

BOARD STAFF INTERROGATORY #10

INTERROGATORY

Ref: Ex B/6/S1/para6

Please file the referenced OEB Decision EB-2006-0034 Phase II concerning the RCAM methodology where the Board addressed SBC costs.

RESPONSE

Please see the attachment.

Witnesses: K. Culbert  
N. Kishinchandani  
M. Weil

Ontario Energy  
Board

Commission de l'énergie  
de l'Ontario



**EB-2006-0034**

**IN THE MATTER OF** the Ontario Energy Board Act,  
1998, S.O. 1998, c.15

**AND IN THE MATTER OF** an Application by  
Enbridge Gas Distribution Inc. for an order or orders  
approving or fixing just and reasonable rates and  
other charges for the sale, distribution, transmission  
and storage of gas commencing January 1, 2007.

**AND IN THE MATTER OF** Phase Two of that  
Application dealing with the Regulatory Cost  
Allocation Methodology (RCAM)

BEFORE: Gordon Kaiser  
Vice Chair and Presiding Member

Ken Quesnelle  
Member

## **DECISION WITH REASONS**

This Decision deals with the regulatory cost allocation methodology employed by Enbridge Gas Distribution Inc. and in particular, two matters on which the parties have been unable to agree upon namely, the cost of raising equity and the cost of stock options.

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**DECISION WITH REASONS**

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This issue goes back to Enbridge's 2006 rate application. In that Decision<sup>1</sup>, the Board directed Enbridge to conduct an independent evaluation of its regulatory cost allocation methodology ("RCAM"), taking into account the Board's recommendations in that Decision. Pursuant to the Board's directive, Enbridge commissioned an independent review of the RCAM for its 2007 rate case. One of the issues in the 2007 rate case was issue 3.6: Does the revised RCAM conform to the Board's directives in the EB-2005-0001 Decision?

The Board issued a Procedural Order on April 16, 2007 indicating that this matter would be considered as a second phase of Enbridge's 2007 rate application hearing.

In the first phase of the hearing the Board accepted, as part of the "completely settled package", the parties' agreement on issue 3.7 which was the quantum of the RCAM allocation for 2007 (\$18.1 million). A supplementary Settlement Agreement was filed with the Board on September 26<sup>th</sup>, 2007 and presented to the Board at an oral hearing on September 27<sup>th</sup>, 2007. The Board accepted the Supplemental Agreement during the hearing<sup>2</sup>. The parties were able to reach an agreement on all outstanding issues with respect to the RCAM except the cost of raising equity and the cost of stock options. This Decision deals with those two issues.

The supplementary Settlement Agreement of September 27, 2006 is attached to this Decision as Exhibit "A". The intervenors opposing Enbridge's claim for the cost of raising equity and stock options are set out in Appendix "B". The witnesses testifying on these two issues are set out in Appendix "C".

### **The Cost of Raising Equity**

At one time, the cost of raising equity was undertaken within the regulated utility. That activity is now carried out by Enbridge's parent, Enbridge Inc. ("EI"). Enbridge argues that the fact that the activity is carried out by the parent should not change the ability of Enbridge to claim these costs. The Utility argues that the cost of raising equity capital continues to be an important function and the cost should be recovered in rates as it has in the past.

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<sup>1</sup> EB-2005-0001 Decision with Reasons, February 9, 2006, page 88

<sup>2</sup> Transcript, EB-2006-0034, Volume 17, September 27, 2007, page 93

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**DECISION WITH REASONS**

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In August 1995, Consumers Gas Limited, the predecessor of Enbridge, applied to the Board for approval to centralize treasury operations in Calgary under the corporate structure of the parent of Consumers Gas at that time, IPL Energy Inc. ("IPL"). This arrangement continues with Enbridge relying on EI to perform these functions.

There is no dispute as to the cost of the treasury functions or their necessity. Rather, the intervenors argue that the cost of raising equity is in fact recovered by EI in Enbridge's regulated rate of return on equity.

The Board does not accept the intervenor's arguments on this issue. The intervenor's own witness, Mr. Mak of Rosen and Associates agreed that the costs incurred in raising capital did not influence the regulated rate of return. Nor do we accept the evidence of the intervenors that EI can be equated to private sector investors who raise capital to invest in various companies.

