



Office of the Utilities Consumer Advocate



Annual Report 2021-2022



utilitiesconsumer
advocate

Alberta

Honourable Nate Glubish
Minister of Service Alberta
423 Legislature Building
Edmonton, AB T5K 2B6

Dear Minister Glubish,

The Power & Natural Gas Consumers' Panel last met on May 31st, 2022, to review the Office of the Utilities Consumer Advocate's (UCA) Annual Report for the Fiscal Year 2021-22, as mandated. The Panel includes representation from key municipal, business, and agricultural associations, as well as a cross-section of public members with diverse expertise on utility issues. As representatives of the ratepayers that the UCA is mandated to represent, we assess that the knowledge and expertise of the UCA provide a significant return on investment for small business, farm, and residential ratepayers.

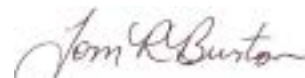
For many small business, farm and residential consumers, the second pandemic year was extremely difficult given the health, economic, and social challenges of the pandemic. The economic challenges forced many small businesses and households to make difficult financial decisions, and the relatively fixed cost of utilities became a concern for those customers. When wholesale electricity and natural gas prices increased significantly last winter, many customers on variable and regulated rate experienced rate shock on their bills. The UCA's winter utility consumer awareness campaign was a timely response to inform consumers on options available to mitigate their utility costs.

The Panel would also like to highlight the following from the UCA Annual Report:

- Over \$92 million in avoided utilities costs for consumers from UCA evidence cited in Alberta Utilities Commission rate decisions.
- The UCA conducted a large winter utility consumer awareness campaign to remind customers they have options when it comes to purchasing power and natural gas in Alberta, and that they can visit ucahelps.alberta.ca for more information on their options, and UCA services.
- There were over 685,000 visits to the UCA website where consumers learned about their utility service options and what to consider as they chose the products and providers that best met their household and/or business' needs.
- Over 30,000 Albertans called the UCA Mediation Team regarding their utility services, with over 1000 calls resulting in mediations to help resolve disputes with their retailers.
- The UCA's Winter Utility Reconnection Program protected 92 households who might otherwise have faced dangerous freezing temperatures without power or heat.
- The Panel reviewed the UCA's key performance metrics, processes and targets, and the Panel's recommendations are accurately reflected in the Annual Report.
- The UCA has consistently achieved operational surpluses against its budget allocations over the past few years. Ratepayers only pay for the UCA's actual expenditures, meaning that the UCA is cost-efficient.

Taken together, the Panel recommends you accept this Annual Report, and request the Minister of Energy recover the UCA's 2021-22 expenditures from the Balancing Pool and Natural Gas Distributors through the usual Ministerial Orders issued annually. The Panel will continue to ensure the concerns of small business, farm, and residential energy utility consumers are understood and addressed.

Sincerely,



Tom Burton
Acting Chair (February to April 2022), Power & Natural Gas Consumers' Panel



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1. Executive Summary

The UCA works with small businesses, farmers, and residential consumers to help reduce their energy costs through representing their interests at regulatory proceedings and advising them on their options for energy utility services.



***Over \$92 million in cost disallowances. Saving consumers money!**

The COVID-19 pandemic affected all Albertans and resulted in many small business and residential consumers struggling with their utility bills over the past two years. Although Alberta's economy is experiencing a strong recovery, many consumers were impacted again by high electricity and natural gas rates last winter.



Consumers saved over \$36 for every \$1 spent on UCA Regulatory Affairs!

The UCA mediated disputes between consumers and energy retailers, worked with various other consumer groups to advocate for lower utility rates, and expanded its consumer education program to inform consumers of their retail choices to help them save money.

The UCA intervened in 41 Alberta Utilities Commission (AUC) proceedings during fiscal 2021-22. These regulatory proceedings examined the various components that go into delivery charges and other regulated charges on power and natural gas bills.

- The AUC agreed with UCA on 58% of issues contested with utility companies during these proceedings.
- UCA evidence and arguments cited in AUC regulatory decisions resulted in cost disallowances of over \$92 million, real savings that helped preserve a competitive business environment and protect consumers.

The UCA Operations Section advises small business, farm, and residential consumers on energy utility services options through the UCA's mediation and consumer education programs.

