Nova Scotia POWER An Emera Company

PO Box 910 | Halifax, Nova Scotia | Canada | B3J

August 26, 2026

REDACTED

Lisa Wallace
Chief Clerk of the Board
Nova Scotia Energy Board
1601 Lower Water Street, 3rd Floor
Halifax, NS B3J 3S3

Re: M13033 – DRO Appeal – Hariana Brooks and Paul Bernard

Dear Ms. Wallace:

In the Nova Scotia Energy Board's (Board, NSEB) letter dated August 12, 2026, the Board directed as follows:

> By copy of this letter, the Board directs Nova Scotia Power Inc. (NS Power, the Company) to file a response with the Board to the enclosed appeal on or before **2:00 PM on Wednesday, August 26, 2026**, and to provide a copy of the complete file reviewed by the DRO in reaching its decision, including any supporting information and comments NS Power wishes the Board to consider. NS Power must also provide a copy of their response to [Hariana Brooks and Paul Bernard].

Mr. Bernard and Ms. Brooks are appealing a decision by the Dispute Resolution Officer (DRO) dated August 5, 2026. The complete DRO file as provided by the DRO pertaining to this decision is included as **Confidential Attachment 1**. Attached as **Confidential Attachment 2** are the relevant customer account and communication notes from NS Power's CIS database. The customer's invoices beginning in December 2023 have been attached as **Confidential Attachment 3**.

Please accept the following summary of activities and communications pertaining to the DRO decision being appealed by Mr. Bernard and Ms. Brooks:

- February 19, 2026 – The customer's husband contacted NS Power regarding their bill and was advised that the current invoice reflected both a six-month billing correction and the current billing cycle. NS Power noted that total consumption over the six-month period was 15,842 kWh and that average bills for the premises between December and April typically range from approximately $1,100.00 to $1,500.00. This is referenced on page 1 of 4 in **Confidential Attachment 2**.

- June 2, 2026 – NS Power attempted to contact the customer regarding their outstanding closed account balance of $1,673.74 but was unable to reach them. Account notes indicate that payment arrangements were to be obtained for the remaining balance, and the account was retained in closed account status for a further contact attempt. This is referenced on page 2 of 4 in **Confidential Attachment 2.**

- June 10, 2026 – NS Power made a further attempt to contact the customer regarding the outstanding balance on the closed account. No contact was made. Account notes indicate that payment terms were to be established should the customer return the call, and the account remained in closed account status. This is referenced on page 2 of 4 in **Confidential Attachment 2**

- June 16, 2026 – NS Power conducted an additional outreach attempt concerning the outstanding closed account balance. The call was unanswered. NS Power noted that payment arrangements could be established if the customer contacted the Company and retained the account in closed account status for a subsequent follow-up attempt. This is referenced on page 2 of 4 in **Confidential Attachment 2**.

- June 23, 2026 – NS Power made a further attempt to reach the customer regarding the outstanding closed account balance but was unable to make contact. The account notes direct that payment terms be established for the outstanding balance should the customer call, after which the account would be returned to closed account status. The account was subsequently placed in collections agency status. This is referenced on page 2 of 4 in **Confidential Attachment 2**.

- July 29, 2026 – Mr. Bernard contacted the DRO after receiving a letter from a collection agency regarding Account #[redacted] He stated that they had previously been advised that their bills were estimated and would be adjusted, that they had requested historical usage and billing information which had not been provided, and that they wanted the account removed from collections and the balance reviewed. This is referenced on page 1 of 20 in the DRO file attached as **Confidential Attachment 1**.

- July 29, 2026 – The DRO responded to the customer and NS Power. He summarized his role and asked NS Power to provide its position in the matter as well as relevant account documentation. This is referenced on page 2 of 20 in the DRO file attached as **Confidential Attachment 1**.

- July 30, 2026 – NS Power confirmed that the customer had provided consent for the release of account information to the DRO and submitted its position, stating the following:

  > [...] Meter connections to our billing system have been restored and customer billing has returned to normal. NS Power confirms the customer's meter reads for February and April 2026 were true reads, and the billing was reconciled after estimated meter read in December.
  >
  > The customer disconnected service from [redacted] on April 16, 2026. The closing bill was printed on April 17, 2026 with a due date of May 19, 2026. NS Power attempted to contact the customer by calling the number on the account, [redacted] multiple times. Calls were placed on June 2, June 10, June 16 and June 23 attempting to reach the customer to discuss payment arrangements on the outstanding balance.
  >
  > It is NS Power's position that the account was released to an outside collection agency on July 10, 2026 when the balance remained unpaid.

  NS Power attached the account ledger, and meter reads for the subject account (#[redacted]. This is referenced on pages 4 to 7 of 20 in the DRO file attached as **Confidential Attachment 1**.

- July 30, 2026 – Mr. Bernard advised the DRO that the telephone number on the account had been disconnected since October 2025, that the first indication they had received regarding the arrears was the collection agency letter, and that they had not been informed that estimated bills would be reconciled through updated meter readings. This is referenced on page 8 of 20 in the DRO file attached as **Confidential Attachment 1**.

- July 30, 2026 – The DRO asked if the customers intended to connect service with NS Power at another address. In addition, the DRO advised Mr. Bernard that the October and December 2025 bills were based on estimated meter readings and that the February and April 2026 bills were based on actual meter readings. The DRO further advised that any estimation error is reconciled once an actual meter reading is obtained and stated that the customer had not been penalized for late payments. This is referenced on page 11 of 20 in the DRO file attached as **Confidential Attachment 1**.

- July 31, 2026 – Mr. Bernard advised the DRO that he was not disputing the actual meter readings. Rather, he stated that his concerns related to not being informed that account charges had been updated, not being informed that the account would be referred to collections, and invoices being issued at six-month intervals. He also questioned whether the estimated billing adjustments had been performed correctly and sought information about the appeal process. This is referenced on page 12 of 20 in the DRO file attached as **Confidential Attachment 1**.

