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ORDER NUMBER
F-4-18

IN THE MATTER OF
the *Utilities Commission Act*, RSBC 1996, Chapter 473

and

British Columbia Hydro and Power Authority
Customer Emergency Fund Pilot Program Application
Participant Assistance/Cost Award Application

BEFORE:
K. A. Keilty, Commissioner/Panel Chair
W. M. Everett, QC, Commissioner

on January 16, 2018

ORDER

WHEREAS:

A. On July 24, 2017, the British Columbia Hydro and Power Authority (BC Hydro) filed with the British Columbia Utilities Commission (Commission), pursuant to sections 58-61 and 49(a) of the *Utilities Commission Act* (UCA), the Customer Emergency Fund (CEF) Pilot Program (CEF Pilot) Application (Application) for approval of the following:

   1. Rate Schedule 1903, to establish a CEF Rate Rider, effective June 1, 2018;
   2. An amendment to Rate Schedule 1901, to exclude the application of the Deferral Account Rate Rider to the CEF Rate Rider, effective June 1, 2018;
   3. Certain amendments to BC Hydro's Electric Tariff related to the Application (CEF Tariff Changes), effective June 1, 2018; and
   4. The establishment of the CEF Regulatory Account, effective the date of the Commission's order approving the Application;

B. On August 24, 2017, by Order G-131-17, the Commission established a Streamlined Review Process (SRP) with one round of technical questions;

C. On November 17, 2017, the Commission issued Order G-166-17 with accompanying reasons for decision approving the CEF Pilot Application;

D. The following participants filed Participant Assistance/Cost Award (PACA) applications with the Commission with respect to their participation in the proceeding:

Date	Participant	Application
December 1, 2017	British Columbia Old Age Pensioners' Organization et al.	$14,007.10
December 2, 2017	BC Sustainable Energy Association and Sierra Club BC	$3,136.00
December 4, 2017	Zone II Rate Payer Group	$10,964.45
December 8, 2017	Non-Integrated Areas Ratepayers Group	$4,547.20
December 13, 2017	Commercial Energy Consumers Association of British Columbia	$9,433.20

E. By letter dated December 29, 2017, BC Hydro provided its comments on the PACA applications stating that the Commercial Energy Consumers Association of British Columbia's (CEC) PACA should not exceed that of participating organizations who represent customer groups with a direct interest in the CEF Pilot;

F. By letter dated January 11, 2018, CEC provided its response to BC Hydro's comments; and

G. The Commission has reviewed the PACA applications in accordance with the criteria and rates set out in the PACA Guidelines, attached to Commission Order G-143-16, and concludes that the cost awards should be approved.

NOW THEREFORE pursuant to section 118(1) of the *Utilities Commission Act* and for the reasons attached as Appendix A to this order, the Commission orders as follows:

1. Funding is awarded to the following participants in the listed amounts for their participation in the BC Hydro CEF Pilot proceeding:

Participant	Award
British Columbia Old Age Pensioners Organization *et al.*	$14,007.10
BC Sustainable Energy Association and Sierra Club BC	$3,136.00
Zone II Rate Payer Group	$10,964.45
Non-Integrated Areas Ratepayers Group	$4,547.20
Commercial Energy Consumers Association of British Columbia	$9,433.20

2. BC Hydro is directed to reimburse the above-noted participants for the awarded amount in a timely manner.

DATED at the City of Vancouver, in the Province of British Columbia, this 16th day of January 2018.

BY ORDER

Original signed by:

K. A. Keilty
Commissioner/Panel Chair

Attachment

British Columbia Hydro and Power Authority
Application for Approval of the Customer Emergency Fund Pilot Program

Participant Assistance/Cost Award Application

REASONS FOR DECISION

Section 118 of the *Utilities Commission Act* (UCA) provides, "The commission may order a participant in a proceeding before the commission to pay all or part of the costs of another participant in the proceeding."

