

Chris Sandve

Chief Regulatory Officer

Phone: 604-623-3726

Fax: 604-623-4407

bhydroregulatorygroup@bhydro.com

July 26, 2021

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

Dear Mr. Wruck:

**RE: British Columbia Utilities Commission (BCUC or Commission)
British Columbia Hydro and Power Authority (BC Hydro)
Fiscal 2022 First Quarter (Q1 F2022)
Summary Report of Customer Complaints and Consecutive Estimates**

BC Hydro writes to submit its Q1 F2022 Summary Report of Customer Complaints and Consecutive Estimates.

Customer Complaints

Table 1 Total Complaints Volume from All Sources and BCUC

	Q1 F2021	Q2 F2021	Q3 F2021	Q4 F2021	Q1 F2022
Total Complaints*	192	123	134	189	137
BCUC	13	18	22	18	18

*Total Complaints include complaints received through the BCUC

Complaint volumes decreased from 192 in Q1 F2021 compared to 137 in Q1 F2022. The Q1 F2022 volumes are more in line with historical norms. The higher number of complaints in Q1 of F2021 were complaints associated with the COVID-19 pandemic.

Complaints received through the BCUC have increased with 18 received in Q1 F2022 compared to 13 received in Q1 F2021.

Table 2 Response Time to Customer Complaints

	Q1 2021	Q2 F2021	Q3 F2021	Q4 F2021	Q1 F2022
Average Response Time Days	4	4	3	3	4

The majority of complaints were completed within internal and external targets. The average resolution time in Q1 F2022 was four days.

Table 3 Complaints by Source

	All Sources									
	Q1 F2021		Q2 F2021		Q3 F2021		Q4 F2021		Q1 F2022	
BC Hydro	107	56%	66	54%	68	51%	92	49%	71	52%
BCUC	13	7%	18	14%	22	17%	18	9%	18	13%
Better Business Bureau	6	3%	3	2%	4	3%	7	4%	3	2%
Government*	66	34%	36	30%	40	29%	72	38%	45	33%
Media and Other	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Total	192	100%	123	100%	134	100%	189	100%	137	100%

*Government represents Office of the Minister, MLA and Ombudsperson

The majority of complaints were received by BC Hydro directly and represent 52 per cent of the total in Q1 F2022. This is followed by complaints received through Government with 33 per cent of the total and the BCUC with 13 per cent of the total for the same period.

Complaints received through Government represent 45 of the 137 total complaints in Q1 F2022, with 21 of those complaints received through MLA offices.

Table 4 Complaints by Category – All Sources

	All Sources									
	Q1 F2021		Q2 F2021		Q3 F2021		Q4 F2021		Q1 F2022	
Credit	9	5%	9	7%	32	24%	35	18%	23	17%
Billing and Payments	118	61%	39	32%	23	17%	32	18%	17	12%
Customer Crisis Fund	15	8%	20	16%	32	24%	18	10%	10	7%
SMI	1	1%	6	5%	3	2%	3	2%	9	7%
Non-Customer Service	23	12%	26	21%	19	14%	45	24%	56	41%
Other	26	14%	23	19%	25	19%	54	29%	22	16%
Total	192	100%	123	100%	134	100%	189	100%	137	100%

Complaints related to Non-Customer Service is the leading category with 41 per cent of the total in Q1 F2022. This includes complaints related to Design and Conservation and Energy Management Programs. The second leading category for Q1 2022 was Credit complaints with 17 per cent of the total or 23 total complaints.