There is a fundamental difference between investment in an unregulated entity and the investment in a regulated gas utility. In the former, investors strive to maximize profit. But Enbridge's return of equity is set pursuant to the explicit formula set and approved by the Board. Also, when EI acquired the shares of Enbridge, it had good reason to believe that it would be entitled to recover the cost of raising equity for the regulated utility.

MNP concluded in its Report<sup>3</sup> that Enbridge had passed the three-pronged test for investor services and capital market financing and access activities. The intervenors disagree for two reasons.

First, they argued that the cost EI incurs to obtain funds is for its own account. They state that these costs do not arise from a service provided by EI to Enbridge. They claim that equity financing was obtained by EI for the benefit of EI as an investor. Capital market and shareholder relation costs, they say, are investor costs and should be born entirely by EI.

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<sup>3</sup> Exhibit D2-T1-S1, MNP Final Report, *Independent Evaluation of EGD's Regulatory Corporate Cost Allocation Methodology*, February 28, 2007

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**DECISION WITH REASONS**

The second argument advanced by the intervenors is that unlike most other companies, Enbridge is allowed to include a rate of return on equity in its rates and its revenue requirement. They state that this ROE is essentially an assured rate of return and that if EI charges Enbridge for the costs of raising equity; this amounts to double-billing. That is; the cost of raising equity is recovered through the RCAM and then a second time through the ROE the parent receives on its investment in Enbridge.

The intervenors suggested that the relevant question is whether the service would be required if it was not provided by the parent company. They argue that even if EI did not perform the capital market function for Enbridge, Enbridge would not need to raise equity from the public equity markets because it is wholly owned by EI.

The Board does not accept this position. It is circular reasoning. If Enbridge was a stand alone utility and not a wholly-owned subsidiary, it would still have these costs. No one disputes that a corporation such as Enbridge requires equity and there is a cost to raising that equity.

The intervenors also argued that allowing equity financing costs will open the floodgates for other utilities such as Toronto Hydro Corporation and Ontario Financial Corp. to claim notional costs for providing equity to Toronto Hydro and Hydro One. Enbridge's response is that such costs would face a Board review and in any event the Enbridge costs are real and not notional. The Board accepts the Enbridge submissions on this point. Enbridge should be allowed to recover the cost of raising equity in rates.

### **The Cost of Stock Options**

Enbridge like many companies offers its executives stock options. The company testified that these options are an important part of the compensation packages and if removed, the Enbridge compensation packages would no longer be competitive. Enbridge also argues that if removed, the stock options would have to be replaced by more costly compensation.

The intervenors agree that if stock options are removed, they would have to be replaced by other compensation which would likely result in higher operating

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**DECISION WITH REASONS**

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costs. Nonetheless, the intervenors take the position that because the options do not result in a cash outlay they are not costs recoverable in rates.

Enbridge responds that the intervenors fail to acknowledge the cost to the shareholder of the dilution impact. The Company also claimed that there is a loss to the EI treasury because it is foregoing the receipt of the full-market value of the shares on the date they are exercised. The dilution impact of issuing stock options was 2¢ per share in 2006. Spread over the entire 343.3 million shares, the dilution impact was not inconsequential.

Enbridge also points to prior testimony given by the principal of Rosen & Associates that options should be considered as a reasonable expense by companies. The article in question quoted Mr. Rosen as saying that “the delay in expensing options on the Income Statement outside of Canada is not so much a question of whether options are an expense but rather the best measure of the expense”<sup>4</sup>. Enbridge pointed to the inconsistency between Mr. Rosen’s statements and the evidence of the intervenor’s witness, Mr. Mak of Rosen & Associates in this proceeding.

In its Decision with Reasons dated July 21, 2001<sup>5</sup> the Board approved Union’s implementation of an accounting change to account for pension and other benefits post-retirement on an accrual basis rather than on a cash basis in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles (“GAAP”). Accordingly, recovery by Union was not dependent on a cash outlay.

Enbridge cited other examples where costs are recovered in rates where there was no cash outlay such as a DSM incentive payment. Enbridge also pointed to the Board’s Decision in Union Gas 2004 rates proceeding<sup>6</sup> where the Board rejected intervenor arguments and accepted Union’s use of incentive payments as a “legitimate compensation package offered to attract and retain qualified managers and staff in a competitive market for human resources.”

