net credits paid to SEB and NSPI's net avoided or incremental costs.

In this case, for load decrements, NSPI would calculate the savings of having avoided the load between the Customer Baseline Loadshape (CBL) and the load that resulted using SEB's actual load for that hour. The avoided costs would be calculated based on the same generation dispatch order used to set the 20 minute-ahead marginal cost for 2P-RTP purposes. For load increments, NSPI would calculate the actual incremental cost of serving the load above the CBL.

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TO: NSPI

FROM: CME **REDACTED**

Response IR-48: (cont'd)

NSPI will forecast the hourly cost of serving the total system load including SEB at their CBL and will compare it to the actual cost of serving the resultant load after the hour has ended. This comparison will separately account for SEB load and non-SEB load and costs, with SEB's load served on the margin. After the actual results for the hour are known, the change in system cost associated with SEB's load deviation can be determined and compared to the 2P-RTP credits or charges for that hour.

Please refer to Confidential Attachment 1 for numerical examples of this procedure. These examples show four sample hours from 2005 and the true-up values that would have been required had the ELI 2P-RTP operated in that year, assuming reasonable deviations from the CBL. NSPI will carry out these same calculations on an hourly basis in 2007, using actual CBL deviations and costs.

NSPI has modelled the new tariff using 2004 and 2005 hourly data. Based on this, the true-up amount required in 2007 is expected to be at least $4 million and may be substantially higher. Absent the true-up mechanism, these costs would have to be recovered from SEB or other customers in a future proceeding.

If Flatline Loadshape is not used in Fuel Cost Determination

Failing to use flat line load shapes in calculating the fuel costs, or not providing for some other means of incorporating these costs into NSPI's approved revenue requirement, these costs must also be included in the true-up calculation.

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TO: NSPI

FROM: CME **REDACTED**

Response IR-48: (cont'd)

Dispute Resolution
In the event the parties do not agree, after making reasonable efforts to do so, the dispute will be referred to the UARB for determination, similar to other areas of operation of the ELI-2P-RTP Tariff.

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RESPONSE TO INFORMATION REQUEST

TO: NSPI

FROM: CME **REDACTED**

Question IR-49: **Reference CME – IR-12**

What is the pricing of natural gas at the "floor level"? Also, provide data, consultants reports, industry and other economic outlooks, etc. that support the answer that there will be higher price levels and what those potential higher price levels may be for each quarter for 2007.

Response IR-49: As discussed in the response to CME IR-12, the floor cannot be translated into a specific number. Rather, the floor occurs when natural gas-fired electricity generation begins to displace a significant amount of coal-fired generation. Therefore, the floor price varies by region based upon coal prices and other coal-related generation costs, for example emission allowance prices in the U.S. [redacted]

Natural gas pricing is sensitive to numerous factors. Shorter-term, the primary factor is weather. Most forecasts consider normal weather and generally note that more extreme weather would cause prices to rise, and milder weather would cause prices to fall, all else being equal.

The recent short-term forecast published by the Energy Information Administration (EIA) of the U.S. Department of Energy[1] projects natural gas at the Henry Hub to average $7.79 per thousand cubic feet[2] USD ($8.03 per MMBtu USD) in 2007.

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[1] Short-Term Energy Outlook, November 7, 2006.
[2] Conversion from thousand cubic feet to MMBtu is thousand cubic feet times 1.031.

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TO: NSPI

FROM: CME **REDACTED**

Response IR-49: (cont'd)

A report published by the EIA Office of Oil and Gas in October 2006 addresses the relationship between crude oil and natural gas prices.[3] The authors find that despite recent decoupling between the prices of each, there is a long-term relationship between crude oil prices and natural gas prices such that a substantial permanent increase in crude oil prices will result in a substantial increase in natural gas prices.