- The UCA Mediation Team provided timely and efficient dispute resolution between consumers and their utility providers. The UCA received 30,521 calls and 1,766

30,521 calls from Albertans and mediation services for 1,766 customers



emails from consumers in fiscal 2021-22, resulting in 1,019 mediations by the UCA. These mediations required the UCA to contact the utility provider on behalf of the consumer to resolve a dispute.

- The UCA helped reconnect 92 households under the Winter Utility Reconnection Program. This initiative was the last line of consumer protection for households entering winter in Alberta without essential heat and power services.

The UCA's consumer education program conducted 47 outreach events, with the majority of these being virtual. This outreach was complemented by 685,267 consumer visits to the UCA website, over 2.4 times more than the previous year.

During Fiscal Year 2021-2022, the UCA informed more consumers about their utility options, helped consumers resolve disputes with the utility providers, and helped contain consumer electricity costs while delivering its services even more efficiently.

The UCA delivered all its programs for \$5.3 million in the Fiscal Year 2021-2022, significantly under its budget allocation of \$6.8 million. The UCA continues to innovate and deliver value to the electricity and natural gas ratepayers who fund it.





2. Introduction

The UCA empowers small business, farm, and residential consumers of electricity, natural gas, and water utilities in Alberta through its three core functions:

Advocacy ▶ The UCA acts as the voice of electricity and natural gas consumers in dozens of regulatory proceedings every year to ensure the lowest-possible rates, consistent with safe, reliable, reasonable service. The UCA works closely with other governmental departments and agencies, as well as utility service providers, to ensure that consumer interests are addressed in policies, regulations, and industry practices.

Mediation ▶ When consumers have exhausted known avenues of issue resolution, the UCA will investigate and attempt to resolve their concerns through mediation with utility companies.

Education ▶ The UCA provides information and advice to consumers so they understand their utility services, and how to make informed choices about how to purchase electricity and natural gas based on their individual circumstances.

The UCA's mandate is set out in Schedule 13.1 of the *Government Organization Act*.

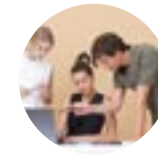
Vision

Alberta's small business, farm, and residential utility consumers are confident the UCA provides them with the information and representation they need to protect their interests.



Mission

The UCA advocates, mediates, and educates for Alberta's small business, farm, and residential utilities consumers to provide the information they need to make informed decisions about their utility services, mediate disputes with their utility providers, and represent the interests of electricity and natural gas consumers at regulatory proceedings to ensure they receive reliable services at reasonable prices.



3. UCA Advocates

Regulatory Affairs Program Activities

The UCA advocates for safe, reliable, cost-effective utility service that meets the needs of consumers today and tomorrow. The Alberta Utilities Commission (AUC) reviews hundreds of applications each year through regulatory proceedings. The UCA typically intervenes in the few dozen proceedings annually that could have the most impact on consumers. Most of the AUC proceedings where the UCA intervenes address service quality, terms and conditions, or rates for consumers. The UCA intervened in 41 AUC proceedings during the 2021-22 FY; 33 of those proceedings were concluded, and a decision was issued by the end of the FY on March 31, 2022. UCA evidence and arguments cited by the AUC in its decisions prevented unjustified expenses from being downloaded to consumers.

The AUC may accept a "Cost Disallowance" based on evidence from interveners. E.g., an applicant may request \$6M for new computers. The UCA presents evidence to show they only need \$4M. The AUC accepts the evidence and disallows this cost; this represents a cost disallowance of \$2M (6M-4M).

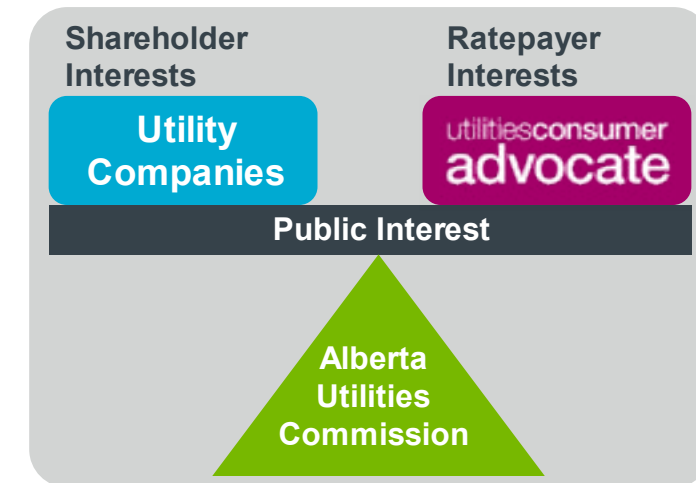


Table 1 on the following page summarizes the value of UCA's participation and regulatory interventions in AUC proceedings since 2013.