- August 1, 2026 – The DRO asked again if the customer intended to connect service with NS Power at another address. The DRO further responded by explaining how estimated billing reconciliations are performed once actual meter readings are obtained and advised that all communications should remain in writing. The DRO also requested NS Power's position on whether the account could be withdrawn from collections and advised that any Final Written Decision could be appealed to the NSEB within 12 days of issuance. This is referenced on pages 13 to 14 of 20 in the DRO file attached as **Confidential Attachment 1**.

- August 4, 2026 – NS Power advised the DRO that collection activity could be placed on hold if the customer wished to enter into payment arrangements with NS Power. NS Power further advised that the balance would remain with the collection agency and that, if the debt had already been reported to the credit bureau, it would continue to appear on the customer's credit report until paid in full. This is referenced on page 15 of 20 in the DRO file attached as **Confidential Attachment 1**.

- August 5, 2026 – Mr. Bernard advised that he considered NS Power's response inadequate and maintained that they had not been informed of the account status prior to referral to collections. He further asserted that their credit rating had been affected and that they sought compensation. This is referenced on page 16 of 20 in the DRO file attached as **Confidential Attachment 1**.

- August 5, 2026 – The DRO issued his Final Written Decision pertaining to this appeal, finding as follows:

> In the context of Board approved Regulation 2.2 and 6.5, N.S. Power has appropriately billed the Customer for service to [redacted] (Account #[redacted]; and has appropriately referred the Customers outstanding debt of $1,673.74 a [to] a Collection Agency.

This is referenced on pages 18 to 20 of 20 in the DRO file attached as **Confidential Attachment 1**.

- August 10, 2026 – Mr. Bernard appealed the DRO's decision with the NSEB.

NS Power agrees with the DRO's decision that the customer was billed appropriately and that the customer's outstanding balance was appropriately referred to collections.

Following the cyber incident, NS Power was temporarily unable to access meter data, resulting in certain customer bills being based on estimated consumption. To ensure customers were billed based on actual energy usage as soon as practicable, NS Power implemented manual meter reading beginning in July 2025. Once actual readings were obtained, any discrepancies between estimated and actual usage were reconciled through adjustments on subsequent bills. As of March 31, 2026, meter connections to NS Power's billing system have been restored to normal operation, and customer billing is returning to normal.

The customers' June 2025 bill was based on estimated consumption. When an actual meter reading was obtained on July 29, 2025, NS Power reconciled the estimate by reversing the previously billed estimated usage and rebilling the account based on the actual reading, within the closing bill.[1] Following the reconciliation, the customers transferred service from [redacted]

The customers' October 2025 initial bill and December 2025 bill for [redacted] were based on estimated meter readings. On February 17, 2026, NS Power obtained an actual meter reading of 103,501.70. That reading exceeded the previous estimated reading of 94,990.00 and confirmed that the customers had consumed more electricity than had been captured by the earlier estimates. Accordingly, there was no overbilling resulting from those estimates that required reconciliation. The February 2026 bill was based on the actual meter reading, and the subsequent April 2026 closing bill was also based on an actual meter reading. The customers' invoices are attached as **Confidential Attachment 3**.

As noted in the account notes, Mr. Bernard contacted NS Power on February 19, 2026 regarding his billing. NS Power advised that the February invoice reflected a reconciliation of prior estimated bills, in addition to consumption for the current billing period from December 17, 2025 to February 17, 2026. NS Power also reviewed the customers' usage history and advised that average bills for the premises during the December to April period typically range from approximately $1,100.00 to $1,500.00. During that discussion, the representative reviewed the account's billing and usage

[1] Please refer to page 10 of 14 in Confidential Attachment 3.

history with Mr. Bernard, and NS Power's records do not reflect any further request for usage or billing information.

The customers' closing bill for [redacted] was issued on April 17, 2026, in the amount of $2,673.74, with a due date of May 19, 2026. On May 4, 2026, a payment of $1,000.00 was applied to the account, reducing the outstanding balance to $1,673.74. When the balance remained unpaid, NS Power attempted to contact the customer at the telephone number on file on June 2, June 10, June 16, and June 23, 2026 to discuss payment arrangements. No contact was made during any of those attempts. Mr. Bernard subsequently advised the DRO that the telephone number on the account had been disconnected. However, the account notes do not indicate that NS Power encountered a disconnected or out-of-service message during its collection attempts, nor do they reflect any request from the customer to update the contact information associated with the account. Following these unsuccessful collection efforts, the account was referred to an external collection agency on July 10, 2026, after the outstanding balance remained unresolved.

NS Power relies on the contact information provided by its customers and has no way of knowing that a telephone number has changed or is no longer in service unless the customer advises the Company. As discussed during the DRO process, customers who wish to make payment arrangements with NS Power may have collection activity placed on hold while those arrangements are maintained. The outstanding balance remains with the collection agency, and any reporting that has already been made to the credit bureau remains in place until the balance is resolved.

Please consider the enclosed information confidential due to the personal nature of the information that has been provided. NS Power has forwarded a copy of this correspondence to Mr. Bernard and Ms. Brooks by e-mail.

Yours truly,

Kathleen Murray

Kathleen Murray
Regulatory Counsel

Encl.

c. Mr. Paul Bernard and Ms. Hariana Brooks

Brooks DRO Appeal Confidential Attachment 1 has been removed due to confidentiality.

Brooks DRO Appeal Confidential Attachment 2 has been removed due to confidentiality.

REDACTED (CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION REMOVED)

Brooks DRO Appeal Confidential Attachment 3 has been removed due to confidentiality.