[3] Jose A. Villar and Frederick L. Joutz, "The Relationship Between Crude Oil and Natural Gas Prices," Energy Information Administration, October 2006, U.S. Department of Energy, 27 November 2006, [http://www.eia.doe.gov/pub/oil_gas/natural_gas/feature_articles/2006/reloilgaspri/reloilgaspri.pdf]

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RESPONSE TO INFORMATION REQUEST

TO: NSPI

FROM: CME **REDACTED**

Question IR-50: **Reference CME – IR-45**

For what is NSPI charged a fee as it relates to its insurance premiums (see chart on page 2 of NSPI response to CMR IR-45)? Also, what is the explanation for the significant variances in Marine Cargo and Charters premium (2005 to 2007 estimated)? Also, please provide the loss ratios as requested in the last three years. They are relevant as loss ratios are a key element in underwriting that affects the pricing of insurance and hence are directly relevant to the insurance costs and therefore the revenue requirements of NSPI.

Response IR-50: The response to this question is confidential.

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RESPONSE TO INFORMATION REQUEST

TO: NSPI

FROM: CME **REDACTED**

Question IR-51: **Reference CA – IR-6**

a. Provide any additional information about the proposed job description for the fuel procurement position (other than as set out in the confidential response to AVON IR-50) and the recommended range of remuneration desired by NSPI and the range of remuneration recommended by the recruiter.

b. Also, given that it appears that filling this position may take a long time or may never occur, what changes (structural and otherwise) has NSPI made in the interim to improve its internal capacity including list the additional training, certification and other education obtained (listed by individual)?

Response IR-51: a. The response to this question is confidential.

b. Please refer to UARB IR-15 in regard to the development of the Solid Fuel Manager. Please refer to Liberty IR-2 with respect to the individuals involved in fuel procurement.

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RESPONSE TO INFORMATION REQUEST

TO: NSPI

FROM: CME

Question IR-52: **Reference CA – IR-10**

Who is responsible for arranging sales of gas off-system and what are the fees and expenses related thereto?

Response IR-52: The gas marketer is responsible for the arranging of sales of gas off-system. This position reports to the Director of Fuels, Energy and Risk Management.

The gas is sold through a request for proposal process. There are no fees paid to resell the gas. The gas is sold as per pricing terms awarded to the successful purchaser.

Expenses include the pipeline tolls and fuel charges to transport the natural gas from NSPI's point of receipt to the point of delivery.

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RESPONSE TO INFORMATION REQUEST

TO: NSPI

FROM: CME

Question IR-53: **Reference CA – IR-24**

Considering that fuel procurement is based on a portfolio with varying terms, capital and other costs amortized over periods of time, etc., it is respectfully submitted that information from future years (whether in the test year or not) affect the test period. Please provide all the factors that most influence NSPI's fuel cost per MWh and identify those factors if they differ from what is estimated by NSPI to occur in the 2007 test year or which could affect a later period.

Response IR-53: NSPI's 2007 test year fuel cost is explained in Section 2 of NSPI's Direct Evidence, "Fuel and Purchased Power". Factors in future years will be explained in future applications, as necessary.

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RESPONSE TO INFORMATION REQUEST

TO: NSPI

FROM: CME

Question IR-54: **Reference CA – IR-47**

Will NSPI make the referred to benchmark studies available at NSPI's offices for viewing and if not, please explain in detail why this kind of confidential information requires greater protection than is provided for using the systems we presently have in place.

Response IR-54: The information provided by utilities for the Canadian Electrical Association's Corporate Performance and Productivity Evaluation (COPE) benchmarking study is the property of the participating utilities and, by confidentiality agreement, can only be released with their consent. NSPI is only permitted to release composite data for other participating utilities as was provided in CA IR-47.

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RESPONSE TO INFORMATION REQUEST

TO: NSPI

FROM: CME

Question IR-55: **Reference CA – IR 54**

Are there employees who are involved in Succession Planning and Apprenticeship training (and related expenses) that in 2007 or beyond will no longer be employees of NSPI but transferred to NSPI and/or Emera related entities?

Response IR-55: No.

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RESPONSE TO INFORMATION REQUEST

TO: NSPI

FROM: CME

Question IR-56: **Reference CA – IR 67**

Specifically identify and describe the capital projects work for 2007 that makes up the increased capital spending as identified in this IR.

Response IR-56: Capital spending for 2005 was $98 million, 2006F is $117 million and 2007 is $136 million. The following is the breakdown.

