



EB-2010-0280

IN THE MATTER OF the *Ontario Energy Board Act, 1998*,
S.O. 1998, c. 15, Schedule B;

AND IN THE MATTER OF cost awards in relation to a
consultation process to develop customer service
standards for Natural Gas Distributors

BEFORE Cynthia Chaplin
Member

DECISION AND ORDER ON COST AWARDS

February 4, 2013

Background

On September 21, 2010, the Ontario Energy Board issued a letter (the “announcement letter”) announcing the commencement of a consultation process to develop customer service standards and rules for gas distributors pertaining to residential and low-income customers (the “consultation”). In its announcement letter, the Board indicated that cost awards would be available under section 30 of the *Ontario Energy Board Act, 1998* (the “Act”) to eligible participants and that costs awarded would be recovered from all rate-regulated natural gas distributors based on their respective distribution revenues.

On September 6, 2012, the Board issued amendments to the Gas Distribution Access Rule relating to low income customer service standards thereby concluding the initial phase of this consultation. Also on September 6, 2012, the Board issued a Notice of Hearing for Cost Awards (the “Notice”) pertaining to the initial phase of this consultation. The Notice required participants to submit their cost claims no later than September 20, 2012. Rate-regulated natural gas distributors were given until September 27, 2012 to submit any objections to the claims filed. No objections were filed.

In its October 28, 2010 Decision on Cost Eligibility, the Board found the following participants (collectively, the “eligible participants”) to be eligible for an award of costs in respect of this consultation:

- Building Owners and Managers Association (“BOMA”);
- Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters (“CME”);
- Federation of Rental-Housing Providers of Ontario (“FRPO”);
- London Property Management Association (“LPMA”);
- Low-Income Energy Network (“LIEN”); and
- Vulnerable Energy Consumers Coalition (“VECC”).

All of the eligible participants, except for BOMA, submitted cost claims.

Board Findings

The Board has reviewed the cost claims of the eligible participants and finds them to be within the overall limits set by the Board in the Notice. The Board therefore finds that these participants are entitled to 100% of their reasonably incurred costs of participating in this phase of the consultation process.

Process for Paying the Cost Awards

The amounts to be paid by each individual rate-regulated natural gas distributor in relation to the costs awarded to each eligible participant are as set out in Appendix A to this Decision and Order. However, the amounts will **not** be paid directly by the distributor to the participant.

The Board will use the process set out in section 12 of the Practice Direction on Cost Awards to implement the payment of the cost awards. Therefore, the Board will act as a clearing house for all payments of cost awards relating to this consultation process. Invoices will be issued to distributors at the same time as the invoices for cost assessments are made under section 26 of the Act. The practice of the Board is to issue to each rate-regulated licensed natural gas distributor one invoice that covers all cost awards payable by the distributor for the relevant period. As a result, the invoice may cover cost awards payable in relation to a number of consultations, including this one.

THE BOARD THEREFORE ORDERS THAT:

1. The individual distributors listed in **Appendix A** to this Decision and Order shall pay the costs awarded to each of the eligible participants as set out in **Appendix A**. These amounts are NOT to be paid directly by the distributor to the participant.
2. The individual distributors listed in **Appendix A** to this Decision and Order shall pay the Board's costs of, and incidental to, this consultation.
3. Payment of cost awards and of the Board's costs referred to in paragraphs 2 and 3 shall be made to the Ontario Energy Board in accordance with the invoice issued to the individual distributor, and shall be due at the same time as cost assessments under section 26 of the Act are due.

DATED at Toronto, February 4, 2013

ONTARIO ENERGY BOARD

Original Signed By

Kirsten Walli
Board Secretary

Appendix A

Gas Distributor, Transmitter, Storage Company	CME	FRPO	LPMA	LIEN	VECC	Total
Enbridge Gas Distribution	\$ 1,468.22	\$ 2,480.76	\$ 2,337.26	\$ 3,864.26	\$ 672.85	\$ 10,823.35
Union Gas	\$ 1,393.46	\$ 2,354.45	\$ 2,218.26	\$ 3,667.51	\$ 638.60	\$ 10,272.28
Natural Resource Gas	\$ 7.39	\$ 12.49	\$ 11.77	\$ 19.46	\$ 3.39	\$ 54.50
Total	\$ 2,869.07	\$ 4,847.70	\$ 4,567.29	\$ 7,551.23	\$ 1,314.84	\$ 21,150.13