



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

DECISION AND ORDER

EB-2021-0131

PUC DISTRIBUTION INC.

Application for Electricity Distribution Licence Amendment

BY DELEGATION, BEFORE: Brian Hewson

Vice President,

Consumer Protection & Industry Performance

March 31, 2021

INTRODUCTION

Through this Decision and Order, the Ontario Energy Board (OEB) is amending PUC Distribution Inc.'s (PUC) electricity distribution licence, ED-2002-0546, to exempt it from compliance with section 5.1.3 (b) of the Distribution System Code (DSC) until June 30, 2021.

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

BACKGROUND

Section 5.1.3 (b) of the DSC came into force on May 21, 2014. It required distributors to install a Metering Inside Settlement Time (MIST) meter on any existing customer facilities where the customer had a monthly average peak demand during a calendar year of over 50 kW (GS>50 kW customers) by no later than August 21, 2020.

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.

APPLICATION

On March 30, 2021, PUC 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 June 30, 2021.

PUC has stated that it will not be able to comply with section 5.1.3 (b) of the DSC by the March 31, 2021 deadline. PUC states that despite its diligent efforts to meet the requirements of section 5.1.3 (b) of the DSC, as of March 30, 2021, there are still 15 meters remaining to be replaced, and one additional meter that requires service upgrades before the MIST meter can be safely installed.

PUC states that many challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic, specifically a lockdown from December 2020 to February 2020 and MIST meters supply delays, prevented the utility from completion of its MIST meter installations before the March 31, 2021 deadline. PUC states that out of sixteen MIST meters pending installation, nine MIST meters are expected to be installed in April, six in May, and one MIST meter will be installed in June once service upgrades are completed. PUC expects to replace all remaining meters and be in compliance with section 5.1.3 (b) by June 30, 2021.

FINDINGS

The OEB finds that PUC has reasonably justified its request for an exemption to section 5.1.3 (d) of the DSC due to the ongoing challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic and delays in MIST meters supply. The OEB therefore grants the application and approves an amendment to PUC's licence which will exempt the utility from compliance with section 5.1.3 (b) of the DSC until June 30, 2021.

IT IS ORDERED THAT:

1. PUC Distribution Inc.'s Electricity Distribution Licence ED-2002-0546, specifically Schedule 3 "List of Code Exemptions", is amended to include an exemption from section 5.1.3 (b) of the Distribution System Code. This exemption expires on June 30, 2021.

DATED at Toronto, March 31, 2021

ONTARIO ENERGY BOARD

Original Signed By

Brian Hewson
Vice President, Consumer Protection & Industry Performance