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April 30, 2024

Patrick Wruck
Commission Secretary and Manager
Regulatory Services
British Columbia Utilities Commission
Suite 410, 900 Howe Street
Vancouver, BC V6Z 2N3

Dear Patrick Wruck:

RE: British Columbia Utilities Commission (BCUC or Commission)
British Columbia Hydro and Power Authority (BC Hydro)
Fiscal 2024 Fourth Quarter (Q4 F2024)
Summary Report of Customer Complaints and Consecutive Estimates

BC Hydro writes to submit its Q4 F2024 Summary Report of Customer Complaints and Consecutive Estimates.

Customer Complaints

Table 1 Total Complaints Volume from All Sources and BCUC

	Q4 F2023	*Q1 F2024*	*Q2 F2024*	*Q3 F2024*	*Q4 F2024*
Total Complaints*	118	115	113	85	105
BCUC	11	21	16	7	15
*Total Complaints include complaints received through the BCUC					

The total number of customer complaints increased from 85 in Q3 to 105 in Q4 F2024, in line with historical volumes. Complaints about planned outages increased to 19 in Q4, compared to 3 in the previous quarter. An increase in Billing and Payments complaints also contributed to the higher volume in Q4.

The number of complaints received through the BCUC has also increased back to its usual volume, from 7 in Q3 to 15 in Q4 F2024. This can be attributed to an increase in Billing and Payments and Design complaints.

Table 2 Response Time to Customer Complaints

	Q4 F2023	*Q1 F2024*	*Q2 F2024*	*Q3 F2024*	*Q4 F2024*
Average Response Time (Days)	3	3	3	4	3

The average response time to customer complaints in Q4 F2024 was three days. The majority of complaints were investigated and responded to within five business days. Most complex investigations involving multiple departments were investigated and responded to within ten business days.

Table 3 Complaints by Source

	All Sources									
	Q4 F2023		***Q1 F2024***		***Q2 F2024***		***Q3 F2024***		***Q4 F2024***	
BC Hydro	45	38%	43	37%	50	45%	40	47%	55	52%
BCUC	11	9%	21	18%	16	14%	7	8%	15	14%
Better Business Bureau	7	6%	4	3%	5	4%	9	11%	6	6%
Government*	55	47%	47	42%	42	37%	29	34%	29	28%
Media and Other	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Total	**118**	**100%**	**115**	**100%**	**113**	**100%**	**85**	**100%**	**105**	**100%**
*Government represents Office of the Minister, MLA, and Ombudsperson										

The largest number of complaints were received by BC Hydro with 55 (52% of the total) in Q4 F2024. This is followed by 29 complaints received through Government (28% of the total) and 15 through the BCUC (14% of the total).

Of the 29 complaints received through Government in Q4 F2024, 10 were from the Office of the Minister, 17 were from MLA offices, and two were from the Ombudsperson's office.

Table 4 Complaints by Category – All Sources

	All Sources									
	Q4 F2023		***Q1 F2024***		***Q2 F2024***		***Q3 F2024***		***Q4 F2024***	
Credit	20	17%	26	23%	14	12%	11	13%	11	10%
Billing and Payments	27	23%	18	16%	16	14%	11	13%	28	27%
Customer Crisis Fund	3	2%	2	2%	2	2%	1	1%	1	1%
SMI	1	1%	4	3%	0	0%	1	1%	0	0%
Non-Customer Service	47	40%	56	48%	61	54%	48	57%	52	50%

	All Sources									
	Q4 F2023		***Q1 F2024***		***Q2 F2024***		***Q3 F2024***		***Q4 F2024***	
Other	20	17%	9	8%	20	18%	13	15%	13	12%
Total	**118**	**100%**	**115**	**100%**	**113**	**100%**	**85**	**100%**	**105**	**100%**

