



Ontario
Energy
Board | Commission
de l'énergie
de l'Ontario

DECISION AND ORDER

EB-2021-0073

HYDRO ONE NETWORKS INC.

Application for Electricity Distribution Licence Amendment

BY DELEGATION, BEFORE: Brian Hewson
Vice President,
Consumer Protection & Industry Performance

March 25, 2021

INTRODUCTION

Through this Decision and Order, the Ontario Energy Board (OEB) amends Hydro One Networks Inc.'s (Hydro One) electricity distribution licence (ED-2003-0043), in order to exempt it from compliance with section 5.1.3 (b) of the Distribution System Code (DSC) until no later than December 31, 2021.

The exemption relates to approximately 130 customers, each with a monthly average peak demand of over 50 kW, located in the City of Orillia (the legacy Orillia Power customers).

This Decision and Order is being issued by Delegated Authority, without holding a hearing pursuant to section 6(4) of the *Ontario Energy Board Act, 1998*.

BACKGROUND

Section 5.1.3 (b) of the DSC came into force on May 21, 2014. It required distributors to install a MIST (Metering Inside Settlement Time) meter on existing customer facilities where the customer had a monthly average peak demand during a calendar year of over 50 kW, by no later than August 21, 2020. Once installed, the distributor would then be required to use the MIST meter data to bill its customers.

On July 23, 2020, the OEB issued a Decision and Order (EB-2020-0187) amending the licences of all electricity distributors to exempt them from having to comply with section 5.1.3 (b) of the DSC until March 31, 2021. In that decision, the OEB acknowledged that the operational challenges related to the COVID-19 emergency could reasonably lead to an unavoidable delay in meeting the August 21, 2020 deadline by many distributors. The OEB also stated that, if any distributor required an extension beyond March 31, 2021, it would need to make a separate application.

Effective September 1, 2020, Hydro One acquired the former Orillia Power Distribution Corporation (Orillia Power). Leave was granted to Hydro One to make the acquisition by Decision and Order of the OEB dated April 30 (EB-2018-0270). That decision also granted Orillia Power leave to transfer its distribution system to Hydro One.

APPLICATION

On January 21, 2021, Hydro One filed an application with the OEB for an extension of the temporary exemption from section 5.1.3 (b) of the DSC from March 31, 2021 to

December 31, 2021, in respect of the approximately 130 legacy Orillia Power customers.

Hydro One states that, following its acquisition of Orillia Power, it discovered that it would need to delay the replacement of the existing demand meters of the legacy Orillia Power customers. The delay would afford Hydro One the opportunity to determine how to effectively migrate the interval meters of the legacy Orillia Power customers (which had been selected and installed by the former Orillia Power) into Hydro One's own billing system. Upon a detailed review of the acquired facilities, Hydro One determined it would be most efficient and cost effective to replace all of the former Orillia Power's demand meters with new interval meters that meet Hydro One's interval metering standard, and then complete the migration of the legacy Orillia Power customers to Hydro One's billing system.

Hydro One submits that, with respect to the legacy Orillia Power customers, it requires an extension of time in order to comply with section 5.1.3 (b) of the DSC. Hydro One states that it is taking all necessary steps to ensure that it has sufficient inventory to perform the required interval meter replacements once all of the legacy Orillia Power customers are migrated to Hydro One's billing system in June 2021. After the meter replacements are complete, Hydro One will begin transitioning these customers to interval billing. Hydro One expects that it will take until December 31, 2021 to successfully migrate all of these accounts to interval billing.

Hydro One also states that, as a result of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, it may continue to experience challenges with regard to accessing customers' premises in order to safely install the MIST meters. Hydro One advises that it will inform the OEB of any such further instances during the exemption period, if the application is approved.

FINDINGS

The OEB finds that Hydro One's application for a temporary exemption from section 5.1.3 (b) of the DSC should be granted. The OEB is persuaded that, it was not until after it acquired Orillia Power in September, 2020, that Hydro One discovered additional time would be required to properly coordinate and complete the transition of the legacy Orillia Power customers, on an interval basis, to Hydro One's billing system. The OEB also acknowledges that ongoing challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic may impact timelines required by Hydro One for the MIST meter installation, and consequent migration of customers to the interval billing.

The OEB therefore grants the application and approves an amendment to Hydro One's

licence in order to exempt the utility from compliance with section 5.1.3 (b) of the DSC until December 31, 2021. This exemption applies only to the approximately 130 GS>50 kW customers located in the City of Orillia.

IT IS ORDERED THAT:

1. Hydro One Networks Inc.'s Electricity Distribution Licence ED-2003-0043, specifically Schedule 3 "List of Code Exemptions", is amended to include an exemption from section 5.1.3 (b) of the Distribution System Code with respect to 130 GS > 50 kW customers located in the City of Orillia. This exemption expires on December 31, 2021.

DATED at Toronto, March 25, 2021

ONTARIO ENERGY BOARD

Original Signed By

Brian Hewson
Vice President, Consumer Protection & Industry Performance