Table 5 Complaints by Category – BCUC

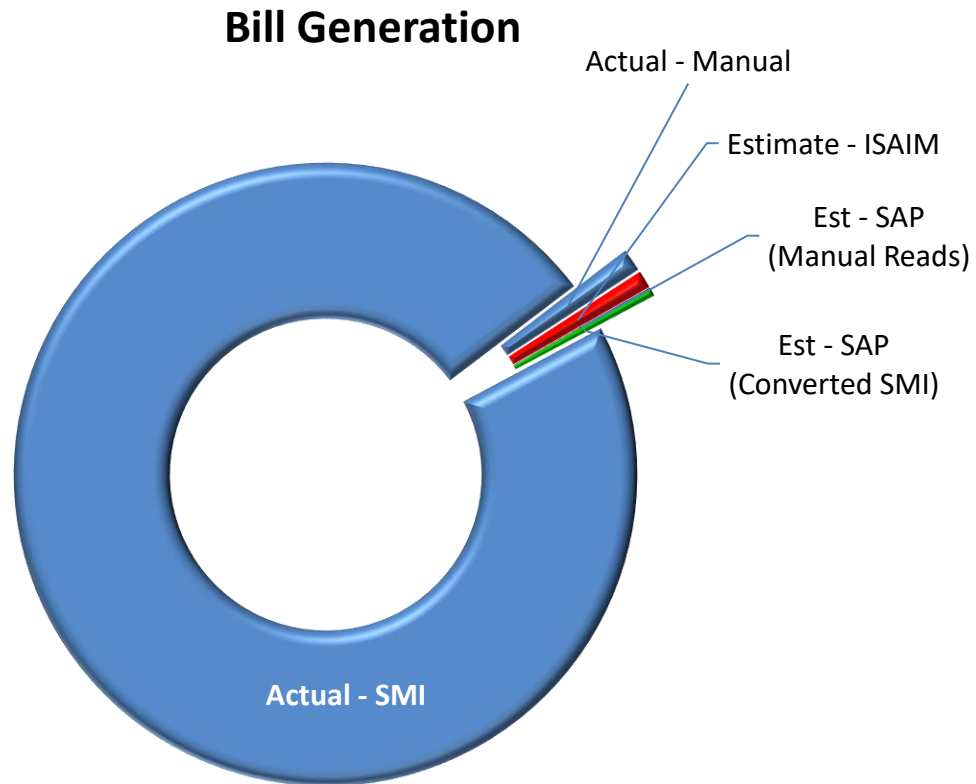
	BCUC									
	Q1 F2021		Q2 F2021		Q3 F2021		Q4 F2021		Q1 F2022	
Credit	0	0%	0	0%	6	27%	7	39%	5	28%
Billing and Payments	10	77%	10	55%	9	51%	8	44%	5	28%
Customer Crisis Fund	0	0%	0	0%	1	5%	0	0%	0	0%
SMI	0	0%	3	17%	1	5%	1	6%	2	11%
Non-Customer Service	2	15%	3	17%	3	13%	2	11%	4	22%
Other	1	8%	2	11%	2	9%	0	0%	2	11%
Total	13	100%	18	100%	22	100%	18	100%	18	100%

The leading complaint categories for complaints received through the BCUC for Q1 F2022 are Credit complaints as well as Billing and Payments complaints, both representing 28 per cent of the total. This is followed by Non-Customer Service with 22 per cent.

Consecutive Estimates

In Q1 F2022, Consecutive Estimates continued to decrease compared to the previous quarter. For June 2021, 99.5 per cent of bills were issued based on actual reads and Itron SAP AMI Integration Module (**ISAIM**) estimates. Figure 1 identifies the sources of meter reads (converted and manual reads) that received actual vs. estimates for the month of June 2021. This is consistent with other years prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Figure 1 Sources of Meter Reads for Invoices Issued, June 2021



Bill Issued Using:	June 2021		
	Volume	%	%
Actual - SMI	1,429,740	97.5%	99.5%
Actual - Manual	17,231	1.2%	
Estimate - ISAIM	13,460	0.9%	
Est - SAP (Manual Reads)	752	0.1%	0.5%
Est - SAP (Converted SMI)	5,910	0.4%	
Total	1,467,093	100%	100%

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 kVAR).