Table 5 Complaints by Category – BCUC

	BCUC									
	Q4 F2023		***Q1 F2024***		***Q2 F2024***		***Q3 F2024***		***Q4 F2024***	
Credit	7	64%	10	48%	2	13%	2	29%	6	40%
Billing and Payments	2	18%	6	29%	4	25%	0	0%	4	27%
Customer Crisis Fund	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
SMI	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	14%	0	0%
Non-Customer Service	2	18%	5	23%	9	56%	3	43%	5	33%
Other	0	0%	0	0%	1	6%	1	14%	0	0%
Total	**11**	**100%**	**21**	**100%**	**21**	**100%**	**16**	**100%**	**15**	**100%**

In Q4 F2024, 52 complaints (50% of the total) were in the Non-Customer Service category. Of these, 17 were related to Design, largely due to service connection delays or costs, and 19 were Planned Outage complaints, with many regarding the outages scheduled in Gastown for transformer testing work. The remaining complaints in this category were for Power Smart Programs (five), Field (four), Claims (three), Vegetation (two), Properties (one) and the consumption graph on MyHydro (one).

Of the 13 complaints under the Other category, eight were due to Rates, three were regarding Reliability, and two were due to Forced Outages. There were 28 complaints related to Billing in Q4 F2024 (27% of the total), mostly due to high invoice amounts, move in/move out and invoice adjustments. Four of the 11 Credit complaints were related to disconnections.

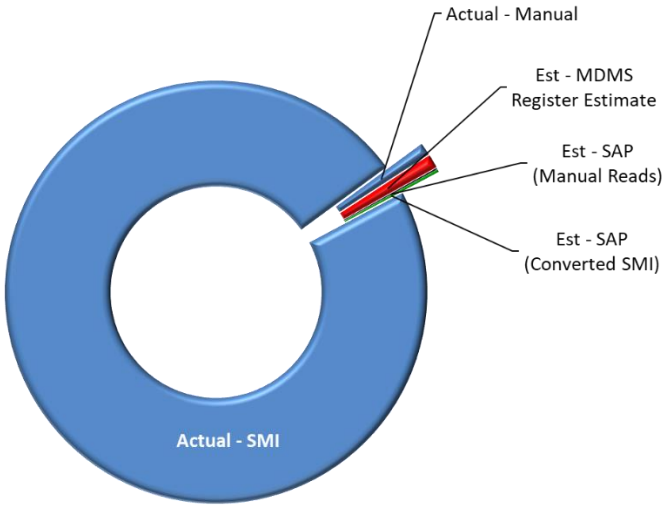
Of the 15 complaints received by the BCUC in Q4 F2024, six were related to Credit, two of which were related to disconnections. Of the five Non-Customer Service complaints, three were related to Design, and one each for Planned Outage and Claims.

Consecutive Estimates

In Q4 F2024, the number of Consecutive Estimates decreased to 7,323 compared to 7,504 in the previous quarter. For March 2024, 98.7% of bills were issued based on actual reads.

Figure 1 below identifies the sources of meter reads (converted and manual reads) that received actual versus estimates for March 2024.

Figure 1 Sources of Meter Reads for Invoices Issued, March 2024



	March 2024		
Bill Issued Using:	**Volume**	**%**	**%**
Actual – SMI	1,433,212	97.7	98.7
Actual – Manual	13,931	0.9	
Estimate – Register Estimate	15,089	1.0	1.3
Est – SAP (Manual Reads)	1,553	0.1	
Est – SAP (Converted SMI)	2,9748	0.2	
Total	**1,466,759**	**100**	**100.0**

Note: Total does not reconcile to other tables and figures because:

- Results include all estimates, not just consecutive estimates (i.e., reflects accounts with only one estimate); and
- This view includes bills issued, while the data for other charts is based on the reading of meter registers. In some cases, multiple meter registers are read but a single bill is issued (e.g., a poly-phase meter with scheduled reads for kWh, kW, and kVARh).

Assessment of Meter Reading Performance

In March 2024, 7,323 scheduled meter readings were unable to be obtained for a second billing period in a row. Therefore, the associated accounts required consumption estimates to ensure timely delivery of bills to customers.

