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July 29, 2022

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

Dear Sara Hardgrave:

**RE: British Columbia Utilities Commission (BCUC or Commission)  
British Columbia Hydro and Power Authority (BC Hydro)  
Fiscal 2023 First Quarter (Q1 F2023)  
Summary Report of Customer Complaints and Consecutive Estimates**

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BC Hydro writes to submit its Q1 F2023 Summary Report of Customer Complaints and Consecutive Estimates.

**Customer Complaints**

**Table 1 Total Complaints Volume from All Sources and BCUC**

	Q1 F2022	Q2 F2022	Q3 F2022	Q4 F2022	Q1 F2023
Total Complaints*	137	126	89	138	93
BCUC	18	19	15	18	15

\*Total Complaints include complaints received through the BCUC

Complaint volumes decreased from 138 in Q4 F2022 to 93 in Q1 F2023. This is also a lower volume than the 137 complaints received in Q1 F2022 (the same quarter for last fiscal year).

Most of the complaints received in Q1 F2023 were either Design complaints due to perceived work delays or Credit and Billing complaints due to disconnections and high bills.

Complaints received through the BCUC also decreased from 18 in Q4 F2022 to 15 in Q1 F2023, down from the quarterly average of 18 in F2022.

**Table 2 Response Time to Customer Complaints**

	Q1 F2022	Q2 F2022	Q3 F2022	Q4 F2022	Q1 F2023
Average Response Time (Days)	4	4	3	3	3

The majority of complaints were completed within internal and external targets of five business days and for complex responses, which involve multiple departments, 10 business days. The average response time in Q1 F2023 was three days.

**Table 3 Complaints by Source**

	All Sources									
	Q1 F2022		Q2 F2022		Q3 F2022		Q4 F2022		Q1 F2023	
BC Hydro	71	52%	63	50%	43	48%	74	54%	40	43%
BCUC	18	13%	19	15%	15	17%	18	13%	15	16%
Better Business Bureau	3	2%	6	5%	4	4%	6	4%	4	4%
Government*	45	33%	38	30%	27	31%	39	28%	34	37%
Media and Other	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	1%	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>100%</b>

*\*Government represents Office of the Minister, MLA, and Ombudsperson*

The largest number of complaints were received by BC Hydro directly, with 40 (43% of the total) in Q1 F2023. This is followed by complaints received through Government with 34 (37% of the total) and the BCUC with 15 (16% of the total).

Of the 34 complaints received through Government in Q1 F2023, 16 were received from MLA offices, 10 directly from the Office of the Minister, and eight from the Ombudsperson's office.

**Table 4 Complaints by Category – All Sources**

	All Sources									
	Q1 F2022		Q2 F2022		Q3 F2022		Q4 F2022		Q1 F2023	
Credit	23	17%	19	15%	13	15%	17	12%	20	22%
Billing and Payments	17	12%	15	12%	11	12%	24	17%	13	14%
Customer Crisis Fund	10	7%	6	5%	6	7%	11	8%	5	5%
SMI	9	7%	9	7%	5	6%	4	3%	3	3%
Non-Customer Service	56	41%	28	22%	27	30%	29	21%	33	36%
Other	22	16%	49	39%	27	30%	53	39%	19	20%
<b>Total</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>100%</b>

Non-Customer Service complaints totaled 33 (36% of the total) in Q1 F2023, which was mostly made up of 16 Design complaints, largely due to service connection delays, and seven related to Conservation and Energy Management, focused mostly on rebates. There were 20 Credit complaints (22% of the total), largely due to disconnections, and 19 (20% of the total) in the Other category, with most regarding Planned Outages.