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<sup>4</sup> Accountability Research Corporation, *What to Watch for With Stock Option Expenses*, July 27, 2004, page 3 (KT 11.3)

<sup>5</sup> RP-1999-0017 Decision with Reasons, July 21, 2001, pages 65-69

<sup>6</sup> RP-2003-0063 Decision with Reasons, March 18, 2004, paras 534-537

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**DECISION WITH REASONS**

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Enbridge also cites the September 2004 Decision of the National Energy Board<sup>7</sup> which allowed TransCanada to recover 100% of its long term incentive compensation costs. As the National Energy Board stated:

“In order to be competitive in the marketplace for employees TransCanada must offer a suite of compensation components similar to its comparator group and the focus on shareholder value is not necessarily detrimental to the shipper interests.”

Enbridge distinguished the decision of British Columbia Utility Commission regarding BC Gas Utility Limited<sup>8</sup> where the Commission denied recovery of certain stock option expenses. There, as Enbridge states, the issue was whether the compensation packages were overly generous. There is no issue in this proceeding about the benefits to ratepayers or the importance of stock options as part of the competitive compensation package. The issue here is a narrower one; whether a non-cash expense qualifies as a regulatory expense for rate making purposes.

The Board accepts Enbridge's submissions with respect to recovery of the cost of stock options. These stock options are an important element of an executive compensation in any modern corporation. This compensation does have a cost although it may not be a cash cost in the usual sense.

If the Board denied recovery of these costs, they would no doubt be replaced by more expensive alternatives which would not benefit the ratepayers or the shareholders. Shareholders may of course benefit from stock options by way of an increased profit. In this regard, it is important to note that this Utility is now embarking on a five-year rate-incentive mechanism which specifically provides for an earnings sharing mechanism.<sup>9</sup>

For the reasons set out above, the Board will allow Enbridge to recover in rates, both the cost of raising equity and the cost of stock options.

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<sup>7</sup> RH-2-2004 Phase 1, Reasons for Decision, September 2004, page 12

<sup>8</sup> Decision, BC Gas Utility Ltd. 2003 Revenue Requirements Application, February 4, 2003, pages 12-15

<sup>9</sup> EB-2007-0606 Decision, January 17, 2008

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**DECISION WITH REASONS**

**Cost Awards**

Parties who intend to claim cost awards for Phase 2 of this proceeding must file cost claims by June 9, 2008. A copy of the cost claim must be filed with the Board and one copy is to be served on Enbridge. The cost claims must be done in accordance with section 10 of the Board's Practice Direction on Cost Awards.

Enbridge will have until June 23, 2008 to object to any aspects of the costs claimed. A copy of the objection must be filed with the Board and one copy must be served on the party against whose claim the objection is being made.

The party whose cost claim was objected to will have until June 30, 2008 to make a reply submission. Again a copy of the submission must be filed with the Board and one copy is to be served on Enbridge.

**ISSUED** at Toronto, May 20, 2008

*Original signed by*

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Gordon Kaiser  
Vice Chair and Presiding Member

*Original signed by*

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Ken Quesnelle  
Member



Appendix A To  
Decision with Reasons  
EB-2006-0034  
May 20, 2008  
  
Supplementary Settlement Agreement

Updated: September 27, 2007

EB-2006-0034

Exhibit N1

Tab 4

Schedule 1

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**SUPPLEMENTARY SETTLEMENT PROPOSAL  
REGULATORY COST ALLOCATION METHODOLOGY**

**September 27, 2007**

### **3.6 Do the revisions to the Regulatory Cost Allocation Methodology (RCAM) meet the Board's directives in the 2006 decision?**

(Incomplete Settlement)

The issue of whether the revisions to RCAM meet the Board's directives from the 2006 decision has been a subject of the corporate cost allocation consultative which has been ongoing. As set out below, parties have been able to come to an agreement to settle certain issues relating to the RCAM.

All aspects of this Supplementary Settlement Proposal are subject to approval by the Board. The parties to the settlement all agree that this Supplementary Settlement Proposal is a package: the individual aspects of this agreement are inextricably linked to one another and none of the parts of this settlement are severable. As such, there is no agreement among the parties to settle any aspect of the issues addressed in this Supplementary Settlement Proposal in isolation from the balance of the issues addressed herein. The parties agree, therefore, that in the event that the Board does not accept this Supplementary Settlement Proposal in its entirety, then (in accordance with the Board's Settlement Conference Guidelines) the Board will reject the Supplementary Settlement Proposal in its entirety and proceed to hearing.