Assessment of Meter Reading Performance

The overall number of consecutive estimates has decreased by 8 per cent since the previous quarter (Q4 F2021).

Table 6 Consecutive Estimates by Meter Reading Category – Q1 F2022

	Mar 2021	Jun 2021
Accounts with Automated Reads – last read SAP Estimate	2,932	3,393
Accounts with Automated Reads – last read ISAIM Estimate	697	923
Accounts with Manual Reads – last read SAP Estimate	3,738	2,449
TOTAL	7,367	6,765

In June 2021, 6,765 scheduled meter readings were unable to be obtained for a second billing period in a row, and therefore the associated accounts required consumption estimates to ensure timely delivery of bills to customers. This is an 8 per cent decrease since the prior quarter (Q4 F2021) and a 67 per cent decrease since the same period the prior year (21,788 total consecutive estimates in Q1 F2020).

SAP estimates that are based on monthly historical data accounted for 5,842 of these bills. The remaining 923 were Itron SAP AMI Integration Module (**ISAIM**) estimates, which are highly accurate because they are based on daily consumption information for the days leading up to the closing of the customer's billing period.

The 8 per cent decrease in total consecutive estimates is due to a significant reduction in consecutive estimates for manually read meters partially offset by an increase in consecutive estimates on automated billing meters.

Table 7 Causes of Missed Reads by Number of Estimates

Category	2-3 estimates		4-5 estimates		6+ estimates		Grand Total	
	Meters	(%)	Meters	(%)	Meters	(%)	Meters	(%)
Customer impact nil/low								
Vacant	492	15	205	17	1,343	52	2,040	29
Disconnected	31	1	22	2	189	7	242	3
Customer-side Power Outage	47	2	109	10	594	24	750	11
Subtotal	570	18	336	29	2,126	84	3,032	44
Meter Replacement	364	11	170	15	184	7	718	10
Estimated Automated Reads								
Intermittent Comms – ISAIM	794	26	89	8	6	0	889	14
Intermittent Comms – SAP	1,311	41	343	35	79	3	1,733	26
Estimated Manual Reads								
Customer Access	51	2	51	5	61	3	163	2
Other	62	2	89	8	72	3	223	3
Recently unconverted	5	0	2	0	-	0	7	0
Grand Total	3,157	100	1,080	100	2,528	100	6,765	100

