



IN THE MATTER OF  
the Utilities Commission Act, R.S.B.C. 1996, Chapter 473

and

Applications for Participant Cost Awards by Intervenors  
into the Commission's 1999 Return on Common Equity for a  
Low-Risk Benchmark Utility Public Hearing

and

Order No. G-97-98 Participant Assistance/Cost Awards

**BEFORE:** P. Ostergaard, Chair )  
L.R. Barr, Deputy Chair ) December 2, 1999  
P.G. Bradley, Commissioner )  
B.L. Clemenhagen, Commissioner )

**O R D E R**

**WHEREAS:**

- A. On March 11, 1999, the Commission issued Order No. G-26-99 setting down an oral public hearing into the appropriate Return on Common Equity ("ROE") and Capital Structures for BC Gas Utility Ltd. ("BC Gas"), Pacific Northern Gas Ltd. ("PNG"), West Kootenay Power Ltd. ("WKP"), Centra Gas Fort St. John Inc. and Centra Gas Whistler Inc., to commence May 31, 1999; and
- B. By way of letters dated March 22, 1999 and March 23, 1999, BC Gas, PNG and WKP ("the Utilities") asked the Commission to reconsider the scope of the hearing and limit the items for consideration to the ROE for a low-risk benchmark utility and to the automatic adjustment formula; and
- C. The Utilities also asked that the Commission delay the date for the filing of all evidence to May 17, 1999, to make such further adjustments to the Regulatory Timetable as necessary to allow for this delay, and to proceed on a written rather than an oral basis; and
- D. Comments on this request were received from the Consumers' Association of Canada (B.C. Branch) et al. ("CAC(BC) et al.") and the Joint Industry Electrical Steering Committee ("JIESC") supporting the restriction in the scope of the hearing but opposing the request for a written hearing; and
- E. The Commission considered all the submissions and set down an oral public hearing into the appropriate ROE for a low-risk benchmark utility and into future processes or mechanisms that may be employed to improve the determination of ROE for the Utilities in future years; and
- F. The public hearing proceeded as scheduled on Monday, June 21, 1999 in Vancouver; and
- G. On August 26, 1999, the Commission issued its Decision and Order No. G-80-99; and
- H. On September 8, 1999, the CAC(BC) et al. submitted its bill of costs for its participation in the ROE hearing; and

- I. On October 4, 1999, the JIESC submitted its bill of costs for its participation in the ROE hearing; and
- J. The Commission has reviewed the applications with regard to the criteria and rates set out in Order No. G-97-98.

**NOW THEREFORE** the Commission orders as follows:

1. Pursuant to Section 118(1) of the Utilities Commission Act, the Commission awards funds for participation in the ROE hearing as set out below:

CAC(BC) et al.	\$10,832.74
JIESC	\$97,514.77

2. Reimbursement of the awards is allocated to the utilities in the following manner:

<u>Utility</u>	<u>Pro-rata Portion</u>	<u>CAC(BC) et.al</u>	<u>JIESC</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
BC Gas	45%	\$ 4,874.73	\$43,881.65	\$48,756.38
WKP	30%	3,249.82	29,254.43	32,504.25
PNG	<u>25%</u>	<u>2,708.19</u>	<u>24,378.69</u>	<u>27,086.88</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<u>100%</u>	<u><b>\$10,832.74</b></u>	<u><b>\$97,514.77</b></u>	<u><b>\$108,347.51</b></u>

3. BC Gas, WKP and PNG are directed to reimburse CAC(BC) et al. and the JIESC for the total amounts allocated in a timely manner.

**DATED** at the City of Vancouver, in the Province of British Columbia, this 9<sup>th</sup> day of December 1999.

BY ORDER

*Original signed by:*

Peter Ostergaard  
Chair