This Supplementary Settlement Proposal, if approved by the Board, will be added to the Settlement Proposal (Ex. N1-1-1) approved by the Board on January 29, 2007 (the "January 29<sup>th</sup> Settlement Proposal") and the provisions of this Supplementary Settlement Proposal will supersede the references at pages 26 and 27 of the January 29<sup>th</sup> Settlement Proposal which state that there is no settlement of Issue 3.6. As the January 29<sup>th</sup> Settlement Proposal settled the level of the Company's O & M Budget for 2007, this Supplementary Settlement Proposal, if approved by the Board, will have no impact on the Company's revenue requirement for 2007.

With that preamble, the following represents the settlement that has been agreed upon.

The Parties agree and accept that, subject to the requirements and exceptions set out below, the Company has complied with the Board's directives from the 2006 decision in respect of its RCAM.

Parties agree that the corporate cost allocation consultative will be continued. Commencing in 2008 and for each year that the Company operates under an incentive rate regulation regime, the Parties agree that where the thresholds set out below are exceeded, the Company will, on an annual basis, provide to members of the consultative the following information:

- (i) a summary table setting out the direct and common allocation costs allocated to the Company for each service and all direct charges allocated to the Company for the year in question and the total allocation costs for

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Exhibit N

Tab 4

Schedule 1

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Exhibit I  
Tab 1  
Schedule 10  
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each service and direct charge for the immediately preceding year. In addition, the Company will provide the consultative with a table setting out the departmental O & M budgets for Enbridge Inc. for the year in question;

- (ii) the Company will give the consultative notice of any service which is discontinued in its entirety. The Company will also provide the consultative with a copy of the service schedule for any new service or direct charge which is undertaken or incurred in 2008 and beyond. The Company will also provide the consultative with notice of its implementation of any of the recommendations made by Meyers Norris Penny LLP in its report dated February 28, 2007.

Furthermore, where the thresholds set out below are exceeded, the Company shall provide the following additional information:

- (i) description of the drivers for increases in RCAM costs which exceed the aggregate threshold;
- (ii) where the threshold for an individual service or direct charge is exceeded, the Company will provide to the consultative a description of the drivers for the increase and a copy of the most current service schedule for the service/charge in question.

Parties agree that the thresholds which trigger the above obligations are as follows:

- (1) The aggregate corporate cost allocation amount for 2007 rates is \$18.1 million. Should this amount increase in 2008 by an amount greater than the Ontario Consumer Price Index ("CPI") plus 3%, the aggregate threshold has been triggered. For subsequent years, the aggregate threshold is triggered where the increase in the aggregate of all RCAM allocations to the Company in comparison to the immediately preceding year is greater than the CPI plus 3%.
- (2) The individual service threshold is triggered where the corporate cost allocation to any specific service or any direct charge increases in any one year by an amount greater than the CPI plus 10% and the increase is greater than \$50,000.

The parties agree that the thresholds set out above are to be interpreted only as triggering mechanisms in respect of the reporting requirements set out herein and are not necessarily indicative of the parties' views regarding reasonable year over year changes in RCAM amounts payable by EGD.

The Company agrees that it will entertain and respond to any reasonable questions received from the consultative in relation to the information it provides to the

consultative as required above. Parties agree that all responses and all information provided to the consultative which it may then share with other intervenors will be on a without prejudice basis and will be treated as if such responses and information had been provided by the Company during a Settlement Conference.

Parties agree that this Supplementary Settlement Proposal in no way infringes upon any existing or future rights that any party may have under the Act or in any future proceeding.

Parties have not settled issues in respect of the following service and Direct charge, but have been able to scope the remaining issues for the purposes of the hearing, as follows:

### **Capital Market Financing and Access**

Are the costs related to obtaining and maintaining equity capital by Enbridge Inc. appropriately recoverable from ratepayers through the RCAM?

### **EGD Stock Based Compensation**

Are stock option expenses appropriately recoverable from ratepayers through the RCAM? (Performance stock units are not in issue)

**Participating Parties:** All parties participated in the negotiation and settlement of this issue except: ABSU, Coral, Direct Energy, Gazifere Inc., GEC, HVAC Coalition, Networks, Jason Stacey, LIEN, OAPPA, OESLP, OPG, Pollution Probe, Sithe Goreway, SEM, Thomas Matz, TransAlta, TransCanada Energy Ltd., TransCanada, Union Energy LP, and Union.

