



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

**BY E-MAIL**

July 4, 2024

**To: All Licensed Rate-Regulated Electricity Distributors  
All Licensed Rate-Regulated Electricity Transmitters  
All Registered Stakeholders in the Evaluation of Policy on Utility  
Consolidations Consultation (EB-2023-0188)  
All Cost Eligible Participants  
All Other Interested Parties**

**Re: Notice of Hearing for Cost Awards  
Evaluation of Policy on Utility Consolidations Consultation  
File No.: [EB-2023-0188](#)**

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The Ontario Energy Board (OEB) is giving notice that eligible participants in the Evaluation of Policy on Utility Consolidations consultation are invited to submit cost claims for eligible activities as follows:

- a) Participation in the meeting with OEB staff outlined in the OEB's letter dated July 27, 2023, launching the consultation.
- b) Review of the OEB Staff Discussion Paper posted on February 8, 2024, and preparation of written comments.

### **Background**

On July 27, 2023, the OEB issued a [letter](#) launching a consultation to engage stakeholders to review and update the OEB's *Handbook to Electricity Distributor and Transmitter Consolidations*, and associated filing requirements.<sup>1</sup> The OEB determined that cost awards will be available to eligible participants under section 30 of the *Ontario Energy Board Act, 1998* (OEB Act) for participation in the consultation. The OEB also determined that costs awarded will be recovered from all licensed rate-regulated electricity distributors.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Originally issued in January 2016.

<sup>2</sup> EB-2023-0188, OEB Letter, July 27, 2023, p. 4

The July 2023 letter stated that cost awards will be available to eligible participants for participation in the initial meeting with OEB staff to a maximum of actual meeting time plus 50% of meeting time for preparation and reporting.

In a decision<sup>3</sup> issued on August 18, 2023, the OEB granted the following organizations cost award eligibility:

- Association of Major Power Consumers in Ontario (AMPCO)
- Consumers Council of Canada (CCC)
- Energy Probe Research Foundation (Energy Probe)
- School Energy Coalition (SEC)
- Vulnerable Energy Consumers Coalition (VECC)

On February 8, 2024, the OEB posted an OEB Staff Discussion Paper (the Paper), and invited stakeholders registered to participate in the consultation to provide written comments on the Paper.<sup>4</sup> The OEB determined that cost awards will be available under section 30 of the OEB Act in relation to the provision of comments on the Paper. More specifically, the OEB noted cost awards will be available to participants already determined eligible to apply for an award of costs for the review of the OEB Staff Discussion Paper and for the preparation of written comments to a maximum of 20 hours.<sup>5</sup>

The OEB issued the new *Handbook to Electricity Distributor and Transmitter Consolidations: Rate-setting Considerations and Filing Requirements* on June 18, 2024. The issuance of this document marked the conclusion of the consultation.

### **Notice of Hearing**

With respect to item a), the OEB notes that the maximum number of hours for this activity for eligible participants is as follows:

<b>Activity</b>	Meeting
<b>Date</b>	September 22, 2023
<b>Start-End</b>	11am-1:30pm
<b>Hours</b>	2.50
<b>Maximum Hours</b>	3.75

The decision on costs will be made by an OEB staff member with delegated authority

<sup>3</sup> EB-2023-0188, Decision on Cost Eligibility, August 18, 2023

<sup>4</sup> EB-2023-0188, OEB Letter, February 8, 2024

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, Appendix A

under section 6 of the OEB Act. The hearing will follow the process set out below.

1. Eligible participants that intend to seek a cost award shall submit their cost claims by **July 17, 2024**. The cost claim must be filed with the OEB and must be completed in accordance with section 10 of the OEB's [Practice Direction on Cost Awards](#) (Practice Direction). Any cost claims will be available for review by licensed rate-regulated electricity distributors through the OEB's website under file number EB-2023-0188.
2. Licensed rate-regulated electricity distributors will have until **July 24, 2024** to object to any aspect of the costs claimed. The objection must be filed with the OEB and one copy must be sent by email to the eligible participant against whose claim the objection is being made.
3. The eligible participant whose cost claim was objected to will have until **July 31, 2024** to file with the OEB a reply submission as to why its cost claim should be allowed. One copy of the reply submission is to be sent by email to the objecting licensed rate-regulated electricity distributor.
4. The OEB will then issue its decision on cost awards.

The OEB will use the process set out in section 12 of the Practice Direction to implement the payment of the cost awards. The OEB will therefore act as a clearing house for all payments of cost awards in this process.

### How to File Materials

Stakeholders are responsible for ensuring that any documents they file with the OEB **do not include personal information** (as that phrase is defined in the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*), unless filed in accordance with rule 9A of the OEB's [Rules of Practice and Procedure](#).

Please quote file number **EB-2023-0188** for all materials filed and submit them in searchable/unrestricted PDF format with a digital signature through the [OEB's online filing portal](#).

- Filings should clearly state the sender's name, postal address, telephone number and e-mail address.
- Please use the document naming conventions and document submission standards outlined in the [Regulatory Electronic Submission System \(RESS\)](#)

[Document Guidelines](#) found at the [File documents online page](#) on the OEB's website.

- Stakeholders are encouraged to use RESS. Those who have not yet [set up an account](#), or require assistance using the online filing portal can contact [registrar@oeb.ca](mailto:registrar@oeb.ca) for assistance.
- Cost claims are now filed through the OEB's online filing portal. Please visit the [File documents online page](#) of the OEB's website for more information. All participants shall download a copy of their submitted cost claim and serve it on all required parties as per the [Practice Direction on Cost Awards](#).

All communications should be directed to the attention of the Registrar at the address below and be received by end of business, 4:45 p.m., on the required date.

With respect to distribution lists for all electronic correspondence and materials related to this proceeding, parties must include the Case Manager, Georgette Vlahos at [georgette.vlahos@oeb.ca](mailto:georgette.vlahos@oeb.ca) and OEB Counsel, James Sidlofsky at [james.sidlofsky@oeb.ca](mailto:james.sidlofsky@oeb.ca).

Email: [registrar@oeb.ca](mailto:registrar@oeb.ca)

Tel: 1-877-632-2727 (Toll free)

**DATED** at Toronto, July 4, 2024

**ONTARIO ENERGY BOARD**

Theodore Antonopoulos  
Vice President, Major Applications