

Requests for Information

1 **Q. Further to the response to PUB-NP-026, in which Newfoundland Power states it**
 2 **does not “*formally track customer’s complaints*”, describe the process Newfoundland**
 3 **Power has in place to record a customer problem or complaint and the steps taken**
 4 **to address that complaint.**

5
 6 A. Customers routinely contact Newfoundland Power to inquire about service problems or a
 7 wide variety of matters ranging from new service connections, to energy consumption, to
 8 power outages.
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10 Newfoundland Power resolves the majority of customer inquiries during the initial
 11 contact with the Company’s Customer Contact Centre. The Company believes that
 12 resolution on the first contact is consistent with least cost customer service. Some types
 13 of customer problems or complaints, such as those related to power outages, may by their
 14 nature require field work or specialist follow up.¹ The Company’s systems track these
 15 inquiries to ensure customers receive a timely response.
 16

17 Customer inquiries or complaints are recorded in different systems depending on the
 18 nature of their concern. For example, Customer Contact Centre staff use the Customer
 19 Service System (“CSS”) to record information related to customer inquiries concerning
 20 electrical service accounts. Typically, the information recorded includes the description
 21 of the inquiry and the resolution.²
 22

23 When customers call to report an outage, the relevant information is captured in the
 24 Company’s Outage Management System. This system is used to record the initial report,
 25 assessment, investigation, and resolution of an outage.
 26

27 During major power outage situations, the Company receives a high volume of customer
 28 inquiries related to the outage.³ Given the volumes, it is not practical for Customer Contact
 29 Centre staff to record detail about each customer inquiry.⁴ Taking the time to log the detail
 30 about each customer inquiry would necessarily reduce the effectiveness of Newfoundland
 31 Power’s customer response.⁵

¹ This includes, for example, customer concerns regarding billing accuracy which may sometimes require field work to check meter readings or metering equipment. Similarly, customer concerns regarding high energy usage may require follow-up by staff specializing in energy conservation. The specialist may be able to resolve the issue over the phone or may decide to make a customer visit.

² If the inquiry cannot be resolved by the Customer Contact Centre staff, it is recorded for follow-up. Once resolved, details of the resolution are also typically recorded in CSS.

³ For example, from January 2-8, 2014, the Company received over 139,000 customer calls.

⁴ In such situations, Customer Contact Centre staff gathers information from each customer regarding their location and outage circumstances, and based on this information will advise the customer as to whether the outage at their location is related to a larger system event. Staff typically does not record the details of all reported outage incidents which are due to these larger system events.

⁵ Newfoundland Power reduced the number of busy signals received by customers in the January 2-8, 2014 period by approximately ¾ when compared to the response in the January 11-13, 2013 electrical system disturbance.

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1 Attachment A shows two examples of screens from the Company's CSS and Outage
2 Management System regarding customer inquiries received between January 2-8, 2014.
3 Given the extraordinary nature of the customer impacts of the system events of January
4 2-8, 2014, Newfoundland Power has commissioned a customer survey relating to the
5 matter. Please refer to the response to Request for Information PUB-NP-046 for further
6 information related to this survey.