

29 April 2021

VIA E-FILING

Patrick Wruck
Commission Secretary
BC Utilities Commission
6th Floor 900 Howe Street
Vancouver, BC V6Z 2N3



Reply to:
ED@bcpiac.org
Ph: 604-687-3034
Our File: 7700.102

Dear Mr. Wruck,

**Re: British Columbia Utilities Commission - Inquiry into the Regulation of Safety
BCOAPO Submissions on Proposed Stage 1 Sub Issues**

We make the following submissions in response to the Commission's Order G-34-21 (Exhibit A-6) on behalf of our clients, the group of community-based organizations serving well over 100,000 diverse clients and members throughout the province. Our clients are known collectively in this regulatory proceeding as BCOAPO or BCOAPO et al.

Below are BCOAPO's comments regarding the Proposed Sub Issues for Stage 1 of the BCUC Inquiry into the Regulation of Safety.

According to Order G-342-20, the BCUC Inquiry into the Regulation of Safety will be held in two-stages. Stage 1 would focus on:

- 1) the nature and extent of the BCUC's jurisdiction to regulate the safety of public utilities under the *Utilities Commission Act* (UCA);
- 2) the conditions, if any, under which the BCUC can forbear from regulating the safety of public utilities within its jurisdiction, as allowable under the UCA; and
- 3) setting out a framework of key principles to guide the BCUC in carrying out its safety-related duties.

Stage 2 would explore the application of this framework and would culminate in a final report.

By letter dated March 25, 2021 (Exhibit A-7, Appendix A), the BCUC proposed six Sub Issues for Stage 1, including:

- Sub Issue 1 – Keeping Informed;

- Sub Issue 2 – Scope of the BCUC’s Safety Mandate;
- Sub Issue 3 – Safety in BCUC Adjudications;
- Sub Issue 4 – Effects of BCUC Safety Regulation on Regulatory Burden;
- Sub Issue 5 – Regulatory Gaps; and
- Sub Issue 6 – Regulatory Overlaps.

Additionally, the BCUC outlined specific questions for each Sub Issue.

BCOAPO submits that overall, all Sub Issues are appropriate for Stage 1 of the Inquiry. Specifically, Sub Issues 2 (Scope of the BCUC’s Safety Mandate), 5 (Regulatory Gaps), and 6 (Regulatory Overlaps) will help to answer the broader questions 1 (the nature and extent of the BCUC’s jurisdiction to regulate the safety of public utilities) and 2 (the conditions, if any, under which the BCUC can forbear from regulating the safety of public utilities within its jurisdiction) laid out in Order G-342-20. Sub Issues 1 (Keeping Informed), 3 (Safety in BCUC Adjudications), and 4 (Effects of BCUC Safety Regulation on Regulatory Burden), will assist interveners with addressing the broader question 3 (setting out a framework of key principles to guide the BCUC in carrying out its safety-related duties) from the Order G-342-20.

Although there might be some of the questions for these issues that could be deferred to Stage 2, such as questions from Sub Issue 1 related to timeframes of the reporting and notifications, BCOAPO has no objections to these questions.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

BC PUBLIC INTEREST ADVOCACY CENTRE

Original on file signed by

Leigha Worth
Executive Director | General Counsel

Original on file signed by

Irina Mis
Staff Lawyer