**Table 5 Complaints by Category – BCUC**

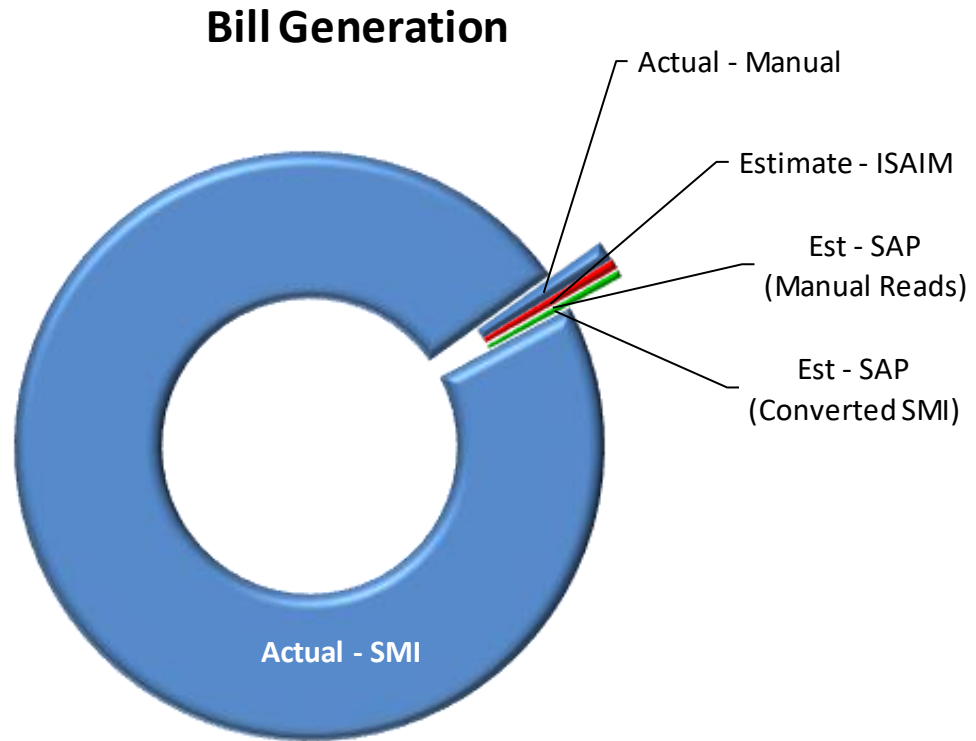
	BCUC									
	Q1 F2022		Q2 F2022		Q3 F2022		Q4 F2022		Q1 F2023	
Credit	5	28%	2	11%	4	27%	2	11%	4	27%
Billing and Payments	5	28%	5	26%	4	27%	7	39%	2	13%
Customer Crisis Fund	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
SMI	2	11%	1	5%	0	0%	2	11%	0	0%
Non-Customer Service	4	22%	4	21%	4	27%	1	6%	7	47%
Other	2	11%	7	37%	3	19%	6	33%	2	13%
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100%</b>

The two leading complaint categories received through the BCUC in Q1 F2023 were Non-Customer Service with seven complaints (47% of the total) and Credit with four complaints (27% of the total). In Q1 F2023, the Non-Customer Service category included three Design complaints and one Indigenous Relations complaint. Three of the four Credit complaints were as a result of disconnection.

### Consecutive Estimates

In Q1 F2023, Consecutive Estimates decreased compared to the previous quarter. For June 2022, 99.5% of bills were issued based on actual reads and Itron SAP AMI Integration Module (ISAIM) estimates. [Figure 6](#) identifies the sources of meter reads (converted and manual reads) that received actual vs. estimates for June 2022.

**Figure 6 Sources of Meter Reads for Invoices Issued, June 2022**



Bill Issued Using:	June 2022		
	Volume	%	%
Actual – SMI	1,376,276	97.9%	99.5%
Actual – Manual	15,315	1.1%	
Estimate – ISAIM	7,582	0.5%	
Est - SAP (Manual Reads)	864	0.1%	0.5%
Est - SAP (Converted SMI)	5,533	0.4%	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,405,570</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

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

The overall number of Consecutive Estimates decreased by 18% compared to the previous quarter.

