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# BRITISH COLUMBIA UTILITIES COMMISSION

## RESPONSE TO FINAL FORTIS AMI METER REPORT

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My concerns with the implementation of the smart meter program are the legitimate questions and some of the questionable responses by Fortis. Yes, electronic meters have been around for a while with some difference of opinion amongst users.

The limited time that electronic meters can be in use without being brought back in for a retest makes me suspect that they are not as good as they are hoped to be. What is the life of electronic meters with a battery...15 years, perhaps? All the while Fortis is throwing away meters that have been in use for 50 or more years; e.g. the picture on page 376 of B-15. Most of these meters are 40 – 50 years old and the RF test in that picture is in front of 40 – 50 year old meters. I could only see 4 AMI meters in that picture. How is it possible that you could use a picture of a test of a low RF reading as there are only approximately 4 RF meters showing? Of course the test would be leaning to a low RF reading. The meter on the far right is not even a newer type of suspension as it has an old bearing type. It is a Sangamo CSA late 1940 or early 50 before magnetic suspended discs came out and they are being used for a test so they can't be that bad and are still being used. As I can see, there are 3 old CJA meters in that picture. Again, with the new meter test the graph does show very low readings but there are also reports of smart meters affecting people after they have been installed. How accurate are your tests, or are you testing for the right range of frequency coming out of the meters?

I have some concerns over the projected amount of money Fortis will be saving by transferring from electromechanical and going to smart meters. Your projected life expectancy of a smart meter of 10 – 15 years does not make for a "smart" meter. Does a smart meter have to be verified due to a battery change or life of the electronics in the meter? We all know that electronics can change drastically in 10 years. Therefore the meter will be obsolete in 15 years and Fortis we required to discard 100,000 meters (which will result in a capital expense) and will allow you to increase the rates again.

The idea of saving money by replacing meter readers is again not correct. You may have fewer meter readers but who will be monitoring the large banks of cell phone receivers that each area will have? More than likely that would be a tradesperson, at a higher pay rate than meter readers. Yes, Fortis will be reducing the amount of exhaust by having fewer meters reader vehicles, but the cell maintenance crew will be using bucket trucks which will use more fuel and more exhaust than a 1/2 ton truck. Again, you are stating false economic savings. The electromechanical meters, e.g. the one shown on image 376 of B-15 could have been in use for 40 – 50 years and not be replaced and still pass the Measurement Canada specifications.

I wonder who convinced Measurement Canada to change specifications that had been in place for dozens of years so that all electromechanical meters should have a shorter seal period upon recertification? They do not have specifications to tell them that electronic meters would be a superior meter, as they don't have a long shelf life and have a battery that will have to be replaced.

The electronic meter that Fortis is now using does not have AMI capability, so what are their plans for the existing electronic ones? Throw them out and replace them with AMI meters? Again, that would be Fortis wasting money. The idea of detecting power outages immediately will be true, but it is also true that Fortis has their manpower spaced so thin that a lineman may take 1 hour to get to the area of an outage. Where has the time of outage changed if you live in a rural area? Rural residents can forget about a speedy fix.

If power theft is occurring, it usually happens before the meter by way of diversion. To disconnect remotely Fortis has to install a remote device in your service. However, the AMI meter is only able to switch the device on and off, it is not the meter. They appear to be telling the customer information that may not be truthful, e.g. the Zigbee radio chip appears to be a bunch of hooey. Do you want Fortis turning off your air conditioner, water heater or thermostat?

If Fortis can program my meter, so can a computer hacker. No electronic frequency is hack proof, e.g. hacking into US Government sites. What is to prevent some hacker from switching off my power? What control will Measurement Canada have on what Fortis can do with my meter?

I liked the picture of the test board on page 245 of D-15! It looks like the same one that I used when I was working for Utilicorp in the Trail meter shop. We all know that the main reason for transfer to AMI meters is so that Fortis can implement Time of Use metering. Time of Use will cost us more money to eat supper because of the higher rates that will be charged to the consumer between 4 – 8 p.m. (e.g. peak time) It simply isn't feasible that people will start eating dinner at 10 p.m., or wake up at 2 a.m. to take a shower because power will cost less at that time. When Time of Use is implemented, can or will Fortis change the Time of Use without the consumer knowing of the change?

Regarding power conservation; there is NOT a shortage of power in the Fortis electrical area; however, conservation will enable Fortis to sell their excess power to the US, won't it?

The amount of irrelevant paper that BCUC wants sent out to intervenors is ridiculous. Is it bullshit baffles brains? I feel that they want the intervenors to give up by overloading us with pages of information they may or may not be relevant to the case. It is impossible to digest the amount of information without hiring a lawyer I'm guessing there were some 1500 – 200 pages. How can a reasonable person be expected to go through this amount of paper?

Joe Tatangelo