These cost disallowances are significant, totaling \$1.86 billion since 2013 and over \$92 million during FY 2021-22.

The UCA has included a performance measure of a rolling three-year average for cost disallowances to adjust for the variance in the number of AUC proceedings and decisions that occur from year to year. For 2021-22, that rolling three-year average was \$181 million.



**Table 1 - UCA Regulatory Interventions
2019-22**

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
# of proceedings the UCA participated in, for which an AUC decision was issued in the FY	47	63	33
# of issues contained in those proceedings	266	245	255
# of issues UCA intervened in	114	140	115
AUC agreed with UCA on (% of issues)	55%	76%	58%
UCA Regulatory Affairs program costs (millions)	\$3.81	\$3.12	\$2.56
UCA evidence/argument cited in AUC decision as cost disallowances (millions)	\$169	\$281	\$92
Cost disallowances per \$ invested in UCA Regulatory Affairs	\$44	\$90	\$36
Rolling three-year average of cost disallowances (millions)	\$228	\$243	\$181

* The significant variance in annual cost disallowances is largely tied to the value of issues being examined by the AUC in their proceedings and the decisions published in each fiscal year. For example, AUC Decision 2941-D01-2015 Generic Cost of Capital included cost disallowances of \$239.6 million and was published on March 23, 2015; had it been published nine days later, it would have counted against 2015-16 statistics.

Table 2 on the following page demonstrates the strong return on investment consumers have received from the UCA's Regulatory Affairs program during 2021-22; for every 1 dollar invested, almost \$36 in cost disallowances were recorded.

**Table 2 - UCA Regulatory Affairs
Performance Measures**

Performance Measures	Target 3-year rolling average	Actual 3-year rolling average	2021/22
Cost disallowances per dollar invested in UCA Regulatory Affairs	>\$50	\$57	\$36
Success rate on the issues contested at the AUC	>66%	63%	58%
% of Regulatory Affairs budget spent on external legal counsel and contractors	<75%	67%	62%

As well as regulatory interventions, the UCA continued to undertake “best practices” research and provide input to AUC, Alberta Electric System Operator (AESO), Department of Energy and other industry bodies on policy related to terms and conditions, distributed energy resources, and metering practices.

The UCA was an active participant, representing consumer interests in discussions regarding AUC Rules and AESO initiatives, including the AESO's ongoing transmission/distribution integrated planning workshops and bulk regional tariff design consultations.

The UCA also provided input into government and AUC initiatives to reduce red tape to balance regulatory efficiency with fairness. The UCA participated in the AUC's industry roundtable held in March 2022: Roundtable 2022: Charting the AUC's progress on regulatory burden reduction. The UCA provided feedback and insights on the AUC's initiatives to reduce regulatory burden through assertive case management and directed mediation. The AUC, in turn, thanked stakeholders for their ongoing support and assistance as they continue to streamline regulatory processes.

The Alberta Electric System Operator (AESO) collects monies through a tariff to pay for electricity transmission costs. These costs contribute to 14% to 24% of a customer's bill. The AESO has been consulting with stakeholders on the current tariff design since 2018, and the UCA has been actively involved in advocating to lower costs for residential, farm, and small commercial consumers.

The UCA continues to make utility rate relief a priority. Some of the largest successes were through the UCA's regulatory interventions in regulated rate tariff (RRT), default rate tariff (DRT) proceedings, and in regards to distribution-connected generation credits.

One of these regulatory proceedings resulted in a negotiated reduction of \$39.3 million to Direct Energy Regulated Services' (DERS) requested revenue requirement.