The Commission's Participant Assistance/Cost Awards Guidelines (PACA Guidelines) set out the eligibility requirements and criteria applied by the Commission in assessing cost awards, including the process for applying for a cost award, eligible costs and rates. Appendix A, section 4.3 of the attached to Commission Order G-143-16 outlines the PACA Guidelines items the Commission may consider when determining the amount of a participant's cost award.

During the period from December 1 to 13, 2017, the British Columbia Old Age Pensioners' Organization et al. (BCOAOP), the BC Sustainable Energy Association and Sierra Club BC (BCSEA), the Zone II Rate Payer Group (Zone II), the Non-Integrated Areas Ratepayers Group (NIARG) and the Commercial Energy Consumers Association of British Columbia (CEC) (collectively, Interveners) submitted their PACA applications in the British Columbia Hydro and Power Authority (BC Hydro) Customer Emergency Fund (CEF) Pilot Program (CEF Pilot) Application.

The Interveners' PACA applications are summarized as follows:

Date	Participant	Application
December 1, 2017	British Columbia Old Age Pensioners Organization *et al.*	$14,007.10
December 2, 2017	BC Sustainable Energy Association and Sierra Club BC	$3,136.00
December 4, 2017	Zone II Rate Payer Group	$10,964.45
December 8, 2017	Non-Integrated Areas Ratepayers Group	$4,547.20
December 13, 2017	Commercial Energy Consumers Association of British Columbia	$9,433.20

By letter dated December 29, 2017, BC Hydro provided its comments on the PACA applications. In BC Hydro's view, the PACA for BCOAPO, BCSEA, ZONE II and NIARG are reasonable. However, BC Hydro stated that CEC did not represent a customer group who has a direct interest in the CEF proceeding and its PACA should therefore not exceed that of participating organizations who did represent customer groups with a direct interest in the CEF Pilot.

By letter dated January 11, 2018, CEC provided its response to BC Hydro's comments, stating, among other things, that CEC's PACA Application was within the PACA guidelines for time spent by consultants and legal counsel. CEC also pointed out that the "Information Requests" it had filed in accordance with the Commission's Regulatory Timetable were consistent with the list of issues identified by the CEC in its intervention, and "BC Hydro took no issue with the CEC Information Requests as to appropriateness or relevance to the Application." CEC further submits that it had "efficiently and effectively participated in the BC Hydro Customer Emergency Fund application process…."

Commission determination

The Panel reviewed each of the Interveners' PACA applications and notes that BC Hydro in its letter dated December 29, 2017 states "In BC Hydro's view, the PACA for BCOAPO, BCSEA, ZONE II and NIARG are reasonable."

With respect to CEC's PACA application, the Panel notes BC Hydro's view that "given that CEC does not represent the direct interest of customers who will be charged the Customer Emergency Fund Rate Rider and be eligible to participate in the Pilot, their PACA should not exceed that of participating organizations which do represent such customers."[1] However, the Panel disagrees with BC Hydro's position, and finds that CEC is eligible for the full amount of the PACA funding that it has applied for the following reasons:

- The Panel found CEC's contributions to be useful in arriving at its decisions in this proceeding despite the fact that CEC represents commercial class customers of BC Hydro who may not be significantly affected by the outcome of the proceeding,
- CEC submitted technical questions in accordance with the regulatory timetable established by Commission Order G-131-17, while NIARG and BCSEA did not. As a result the Panel finds it reasonable that CEC's preparation time and costs would be higher, and
- BC Hydro, in its letter commenting on the PACA funding, did not take issue with the quality of the contributions made by CEC during the proceeding.

The Panel finds CEC's PACA application to be reasonable in the circumstance and in accordance with the criteria and rates set out in the PACA Guidelines, attached to Commission Order G-143-16. **The Commission determines that CEC and the other Interveners are eligible for PACA funding in the amounts applied for, and orders PACA to be paid as set out in Order F-4-18.**

[1] BC Hydro Response to CEC PACA Application, letter dated December 29, 2017, p. 2.