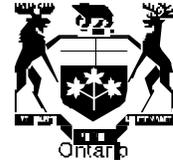


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NOTICE OF PROPOSAL TO AMEND
THE GAS DISTRIBUTION ACCESS RULE
BOARD FILE NO: EB-2006-0198

To: All Natural Gas Distributors
All Licensed Natural Gas Marketers
All Participants in Proceeding RP-2000-0001

Background

The Ontario Energy Board (the "Board") is giving notice under section 45 of the *Ontario Energy Board Act, 1998* (the "Act") of its proposal to amend the Gas Distribution Access Rule (the "GDAR"). The Board is proposing to amend section 1.4.3 of the GDAR as set out in Appendix A and described below.

Chapter 4 of the GDAR deals with service transaction requests, and is currently scheduled to come into force on January 1, 2007, except in relation to the requirement to accommodate gas distributor-consolidated billing in bill-ready form which has been deferred to January 1, 2008.

These dates reflect the Board's Decision and Order dated November 15, 2005 in proceeding RP-2000-0001, in which the Board:

- adopted a form of Service Agreement for the purpose of section 3.2 of the GDAR;
- mandated an Electronic Business Transactions ("EBT") system for the purposes of section 4.7.1 of the GDAR, with the EBT standards to be implemented being included as an appendix (the "EBT Standards Appendix") to the form of Service Agreement approved by the Board;
- established dates for the implementation of the Service Agreement and the EBT Standards Appendix; and

- directed Board staff to promptly convene the Advisory Committee contemplated in the EBT Standards Appendix and initiate the “Change and Version Control Process” for the purpose of addressing outstanding wording changes and process improvement matters.

Proposed Amendment to the GDAR

Board staff, the EBT Standards Working Group and the Advisory Committee have been working towards completion of the EBT Standards Appendix. In order to ensure as smooth an implementation of the EBT standards as possible, a test plan for the testing of participant systems has been agreed. In order for testing to be complete in advance of January 1, 2007, it must occur in the fall of 2006. While some participants have confirmed the readiness of their internal systems for testing in accordance with that schedule, a number of other participants have indicated that their internal systems will not be ready in time to accommodate testing within that timeframe.

The Board is therefore proposing to defer implementation of chapter 4 of the GDAR for a period of five months by amending section 1.4.3 of the GDAR to provide that chapter 4 will come into force on June 1, 2007 rather than on January 1, 2007. The text of the proposed amendment is set out in Appendix A. It is expected that all participant systems should be capable of accommodating testing within this extended timeframe. No change is proposed to the date by which gas distributors are required to accommodate gas distributor-consolidated billing in a bill-ready form, which remains January 1, 2008.

Anticipated Costs and Benefits

It is anticipated that some participants may incur additional costs as a result of the deferral of the implementation of chapter 4 of the GDAR. In at least one case, this is due to the need to retain the services of consultants for a more extended period of time. The Board anticipates, however, that gas market participants will benefit from the deferral inasmuch as the integrity and stability of internal systems will be better assured following market testing of all participant systems. The Board also anticipates that gas market participants and consumers will benefit from a market that operates as effectively and efficiently as possible, and that this outcome is more likely to be assured if implementation of chapter 4 of the GDAR is delayed to allow proper testing of the internal systems of all participants.

The Board is of the view that the benefits of the deferral of implementation of chapter 4 of the GDAR for a period of five months outweigh any costs that might be incurred or borne.

Coming into Force

The Board proposes that the amendment to the GDAR as set out in Appendix A come into force upon publication in the *Ontario Gazette*.

Invitation to Comment

All interested parties are invited to comment on the proposed amendment to the GDAR. This consultation is not intended to provide an opportunity for parties to revisit the policy decisions or approach embodied in the Board's previous decisions and orders regarding the GDAR, and the Board requests that comments be restricted to the proposed amendment only.

Any person who wishes to make a written submission with respect to the proposed amendment to the GDAR must file **8 paper copies** of the submission, and an electronic version in searchable Adobe Acrobat (PDF) and Word, with the Board Secretary by **4:30 pm on Friday, September 1, 2006**. Your submission must quote file number EB-2006-0198 and include your name, postal address and telephone number and, if available, your e-mail address and fax number.

Written submissions should be sent to:

Kirsten Walli
Board Secretary
Ontario Energy Board
P.O. Box 2319
2300 Yonge Street, Suite 2701
Toronto, ON M4P 1E4

Electronic versions may be submitted on diskette or by e-mail to boardsec@oeb.gov.on.ca.

This Notice, including the proposed amendment to the GDAR, all other Board documents referred to in this Notice (including the GDAR) and all written submissions received by the Board with respect to the proposed amendment will be available for inspection on the Board's website at www.oeb.gov.on.ca and at the Board's offices during normal business hours.

If you have any questions regarding the proposed amendment please contact Barbara Robertson at 416-440-7718 or call toll-free at 1-888-632-6273.

DATED at Toronto, August 18, 2006.

Original signed by

Kirsten Walli
Board Secretary

Attachment: Appendix A: Proposed Amendment to the GDAR

Appendix A

Proposed Amendment to the Gas Distribution Access Rule

- 1. Section 1.4.3 of the Gas Distribution Access Rule is repealed and replaced with the following:**

Chapter 4 of this Rule shall come into force on June 1, 2007, provided that nothing in Chapter 4 shall require a gas distributor to accommodate gas distributor-consolidated billing in a bill-ready form (as defined in the Service Agreement) until January 1, 2008.