**Table 7 Consecutive Estimates by Meter Reading Category – Q1 F2023**

	Mar 2022	Jun 2022
Accounts with Automated Reads – last read SAP Estimate	3,055	3,536
Accounts with Automated Reads – last read ISAIM Estimate	2,106	1,050
Accounts with Manual Reads – last read SAP Estimate	4,205	3,114
<b>Total</b>	<b>9,366</b>	<b>7,700</b>

In June 2022, 7,700 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 a 18% decrease compared to the prior quarter (Q4 F2022) and a 14% increase compared to the same period the prior year (6,765 total Consecutive Estimates in Q1 F2022).

SAP estimates that are based on monthly historical data accounted for 6,650 of these bills. The remaining 1,050 were ISAIM estimates.

The 18% decrease in total Consecutive Estimates this quarter is due to a 50% decrease in ISAIM estimates, along with a 26% decrease in SAP estimates for manually read meters. Conversely there was a 16% increase in SAP estimates for meters being read over the air, however the net change was still an overall decrease in Consecutive Estimates. The reduction in ISAIM estimates was due to the replacement and subsequent improved performance of the intermittently communicating router reported last quarter. This has addressed last quarters' unusually high ISAIM estimates, and these estimates have now returned to more normal levels. The reduction in consecutive estimates for manually reads meters is likely a result of improved access to sites that were estimated in the winter months due to excessive snow. The increase in SAP estimates for meters with automated reads is normal for this time of the year as densifying foliage starts to compromise the effectiveness of our communications network.

**Table 8 Causes of Missed Reads by Number of Estimates**

Category	2-3 Estimates		4-5 Estimates		6+ Estimates		Grand Total	
	Meters	(%)	Meters	(%)	Meters	(%)	Meters	(%)
<b>Customer Impact NIL / Low</b>								
Vacant	325	8	167	16	1,274	46	1,766	22
Disconnected	52	1	32	3	207	7	291	4
Customer-Side Power Outage	38	1	130	13	752	28	920	12
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>415</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>329</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>2,233</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>2,977</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>Meter Replacement</b>	<b>291</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>296</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>825</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Estimated Automated Reads</b>								
Intermittent Comms – ISAIM	986	24	26	3	7	0	1,019	13
Intermittent Comms – SAP	1,878	49	113	11	110	4	2,101	28
<b>Estimated Manual Reads</b>								
Customer Access	74	2	101	10	71	3	246	3
Other	142	4	135	14	79	3	356	5
Recently Unconverted	154	4	20	2	2	0	176	2
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>3,940</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1,020</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>2,740</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>7,700</b>	<b>100</b>

[Table 8](#) above summarizes the causes of all missed meter reads that resulted in bills issued based on consecutive estimates in Q1 F2023, including automated and manually read meters.