**Approval:** All participating parties accept and agree with the proposed settlement of this issue.

**Evidence:** The evidence in relation to this issue includes the following:

A1-9-1	List of Affiliate Transactions
D1-2-2	Employee Expenses and Workforce Demographics
D1-2-3	Supplementary Evidence RCAM: Stock Option Compensation
D1-3-1	Corporate Cost Allocations
D1-3-2	RCAM: Update and Summary of Independent Evaluation, and Intercompany Services Agreement
D2-1-1	Corporate Cost Allocation: Meyers Norris Penny LLP Report, February 28, 2007, and Appendices
D2-1-2	MNP Reply to Preliminary Report of Rosen and Associates, September 14, 2007
D3-2-3	Operating and Maintenance Expense by Cost Type
I-1-27 to 28	Board Staff Interrogatories 27 and 28
I-9-1	IGUA Interrogatory 1

**Updated: September 27, 2007**

**EB-2006-0034**

**Exhibit N1**

**Tab 4**

**Schedule 1**

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I-16-38 to 39, 57	SEC Interrogatories 38, 39 and 57
I-24-2 to 3, 34 to 37	VECC Interrogatories 2, 3 and 34 to 37
KT11.1-1 to 2	Board Staff Interrogatories 1 and 2
KT11.2-1 to 19	VECC Interrogatories 1 to 19
L-28-1	Preliminary Report of Rosen & Associates Limited, May 30, 2007
Tr.	Transcript of Technical Conference, May 1, 2007
JTII.1, 1-10	EGD Undertaking Responses, 1 to 10
KTII.3,1 to 6	EGD Interrogatories 1 to 6

Appendix B To  
Decision with Reasons  
EB-2006-0034  
May 20, 2008  
List of Intervenors

**ENBRIDGE GAS DISTRIBUTION INC.  
2007 RATES CASE – PHASE II  
EB-2006-0034**

**LIST OF INTERVENORS**

<b>Intervenors</b>	<b>Rep. And Address for Service</b>
1. Consumers Council of Canada ("CCC")	Julie Girvan 2 Penrose Road Toronto ON M4S 1P1  Tel: 416-322-7936 Fax: 416-322-9703 Email: jgirvan@ca.inter.net
AND	Robert B. Warren Counsel WeirFoulds LLP Barristers & Solicitors The Exchange Tower, Suite 1600 P.O. Box 480, 130 King St. W. Toronto ON M5X 1J5  Tel: 416-947-5075 Fax: 416-416-365-1876 Email: rwarren@weirfoulds.com
2. Energy Probe Research Foundation ("Energy Probe")	David S. MacIntosh c/o Energy Probe 225 Brunswick Avenue Toronto ON M5S 2M6  Tel: 416-964-9223 ext. 235 Fax: 416-964-8239 Email: DavidMacIntosh@nextcity.com
AND	Thomas Adams c/o Energy Probe 225 Brunswick Avenue Toronto ON M5S 2M6  Tel: 416-964-9223 ext. 239 Fax: 416-964-8239 Email: TomAdams@nextcity.com



AND

Mr. Randy Aiken  
Aiken & Associates  
578 McNaughton Ave. West  
Chatham, Ontario, N7L 4J6

Tel: 519-351-8624  
Fax: 519-351-4331  
Email: raiken@xcelco.on.ca

3. Industrial Gas Users Association  
("IGUA")

Murray A. Newton  
President  
Suite 1201 - 99 Metcalfe Street  
Ottawa ON K1P 6L7

Tel: 613-236-8021  
Fax: 613-230-9531  
Email: mnewton@igua.ca

AND

Peter C.P. Thompson, Q.C.  
Borden Ladner Gervais LLP  
Barristers and Solicitors  
World Exchange Plaza  
100 Queen Street, Suite 1100  
Ottawa ON K1P 1J9

Tel: 613-787-3528  
Fax: 613-230-8842  
Email: pthompson@blgcanada.com

4. School Energy Coalition

Bob Williams  
Co-ordinator  
Ontario Education Services Corporation  
c/o Ontario Public School Boards' Association  
439 University Avenue, 18th Floor  
Toronto ON M5G 1Y8

Tel: 416-340-2540  
Fax: 416-340-7571  
Email: bwilliams@opsba.org

AND

Tanya Watson  
Consultant  
Institutional Energy Analysis, Inc.  
700 - 250 University Avenue  
Toronto ON M5H 3E5

