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1 **Request IR-1:**

2
3 **Reference: Reduction in outages caused by tree strikes.**

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5 **Please explain the extent to which the reduction in outages caused by tree strikes was:**

6
7 **(a) The result of vegetation management and tree trimming; or**

8
9 **(b) Weather conditions experienced in 2025.**

10
11 **Response IR-1:**

12
13 (a-b) The reduction can be attributed to both factors as there is difficulty in the quantification of
14 outages and the root cause of the tree strikes. While there was more favourable weather in
15 2025, there was also approximately \$45 million of tree trimming and vegetation
16 management in 2024 and 2025.

17
18 Without vegetation management, even in favourable weather conditions, tree strike outages
19 would be higher. The ongoing and increasing vegetation management plan laid out in the
20 Five-Year Reliability Plan will provide ongoing cumulative benefits as more corridors are
21 widened and higher risk trees are trimmed and managed.

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Request IR-2:

Reference: Customer service standards and targets.

On page 27, line 12 to 13, the Report states, “without the impact of the incremental call volume from May through December, Nova Scotia Power would likely have achieved the service level during this period”.

(a) Please provide the evidence to support this statement.

(b) How many Customer Care Representatives did Nova Scotia Power employ in each of January of 2025 and December of 2025?

(c) How many of the Customer Care Representatives employed by Nova Scotia Power in January of 2025 and December of 2025 were full-time employees and how many were part-time employees?

(d) How many hours of work did Customer Care Representatives contribute to Nova Scotia Power in January of 2025 and December of 2025?

Response IR-2:

(a) The assertion is based on comparison to a baseline of 2024 call volume, handle times and staff shrinkage (e.g., vacation, absence, training, etc., percentage of FTE time spent in non-call facing scenario) correlated to the service level achieved. The period May-December 2025, relative to the same period in 2024, had increased call volume and handle times such that the product of calls answered and average handle time (equivalent to workload) increased by 40 percent year over year. This increase would translate to a ~23 percent service level impact, whereas Performance standard service level finished at 60.6 percent on the year, less than 10 percent below target.

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1 (b-d)

	Headcount	Full Time	Part Time	Total Hours	Full Time Hours	Part Time Hours
Jan-25	139	126	13	17870	16729	1141
Dec-25	143	129	14	20770	19574	1196

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Request IR-3:

With regard to notification of an anticipated severe weather event:

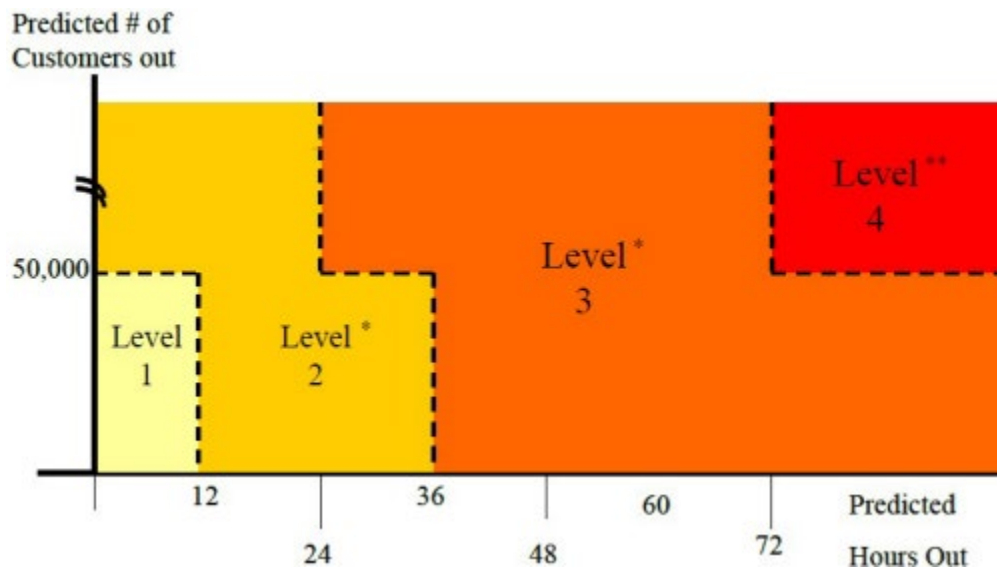
- (a) Please describe the weather forecasting resources that are used by Nova Scotia Power to plan its responses to adverse weather conditions, including severe weather events.
- (b) What criteria does Nova Scotia Power assess in order to determine whether to open the Emergency Operation Centre?
- (c) What was Nova Scotia Power's experience in 2025 regarding the accuracy of the weather forecasting resources it relied upon?
- (d) What, if any, steps did Nova Scotia Power take as a result of its experience regarding the accuracy of the weather forecasting resources that it relied upon?