Table 6 Consecutive Estimates by Meter Reading Category – Q4 F2024

	December 2023	March 2024
Accounts with Automated Reads – last read SAP Estimate	2,356	2,515
Accounts with Automated Reads – last read Register Estimate	2,095	1,326
Accounts with Manual Reads – last read SAP Estimate	3,053	3,482
Total	7,504	7,323

SAP estimates that are based on monthly historical data accounted for 5,997 of these bills. The remaining 1,326 were Register Estimates.

The 2% decrease in total Consecutive Estimates this quarter is due to a 37% decrease in register estimates for automated reads. Consecutive Estimates for manual reads increased by 14% and SAP estimates for automated reads increased by 7%, which is consistent with seasonal trends.

Table 7 Causes of Missed Reads by Number of Estimates

Consecutive Estimates by Reason	**2-3 estimates**		**4-5 estimates**		**6+ estimates**		**Grand Total**	
Category	**Meters**	**(%)**	**Meters**	**(%)**	**Meters**	**(%)**	**Meters**	**(%)**
Low / No Customer Impact								
Vacant	257	7%	242	26%	1,228	45%	1,727	23%
Disconnected	50	1%	37	4%	234	8%	321	4%
Customer-side Power Outage	32	1%	173	21%	857	32%	1,062	15%
Subtotal	**339**	**9%**	**452**	**51%**	**2,319**	**85%**	**3,110**	**42%**
Estimated Automated Reads								
Intermittent Comms – ISAIM	1,038	27%	42	6%	5	0%	1,085	14%
Intermittent Comms – SAP	1,137	33%	55	7%	122	4%	1,314	20%
Subtotal	**2,175**	**60%**	**97**	**13%**	**127**	**5%**	**2,399**	**34%**
Estimated Manual Reads								
Customer Access	124	3%	70	8%	94	3%	288	4%
Other	594	15%	132	15%	139	5%	865	11%
Recently unconverted	148	4%	1	0%		0%	149	2%
Subtotal	**866**	**22%**	**203**	**24%**	**233**	**8%**	**1,302**	**17%**

Consecutive Estimates by Reason	2-3 estimates		4-5 estimates		6+ estimates		Grand Total	
Category	**Meters**	**(%)**	**Meters**	**(%)**	**Meters**	**(%)**	**Meters**	**(%)**
Meter Replacement	341	9%	110	12%	61	2%	512	7%
Grand Total	**3,721**	**100%**	**862**	**100%**	**2,740**	**100%**	**7,323**	**100%**