The distribution-connected generation (DCG) credit proceeding decision cited UCA arguments and concluded that the existing credit mechanism did not support just and reasonable rate making as it increased the amount customers pay for transmission service without them receiving a proven, quantifiable benefit.

The total expected savings to customers from eliminating these generator credits will amount to \$102.5 million. The UCA was one of three parties to make similar arguments, so it counted ~\$34 million in savings from that proceeding in its \$92 million overall total in cost disallowances.



Regulatory Affairs - Program Objectives

The UCA Regulatory Affairs program supports the following Service Alberta 2021-24 Business Plan Outcomes and Key Objectives:

Service Alberta Outcome 1 - Consumers are protected and a competitive business environment is preserved.

Key Objective 3.2

Balance effective industry regulation and protection of consumer interests while enhancing governance and reducing unnecessary red tape.

UCA Regulatory Affairs Program Objectives

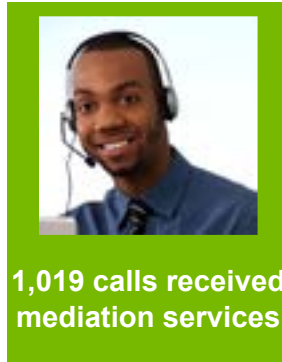
<p>One</p>	<p>Assist regulatory decision-makers with gaining a richer understanding of issues under their consideration by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ intervening in regulator proceedings; ▶ conducting independent analysis of applications to regulatory agencies (particularly the AUC); and ▶ presenting evidence and arguments on behalf of small business, farm, and residential consumers of electricity and natural gas.
<p>Two</p>	<p>Pursue results oriented regulatory interventions and consumer focused input into GOA policy development concerning energy issues by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ responding to government priorities and policy direction by providing expert analysis and advice that represents consumers' best interests; and ▶ prioritizing effort to issues of significance to consumers because of their financial, service quality, precedential, or other regulatory implications. See Appendix B – Proceeding Intervention Criteria for more details.
<p>Three</p>	<p>Ensure timely UCA reporting of regulatory results, successes and future challenges, including informing the Minister of Service Alberta on critical issues arising from regulatory applications.</p>
<p>Four</p>	<p>Reduce regulatory burden by identifying opportunities to address reoccurring regulatory issues and improving standardization of terms, tariffs, and conditions through collaboration with industry and other stakeholders, generic regulatory proceedings, or updates to regulation.</p>



4. UCA Mediates

Mediation Program Activities

The UCA received 30,521 calls from Albertans through the 310-4UCA (310-4822) line during FY 2021-22 and 1,766 emails to UCAhelps@gov.ab.ca. This was a substantial increase from FY 2020-21, when the UCA received 20,662 calls and 973 emails. These increases are attributed to high utility rates during the winter of 2021/22 and the UCA Winter Utility Awareness Campaign.



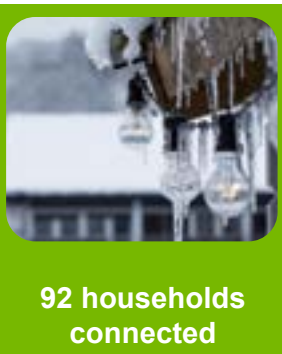
1,019 calls received mediation services

The majority of calls to the UCA are from customers looking for advice and information about their utility situation. Mediation Officers provided consumers with a list of retailers and product offers, education about the energy market, and information that will help a customer to make an informed choice about their service. Of the total calls, 1,019 calls were provided with mediation services.

These services included investigating concerns raised by consumers and attempts to resolve their concerns through mediation with utility companies. The most common reasons for mediation are billing issues, high consumption, concerns about billing and customer service, and disconnections for non-payment or non-application.

Each year, the UCA participates in the AUC's Winter Utility Reconnection Project. The UCA is supplied with the names and contact information of Albertan consumers whose electricity and/or natural gas services are being disconnected at the beginning of the winter season.

Multiple attempts are made to reach those individuals through phone calls and letters in an effort to assist in the reconnection process. This includes providing information and advice, mediating payment arrangements, and connecting consumers with support programs if required.



92 households connected

As part of the AUC Winter Utility Reconnection Program, the UCA received 2,706 files from retailers for investigation and helped reconnect 92 disconnected households during the 2021-22 winter season. The UCA Mediation Team has been able to help a number of consumers resolve complicated and unusual issues.