Response IR-3:

- (a) NS Power relies on forecasts and guidance provided by third-party providers, including Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC). Primarily, these forecasts are developed for eight regions of the province to account for variations between different parts of Nova Scotia. The forecasts include estimates of anticipated temperatures, precipitation types and volumes, as well as wind conditions. NS Power's primary forecast provider typically supplies two forecasts for each region per day (morning and afternoon), but in advance of adverse weather, this is increased to four forecasts per region per day. These forecasts are supplemented with specific guidance and alerts produced by ECCC depending on the severity of a potential event as well as briefings and discussions from various third-party meteorologists engaged by NS Power.

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(b) The criteria for activating the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) is detailed within Section 5 of NS Power's Emergency Services Restoration Plan (ESRP), most recently filed in M12441. The determination of the restoration response level, and consequently whether the EOC is activated within the ESRP, is a function of both the number of customers predicted to be impacted as well as the predicted duration of the restoration response. The EOC would be activated in the case of a Level 3 or 4 response as determined according to Figure 1 in the ESRP and reproduced below:



The response levels outlined in the ESRP, including activation of the EOC, are intended to provide scalability in the response to a major event, but the ESRP does not attempt to exhaustively describe every type of event that could occur, nor does it try to replace the good judgment that must be exercised by operations personnel when responding to the many different scenarios that can occur.

(c) The accuracy of weather forecasting received by NS Power in 2025 was largely as expected. As discussed further below, no weather forecaster or forecast is anticipated to be completely accurate at all times, but NS Power believes based on its past experience with forecasters over multiple years and understanding of the complexity of meteorology, the

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1 Company has access to the necessary pre-event forecasts to make informed and effective
2 decisions. As described in part (a) Nova Scotia Power uses several different weather
3 sources to monitor weather forecasts and plan for adverse weather events, including
4 potential outages. This includes third-party forecasters as well as data and briefings from
5 ECCC as appropriate. NS Power and the experts it depends on for their expertise
6 understands this is a complex science. Forecasts are probabilistic and sensitive to rapidly
7 changing atmospheric conditions with differences in timing, location, and resolution.
8 These inherent complications makes it very hard to directly compare forecasted data and
9 observed conditions as accurate or not accurate. What may appear as discrepancy between
10 forecasted data and observed conditions does not necessarily reflect deficiencies in forecast
11 quality, particularly when there is forecast consensus among providers. NS Power uses
12 multiple forecast sources to produce the best plan possible for adverse weather potential
13 system impacts. NS Power does not actively evaluate every daily and hourly forecast value
14 against actuals, and would only investigate significant divergence in forecasts and actuals
15 as needed, as utility impacts, and therefore the Company's focus, only occur over certain
16 wind and precipitation thresholds.

- 17
18 (d) NS Power continues to follow its documented processes within the ESRP for all storm-
19 related activities and provides any action items and reviews as part of each Post-Event
20 Critique and its continuous improvement process.

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Request IR-4:

With regard to Estimated Time to Restore:

(a) Please describe the extent to which Nova Scotia Power relies upon weather forecasting to provide Estimated Time to Restore (ETR) updates to customers?

(b) What was the experience of Nova Scotia Power in 2025 regarding the accuracy of weather forecasts used to provide ETR updates to customers?

Response IR-4:

(a) Nova Scotia Power relies on weather forecasting extensively and at multiple stages of the storm response process to provide Estimated Time to Restore (ETR) updates to customers. This occurs both before and during storm events, as outlined in the board-approved Emergency Services Restoration Plan (ESRP).

a. Pre-event Planning: NS Power's initial ETR strategy is based primarily on the outputs from the Company's Damage Prediction Model. These ETRs are based on the anticipated damage, customer outages, resource availability, timing, and overall weather conditions

b. During a Weather Event: ETRs are updated as new information becomes available about the impact of the weather conditions on outages and also the safety of field resources. Wind speed, visibility, precipitation, and road conditions all contribute to updating ETRs as appropriate.

c. During Restoration/Field-Level: ETRs are also updated through field validation, at a single event level, or at a regional level once it is safe to assess the damage and outage causes.

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- 1 (b) NS Power used the ETR process above during its adverse weather response for all events
2 in 2025. Please refer to CA IR-03 for further discussion on forecasting.