(*in millions*)

Function	**Increase 2006F over 2005A**	**Increase 2007 over 2006F**
Transmission/Distribution	$7	$13
General Property	$6	$ 2
Generation	$6	$ 4

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RESPONSE TO INFORMATION REQUEST

TO: NSPI

FROM: CME

Question IR-57: **Reference SEB – IR-9**

Provide an organizational chart for the solid fuels procurement team and their job descriptions (if different in any way from the Liberty IR-1 response).

Response IR-57: The solid fuels procurement team is as provided in Liberty IR-1 and Liberty IR-2.

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RESPONSE TO INFORMATION REQUEST

TO: NSPI

FROM: CME

Question IR-58: **Reference SEB – IR-16**

Due to the lack of negative impact for the 2006 hurricane season and its potential impact in softening prices (e.g. petroleum coke), to what extent can NSPI alter its high sulphur coal usage? If not, why not and if so, what will be the change in costing that it could experience?

Response IR-58: NSPI's high sulphur coal usage is determined based on 2007 modeling assumptions.

Hurricanes, demand and other factors (e.g. gas versus oil pricing) may affect NSPI's fuel mix. A fuel adjustment mechanism would reflect such changes.

The present petroleum coke market is at an all time high.

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RESPONSE TO INFORMATION REQUEST

TO: NSPI

FROM: CME **REDACTED**

Question IR-59: **Reference SEB – IR-77**

Outside of annual reports and compliance filings as required as a publicly traded company, what presentations, reports, financial information and related communications has NSPI made to the financial institutions (i.e. corporate credit rating organizations, banks, brokerage houses, etc.) and please provide copies of them?

Response IR-59: Six presentations were made to bond rating agencies in 2006 (please refer to Confidential Attachments 1 to 6). NSPI has not made any other presentations to banks or brokerage houses.

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TO: NSPI

FROM: CME

Question IR-60: **Reference SEB – IR-86**

What was the return on asset assumption for the individual years 2001 to 2005 (same as in the chart) and was it the same as recommended by NSPI's actuary?

Response IR-60: The asset rates of return assumption used for pension accounting purposes from 2001 to 2005 were as follows:

2001 8.00%
2002 7.50%
2003 7.50%
2004 7.50%
2005 7.50%

Yes, the return on asset assumptions were in the range recommended by NSPI's actuary.

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RESPONSE TO INFORMATION REQUEST

TO: NSPI

FROM: CME

Question IR-61a: **Reference Liberty – IR-41**

Based on the list provided, what publications and journals does NSPI primarily rely upon and/or use the most and which have historically provided the most useful information?

Response IR-61a: NSPI uses the listed publications to obtain information on the price of fuels and the price for shipping these fuels. The listed publications provide a variety of price information including, but not limited to, historical data, indices values, current market spot prices, commodity futures pricing, fundamental forecast pricing and market commentary. Information in the publications is used to provide a broad view of fuel pricing and the use of one particular publication versus another depends on the particular undertaking for which the pricing information is required.

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RESPONSE TO INFORMATION REQUEST

TO: NSPI

FROM: CME

Question IR-61b: **Reference Liberty – IR-77**

Why does NSPI not hedge LFO?

Response IR-61b: NSPI has not hedged Light Fuel Oil (LFO) as the volume required can be highly variable. LFO is used to fuel combustion turbine units. These units are peaking units in NSPI's fleet. The extent of their dispatch and hence LFO volume consumed is affected by customer load, external markets and the use of rates such as 2P-RTP.

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RESPONSE TO INFORMATION REQUEST

TO: NSPI

FROM: CME

Question IR-62: **Reference UARB – IR-9 and CME - IR-6**

Provide a further detailed explanation beyond the answer provided including a detailed breakdown explanation of the methodology of how NSPI dispatches its fleet in the most economically way.

Response IR-62: Please refer to UARB IR-4 Attachment 11 and Confidential UARB IR-91 for a further explanation of the load increase in 2007.

The planned dispatch of units for the 2007 Fuel and Purchase Power Forecast was determined by Strategist. The Generation and Fuel (GAF) module of Strategist performs the dispatch using probabilistic production costing techniques.