Tel: 416-214-5218  
Fax: 416-214-5418  
Email: tanya.watson@shibleyrighton.com

AND

Jay Shepherd  
Shibley Righton LLP  
Barristers and Solicitors  
700 - 250 University Avenue  
Toronto ON M5H 3E5

Tel: 416-214-5224  
Fax: 416-214-5424  
Email: jay.shepherd@shibleyrighton.com

5. Vulnerable Energy Consumer's  
Coalition ("VECC")

Dr. Roger Higgin  
Managing Associate  
Econalysis Consulting Services  
1102 – 34 King Street East  
Toronto ON M5C 2X8

Tel: 416-348-9391  
Fax: 416-348-0641  
Email: rhiggin@econalysis.ca

AND

James Wightman  
Econalysis Consulting Services  
1102 – 34 King Street East  
Toronto ON M5C 2X8

Tel: 416-348-0640  
Fax: 416-348-0641  
Email: jwightman@econalysis.ca

AND

Michael Buonaguro  
Counsel for VECC  
Public Interest Advocacy Centre  
1102 - 34 King Street East  
Toronto ON M5C 2X8

Tel: 416-348-0814  
Fax: 416-348-0641  
Email: mbuonaguro@piac.ca

Appendix C To  
Decision with Reasons

EB-2006-0034

May 20, 2008

Witnesses

Witnesses	
EB-2006-0034	
<b>Enbridge</b>	
Jane Haberbusch	Director of Human Resources
Narin Kishinchandani	Director of Finance and Control
Patrick Hoey	Director of Regulatory Affairs
Robert Baldauf	Consultant , Meyers Norris Penny LLP
<b>VECC</b>	
Alan Mak	Consultant, Rosen & Associates
Mark Noxon	Consultant, Rosen & Associates

BOARD STAFF INTERROGATORY #11

INTERROGATORY

Ref: Ex B/6/S1/

Is Enbridge aware of any regulatory precedents in the accounting treatment of SBC or similar compensation related expenses in the regulated rates of energy utilities or other common carriers? If so, please provide the relevant regulatory documents that show how the regulators or other authorities have decided to treat the issue.

RESPONSE

EGD is not aware of any regulatory precedents in which the required accounting treatment of an individual element of SBC was examined or deemed more important to be examined than other individual elements of SBC. Nor is it aware of any regulatory precedent which denied the appropriate accounting treatment of individual or total SBC related expenses. Absent such a precedent or generally accepted regulatory principal, the approach accepted by the Board has always been the use of generally accepted accounting principles.

EGD notes that the Board, in its EB-2006-0034 Phase II Decision, relied on various precedents, Accountability Research Corporation – What to Watch for With Stock Option Expense, July 27, 2004, page 3 – KT11.3 within EB-2006-0034 and regulatory decisions, Union RP-2003-0063, TransCanada RH-2-2004 Phase I where all forms of SBC were accepted as an appropriate precedent in approving SBC elements as an appropriate expense within EGD's Utility costs.

Witnesses: K. Culbert  
N. Kishinchandani  
M. Weil

BOARD STAFF INTERROGATORY #12

INTERROGATORY

Ref: Ex B/6/S1/para9

Preamble: The evidence says that the 2009 CAM amount for SBC allocated costs to EGD is \$9.3 million; however the 2009 RCAM amount for SBC is \$4.3 million.

Question: Please explain in detail the differences between the 2 amounts.

RESPONSE

The amounts quoted above are not directly comparable since the 2009 SBC CAM amount of \$9.3M includes both the direct cost based on grants to EGD employees and the indirect cost components based on departmental allocations. The direct 2009 CAM related amount is \$5.0 million.

In contrast, the \$4.3M of 2009 SBC RCAM amount represents only direct costs based on grants to EGD employees.

The comparability of the direct SBC amounts is further impaired by the following factors:

- a) The CAM amount is based on actual 2009 costs using 2009 actual grant data, while the 2009 RCAM amount is based on the 2008 CAM budget adjusted for inflation.
- b) CAM amounts are updated periodically during the year for changes in actual stock prices for PSUs and RSUs, and for performance outcomes as they relate to PSUs, while RCAM amounts have been only updated annually on a lagged basis.

Witnesses: K. Culbert  
N. Kishinchandani  
M. Weil