

## MODERNIZING THE BRITISH COLUMBIA UTILITIES COMMISSION

The British Columbia Utilities Commission (BCUC) is a regulatory agency of the Provincial Government, operating under and administering the *Utilities Commission Act*.

The Commission's primary responsibility is the regulation of the public utilities under its jurisdiction, including BC Hydro.

### Modernizing the Role of the BCUC

The *Clean Energy Act* affirms and modernizes the role of the BC Utilities Commission and its relationship to the provincial government's energy policy objectives. The province's goal is to ensure that there is alignment between the government's policy priorities, how BC Hydro delivers on those priorities, and how the BCUC provides regulatory oversight.

The BCUC will continue to regulate BC Hydro's domestic supply and rates. It will also continue to regulate the safety and reliability of the BC Hydro system, as well as regulate operating, management and administrative costs, and handle complaints from ratepayers regarding BC Hydro service.

### Clean Energy a Provincial Economic Priority

The provincial government has identified the development of clean energy as a key economic priority and through the *Clean Energy Act* the province has set out a number of strategic projects that will be exempted from separate approval by the BCUC. Future projects, specifically for the purposes of supplying export markets, will also be exempt from BCUC review.

Projects will remain subject to the province's rigorous environmental assessment process and to applicable First Nations consultation obligations.

The *Clean Energy Act* exempts the following projects and programs to seek a separate BCUC approval:

- Northwest Transmission Line
- Mica units 5 and 6
- Revelstoke unit 6
- Site C
- Bioenergy Phase 2 Call for Power
- BC Hydro's Integrated Power Offer
- Clean Power Call
- Standing Offer Program

- Feed-in Tariff
- BC Hydro's Smart Metering and Smart Grid program

Notwithstanding the exempt projects listed in the Act, the BCUC will continue to regulate BC Hydro and provide oversight for future BC Hydro projects and programs.

### **Long-Term Planning for Clean Energy**

Under the *Clean Energy Act*, BC Hydro will be required to submit a long-term Integrated Resource Plan to the Government, setting out how BC Hydro intends to implement the energy objectives set out in the Act.

The initial Plan will consider B.C.'s electricity needs over the next 30 years and will be developed with input from the public, stakeholders and First Nations. BC Hydro will have 18 months to deliver the Integrated Resource Plan and it will then be approved or rejected by the provincial government. Once approved, the BCUC will be required to consider and be guided by the Plan in its future decisions.