The production costing procedure consists of two stages. In the first stage, system load data is transferred from the Load Forecast Adjustment (LFA) module in the form of typical 168-hour weekly load shapes, peak demand, and energy for each month. Hydro generation and transactions representing energy sales and purchases are also considered. The result of this first stage is the modified system load shape ready for thermal dispatch.

In the second stage, the expected operation of the thermal generating units is simulated by a probabilistic technique. Each generating unit may be represented by a specified number of capacity segments. A unit may be designated as a must-run unit, in which case its minimum segment is dispatched before any upper segment in the system. Planned maintenance is explicitly modeled for each generating unit by specifying the start and end date for each maintenance. The minimum segments of the must-run units are dispatched first, followed by enough other segments to satisfy a

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TO: NSPI

FROM: CME

Response IR-62: (cont'd)

commitment criterion; that is a sufficient number of units are available to meet a user-defined percentage of the expected peak demand. Operationally, the commitment criterion corresponds to the need to bring units on line in anticipation of needing them to serve load later in the day.

Each generating unit is described in the GAF module by its capacity segments and the corresponding heat rate (MMBtu/MWh). The dispatch cost ($/MWh) of each generating unit capacity segment is determined by multiplying its average heat rate by the fuel cost, adding the unit's variable operating and maintenance cost and applying an operating or loss factor. Once enough units have been started to satisfy the unit commitment criterion, the remaining segments are dispatched in economic order, subject, of course, to the dispatch of a unit's minimum capacity segment before the dispatch of its upper segments.

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TO: NSPI

FROM: CME **REDACTED**

Question IR-63: **Reference UARB – IR-15**

Provide copies of the complete presentations made by [redacted] made at industry forums at which he presented. Also, provide a copy of [redacted] Personal Development Plan.

Response IR-63: [redacted] has not accepted invitations to present at solid fuel industry forums.

Personal Development Plans are confidential personnel documents and are not released by NSPI.

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TO: NSPI

FROM: CME

Question IR-64: **Reference UARB – IR-20**

The CME respectfully disagrees that information for 2008 and beyond is not relevant and asks that the question be fully answered. NSPI is engaged in multi-year contracts and other expenditures and investments that extend beyond any single test year. Also the impact in any year and the assumptions of future years affect the test year and beyond.

Response IR-64: At the request of the Board, NSPI has filed a revised response to the question. Please refer to UARB IR-20 (revised).

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RESPONSE TO INFORMATION REQUEST

TO: NSPI

FROM: CME

Question IR-65: **Reference UARB – IR-37**

Provide a detailed breakdown of cost and explanation of activities as to the estimates and how they were derived for both Asset Management and Customer Growth and Support including how the costs are expensed, amortized or capitalized.

Response IR-65: A detailed breakdown of costs and activities included in the Asset Management category is provided in the response to UARB-IR-85.

The Customer Growth and Support estimate of $19.6 million was derived by including Regional Operations cost of $23.0 million (as detailed in the Direct Evidence, Appendix B, page 32) plus fleet fuel expense of $2.1 million (as referenced in Appendix B, page 38) less Transmission Maintenance and Operations costs of $5.5 million, included in Regional Operations. All these activities are operating or maintenance expenses.

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TO: NSPI

FROM: CME

Question IR-66: **Reference UARB – IR-44**

The CME respectfully disagrees that forecasts of OM&G costs are not relevant to establishing the 2007 test year and asks that the question be fully answered, and in particular, the movement of "initiatives foregone" does affect any present test year and future years. With respect, all sophisticated organizations make multi-year plans, budgets, etc. notwithstanding their uncertainty.

Response IR-66: NSPI provided the information as requested in UARB IR-44.

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TO: NSPI

FROM: CME

Question IR-67: **Reference UARB – IR-64**

List any contractors to NSPI noted in response to IR-64 that are companies related to NSPI and/Emera and the total value of those expenditures for 2006 and estimated for 2007.

Response IR-67: Of the contractors noted in UARB IR-64, Cablecom Ltd. was awarded one contract in 2006 for a total value of $1,363. There are no expenditures estimated for 2007.