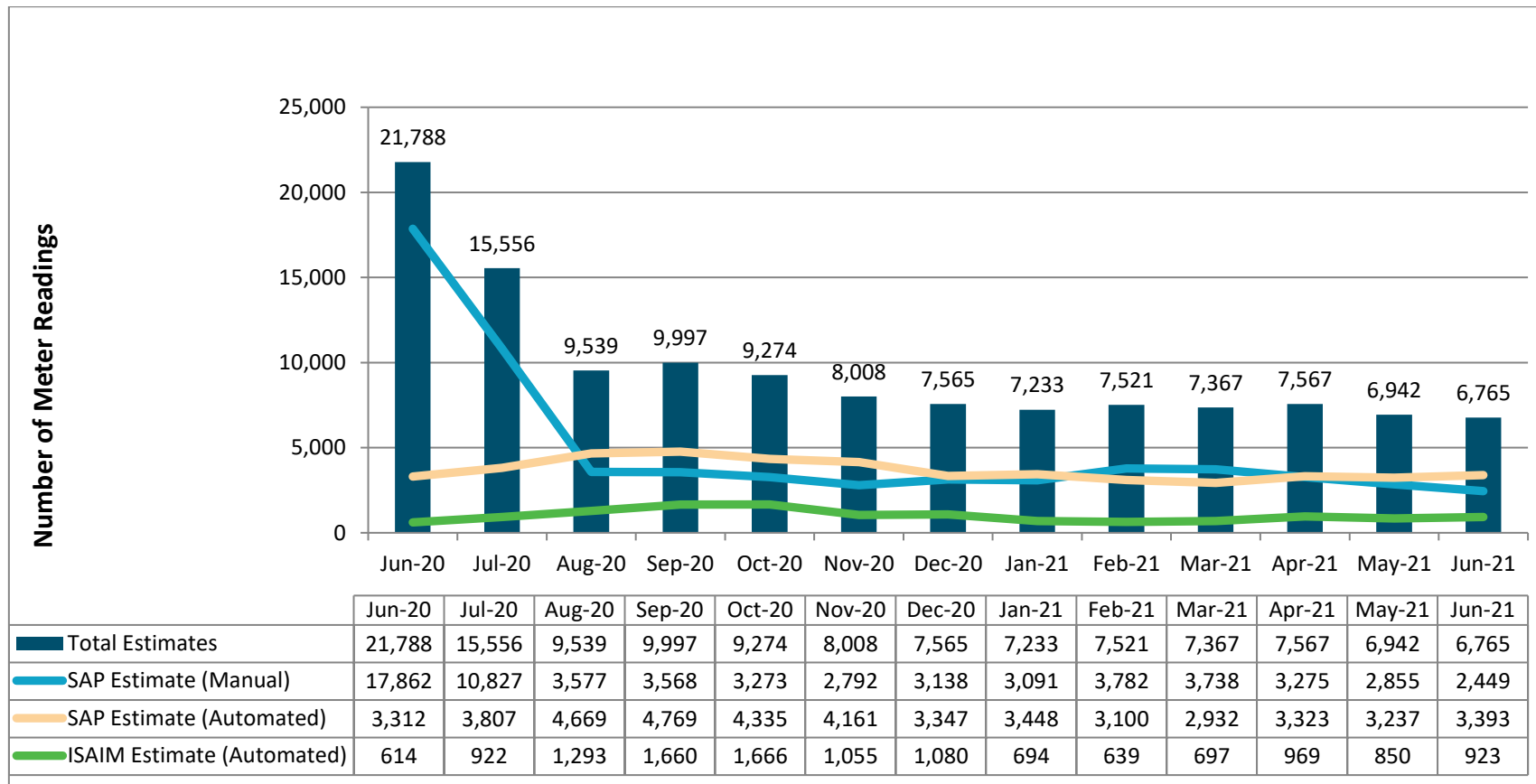
Table 7 above summarizes the causes of all missed meter reads that resulted in bills issued based on consecutive estimates in Q1 F2022, including automated and manually read meters.

The largest category contributing to consecutive estimates overall, at 44 per cent has low or no customer impact. This category includes accounts that are vacant (29 per cent), services with the line side breakers turned off (11 per cent) and disconnected services (3 per cent).

The second largest category is intermittent communications of automated meters, which accounts for 40 per cent of estimated reads including ISAIM (14 per cent) and SAP (26 per cent) estimates. The remaining four categories have relatively low volumes totaling 10 per cent or less and make up the remaining 15 per cent of the overall total. The “Other” category currently relates primarily to inaccessibility to read meters due to wildfires.

For those meters with six or more consecutive estimates, the most significant causes are vacant accounts (52 per cent) and customer-side power outages (24 per cent). These two categories, along with disconnected meters (7 per cent), comprise 84 per cent of the accounts with six or more consecutive estimates and do not impact customer billing.

Figure 2 Meter Readings Requiring Two or More Consecutive Estimates, Jun 2020 to Jun 2021, Converted and Non-converted Meters



July 26, 2021
Mr. Patrick Wruck
Commission Secretary and Manager
Regulatory Support
British Columbia Utilities Commission
Fiscal 2022 First Quarter (Q1 F2022)
Summary Report of Customer Complaints and Consecutive Estimates

For further information, please contact Alicia Henderson at 604-623-4381 or by email at bchydroregulatorygroup@bchydro.com.

Yours sincerely,



Chris Sandve
Chief Regulatory Officer

hr/tl