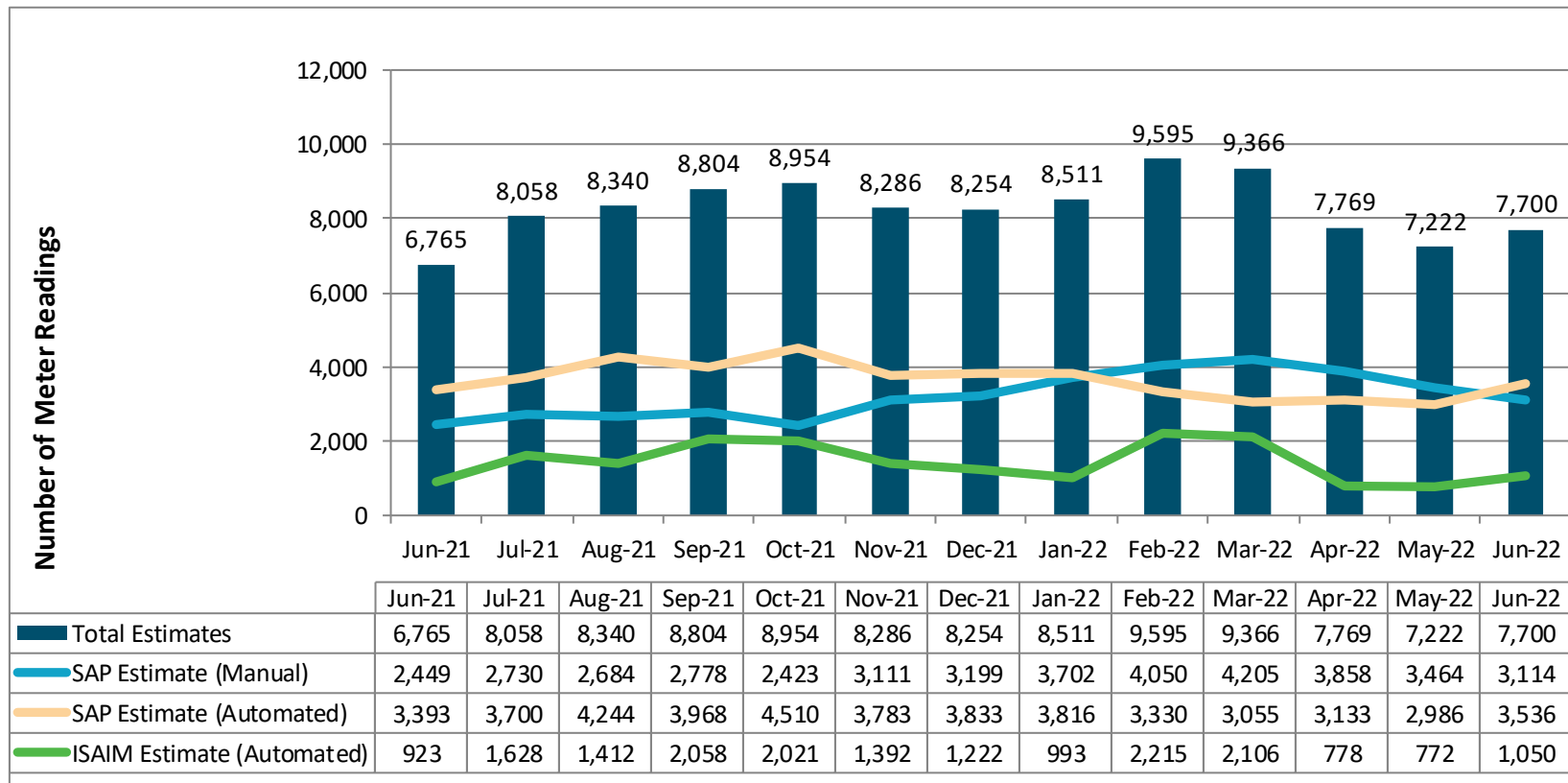
The largest category contributing to Consecutive Estimates overall is intermittent communications of automated meters, which accounts for 41% of estimated reads including ISAIM (13%) and SAP (28%) estimates.

The second largest category, at 38%, has low or no customer impact. This category includes accounts that are vacant (22%), services with the line side breakers turned off (12%) and disconnected services (4%).

The remaining four categories have relatively low volumes, each comprising 11% or less, and make up the remaining 21% of the overall total.

For those meters with six or more consecutive estimates, the most significant causes are vacant accounts (46%) and customer-side power outages (28%). These two categories, along with disconnected meters (7%), comprise 81% 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, June 2021 to June 2022, Converted and Non-Converted Meters**



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Acting Commission Secretary and Manager  
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For further information, please contact Alicia Henderson at 604-623-4381 or by email at [bchydroregulatorygroup@bchydro.com](mailto:bchydroregulatorygroup@bchydro.com).

Yours sincerely,



(for)Chris Sandve

Chief Regulatory Officer

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