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BY E-MAIL AND WEB POSTING

April 23, 2009

To: All Participants in EB-2008-0280

**Re: Filing Guidelines for the Pre-Approval of Long-Term Natural Gas Supply and/or Upstream Transportation Contracts
Board File No.: EB-2008-0280**

The purpose of this letter is to notify participants of the release of the final filing guidelines for the pre-approval of the cost consequences of long-term natural gas supply and/or upstream transportation contracts ("LTC filing guidelines"), which have been posted on the Board's website at www.oeb.gov.on.ca.

Background

In the Natural Gas Forum ("NGF") report, the Board concluded that it will:

- offer natural gas utilities the opportunity to apply for pre-approval of long-term natural gas supply and/or upstream transportation contracts; and
- consult on the development of guidelines that will inform all stakeholders of the principles and issues the Board will consider when evaluating an application for contract pre-approval.

In a letter, dated August 22, 2008, the Board outlined the issues to be addressed when developing a pre-approval process for long-term natural gas supply and/or upstream transportation contracts. The Board indicated that it would hold a consultation to discuss the needs, benefits and risks of entering into long-term contracts, the impact on competition and the filing guidelines.

Also, in its letter dated August 22, 2008, the Board stated that it planned to conduct the consultation in two phases. In the first phase, staff would hold stakeholder meetings which would lead to the development of a staff discussion paper. In the second phase, the Board would consider whether it is appropriate to develop filing guidelines for the pre-approval of long-term contracts.

On October 15-17, 2008, staff held a number of meetings with stakeholders. At these meetings, staff and its technical expert presented material to initiate discussion on whether: (i) it is appropriate for natural gas utilities to enter into long-term natural gas supply and/or upstream transportation contracts; and (ii) the Board should develop guidelines for the pre-approval of long-term contracts, and if so, what should be included in these guidelines.

At these meetings, no substantive issues were raised and stakeholders generally agreed to a pre-approval process for long-term contracts that support the development of new natural gas infrastructure (e.g., new pipeline facilities to access new natural gas supply sources such as Liquefied Natural Gas plants and frontier production). As a result, a staff discussion paper, as originally contemplated in Phase I of the consultation, was not necessary. The Board decided to proceed directly to Phase II and release its draft LTC filing guidelines for stakeholder comment. On February 11, 2009, the Board issued the draft LTC filing guidelines for stakeholder comment and the Report of the Board entitled Draft Filing Guidelines for the Pre-Approval of Long-Term Natural Gas Supply and/or Upstream Transportation Contracts ("the Report").

Ten stakeholders submitted comments on the draft LTC filing guidelines. The majority of these stakeholders supported the draft LTC filing guidelines and commented on the following matters:

- the actual contract itself should be filed as part of this process;
- this process should also include renewals of long-term contracts;
- this process should include any long-term contracts that involve an affiliate of the natural gas utility; and
- the Board should define what is meant by long-term.

One stakeholder, however, submitted that there is no need to determine at this time whether long-term contracts are appropriate since there are no current issues with security of supply or upstream transportation constraints. Therefore, it would be best for the Board to make a determination in the future if and when these concerns arise.

All materials related to these consultations (including stakeholders' comments) are available on the Board's website.

Final Filing Guidelines

The Board has decided to proceed with the finalization of the filing guidelines for the pre-approval of the cost consequences of long-term natural gas supply and/or upstream transportation contracts.

The filing guidelines in Attachment A reflect the comments by stakeholders, as appropriate. In response to the comments raised, the Board reiterates its policy as set out in the Report.

The Board believes that applications for pre-approval of the cost consequences of long-term contracts should be limited to those that support the development of new natural gas infrastructure. The Board does not believe that the pre-approval process should be used for the natural gas utility's ("utility") normal day-to-day contracting, renewals of existing contracts and other long-term contracts that are not related to new natural gas infrastructure. These contracts should continue to be addressed in the utility's rate proceedings.

Further, the Board is of the view that this pre-approval process should be an option available to the utility and not a requirement (even if the long-term contract involves an affiliate). As a consequence, the Board offers utilities the opportunity to apply on a case-by-case basis for pre-approval of these long-term contracts that support new natural gas infrastructure.

In its Report, the Board stated that it would pre-approve the costs associated with these contracts, not the contract itself. However, based on stakeholder comments, the Board believes that the contract should be filed as part of this process to allow for an appropriate review. The Board notes that the utility may request confidential treatment of its contract in accordance with the Ontario Energy Board's *Practice Direction on Confidential Filings*.

For additional clarity, the Board is of the view that defining long-term is not necessary since the pre-approval process is limited to projects that would support the development of new natural gas infrastructure. It is expected that the length of the contract will vary with, amongst other things, the nature and magnitude of the new natural gas infrastructure.

For any questions regarding the final LTC filing guidelines please contact Laurie Klein at laurie.klein@oeb.gov.on.ca or (416) 440-7661. The Board's toll free number is 1-888-632-6273.

Yours truly,

Original signed by

Kirsten Walli
Board Secretary

Attachment A

Attachment A

Filing Guidelines for Pre-Approval of Long-Term Natural Gas Supply and/or Upstream Transportation Contracts

This form applies to all applicants who are requesting pre-approval of the cost consequences of long-term natural gas supply and/or upstream transportation contracts that support the development of new natural gas infrastructure.

“Long-term” has not been defined since this pre-approval process is limited to projects that would support the development of new natural gas infrastructure. It is expected that the length of the contract will vary with, amongst other things, the nature and magnitude of the new natural gas infrastructure.

All applicants must complete and file the information requested in Part I, II, III, IV, V and VI.

Part I – Identification of Applicant

Name of Applicant:	File No: (OEB Use Only)
Address of Head Office:	Telephone Number:
	Facsimile Number:
	E-mail Address:
Name of Individual to Contact:	Telephone Number:
	Facsimile Number:
	E-mail Address:

Part II – Needs, Costs and Benefits

2.1	A description of the proposed project that includes need, costs, benefits (such as this project improves the security of supply and the diversity of supply sources) and timelines.
2.2	An assessment of the landed costs (supply costs + transportation costs including fuel costs) for the newly contracted capacity and/or natural gas supply compared to the landed costs of the possible alternatives.

Part III – Contract Diversity

3.1	A description of all the relevant contract parameters such as transportation/supply provider, contract length, conditions of service, price, volume, and receipt and delivery points.
3.2	An assessment on how the contract fits into the applicant's overall transportation and natural gas supply portfolio in terms of contract length, volume and services.

Part IV - Risk Assessment

4.1	<p>Identification of all the risks (such as forecasting risks, construction and operational risks, commercial risks and regulatory risks) and plans on how these risks are to be minimized and allocated between ratepayers, parties to the contract and/or the applicant's shareholders.</p> <p>For example, forecasting risks include future demand, prices, actual landed costs and performance of basin; commercial risks include competitive and credit-worthiness of provider/operator; construction and operational risks include costs escalations, delays or reliability issues pertaining to new construction, and gas interchangeability and quality issues; and regulatory risks include changes in laws or regulations.</p>
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Part V – Other Considerations

5.1	A description of the relationship and any other conditions, rights or obligations between the parties to the contract and the applicant's parent company and/or affiliates.
5.2	An assessment of retail competition impacts and potential impacts on existing transportation pipeline facilities in the market (in terms of Ontario customers).

Part VI – Contract

6.1	The contract for which the utility is seeking pre-approval for is filed in this application. The utility may request confidential treatment of its contract in accordance with the Ontario Energy Board's <i>Practice Direction on Confidential Filings</i> .
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