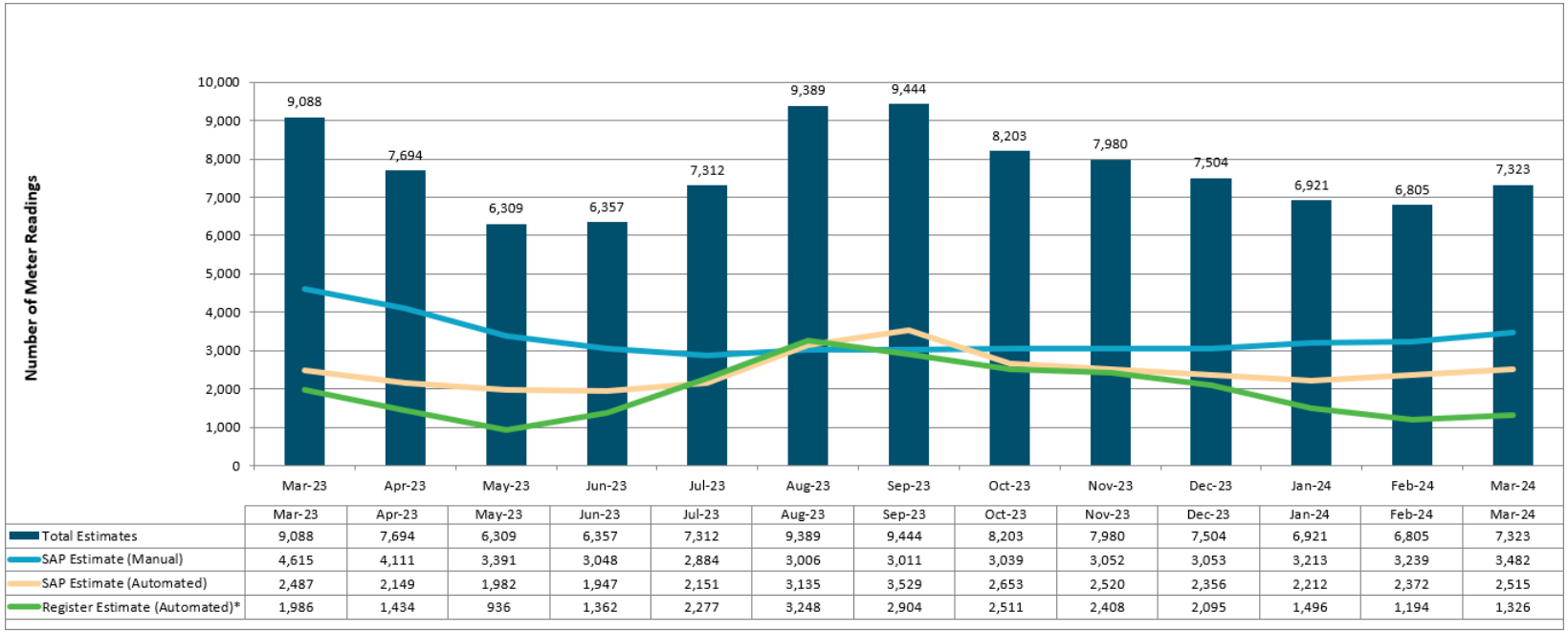
Table 7 above summarizes the causes of all missed meter reads that resulted in bills issued based on consecutive estimates in Q4 F2024, including automated and manually read meters.

BC Hydro assesses that 42% of the estimated meter reads had low or no customer impact. This category includes accounts that are vacant (23%), services with the line side breakers turned off (15%), and disconnected services (4%). The meter replacement category accounts for 7% of consecutive estimates. The majority of meters pending replacement have failed and require replacement for an actual read to be obtained. Intermittent communications of automated meters accounted for a further 34% of estimated reads, divided between MDMS estimates (14%) and SAP estimates (20%).

Of the 17% of consecutive estimates relating to manually read meters, the majority are the result of the inability to access meters due to inclement weather conditions (included in the Other category, 11%). Customer Access issues such as locked gates and key issues account for 4% of consecutive estimates with the remaining 2% caused by Recently Unconverted meters (which are meters that have been changed from automated to manual reads as the meter stopped communicating over the air).

For those meters with six or more consecutive estimates, the most significant causes are vacant accounts (45%) and customer-side power outages (32%). These two categories, along with disconnected meters (8%), comprise 85% of accounts with six or more consecutive estimates and do not impact customer billing.

Figure 2 Meter Readings Requiring Two or More Consecutive Estimates, March 2023 to March 2024 Converted and Non-Converted Meters



	Mar-23	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24
Total Estimates	9,088	7,694	6,309	6,357	7,312	9,389	9,444	8,203	7,980	7,504	6,921	6,805	7,323
SAP Estimate (Manual)	4,615	4,111	3,391	3,048	2,884	3,006	3,011	3,039	3,052	3,053	3,213	3,239	3,482
SAP Estimate (Automated)	2,487	2,149	1,982	1,947	2,151	3,135	3,529	2,653	2,520	2,356	2,212	2,372	2,515
Register Estimate (Automated)*	1,986	1,434	936	1,362	2,277	3,248	2,904	2,511	2,408	2,095	1,496	1,194	1,326

For further information, please contact Alicia Henderson by email at bchydroregulatorygroup@bchydro.com.

Yours sincerely,

Chris Sandve
Chief Regulatory Officer

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