In the spring of 2022, a microgeneration consumer reached out to the UCA because they did not believe the credits received on their statement matched what they were creating through their solar panels. The consumer had been trying to resolve the account with their retailer for some time and was not making any progress. A Consumer Mediation Officer initiated an investigation and discovered that the consumer's usage and power generation numbers had been reversed since 2018. The consumer had been under credited by 3,500kWh. When mediation was completed, the consumer was credited just over \$1,000.

In another example, a customer living outside of Alberta contacted the UCA because they were receiving a bill from a retailer for a property in Alberta they had no association with. The consumer had had no luck resolving the issue with the retailer directly. When a Consumer Mediation Officer investigated, they discovered that consumer living at the property in question had the same name as the person receiving the bills but was not the same person. With the UCA intervention, the account was adjusted so the correct person was billing at the address, and the person living outside was not held responsible for any of the charges.

Table 3 - UCA Mediation Performance Measures

Performance Measure	Annual Targets	2021/22 Actual
Abandoned call rate	7%	2%
Average speed of answer	30 seconds	44 seconds
Average days to close energy utility mediation	14 days	8 days
Average days to close a water utility mediation	28 days	11 days
Winter Utility Disconnection Program completed	December 15	December 22

*The average speed of response was up considerably due to extremely high call volume in January and February 2022 due to historically high electricity and natural gas prices. Temporary staff were hired for March 2022 to reduce wait times below target levels.

Mediation Program Objectives

The UCA Mediation program supports the following Service Alberta 2021-24 Business Plan Outcomes and Key Objectives:

Service Alberta Outcome 3 - Consumers are protected and a competitive business environment is preserved.

Key Objective 3.3 Improve access to timely and efficient consumer dispute resolutions.

UCA Mediation Program Objectives

One	Resolve disputes between consumers and energy service providers through timely and effective mediation.
Two	Contact disconnected residential consumers through the Winter Utility Reconnection Program in order to assist with activating their gas and/or electricity service during winter months.
Three	Support Service Alberta's consumer protection focus by advising the Minister of critical and sensitive issues and on trends identified from mediation activities.



5. UCA Educates

Consumer Education Program Activities

The UCA Consumer Education and Awareness Program includes three complementary components:

1. the www.ucahelps.alberta.ca website
2. UCA social media channels
3. UCA consumer outreach program

Website

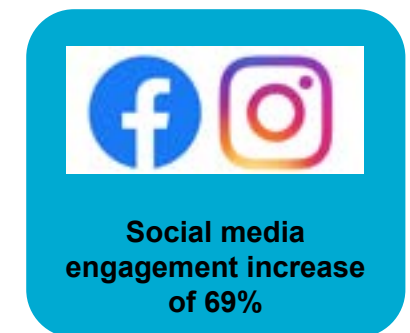
The www.ucahelps.alberta.ca website is the foundation of the UCA Consumer Education and Awareness Program. The UCA website provides an important objective source of information for consumers about retail choices, their monthly bills, helpful tips and hints, and where to go for help. The site also includes detailed information about the energy markets and utility regulatory processes and decisions. The website includes a cost-comparison tool so that consumers can easily review the products available in their area.



During 2021-22, the UCA enhanced the user interface and education resources available on the UCA website. These enhancements were complemented by the Winter Utility Consumer Awareness Campaign that increased visits to the UCA website to 685,267, over 2.4 times more than the previous year. Over 447,000 new users visited the website, which is a 139% increase over FY 21/22. The number of times the consumers had viewed the website pages increased 122% from 957,586 page views in FY 20/21 to over 2 million page views in FY 21/22. The website provides Albertans with helpful information on their options for purchasing power and natural gas for their homes and businesses.

Social Media Engagement

The number of UCA social media engagements (Facebook and Instagram likes, shares, and comments) was 19,131 for FY 21/22, an increase of 69% over FY 20/21. The increase is assessed to be from consumers' concerns with high regulated electricity and natural gas retail prices during the winter months and the consumer awareness campaign mentioned earlier.



Consumer Outreach Program

Over the past year, the Consumer Education Team's delivery of outreach activities was still largely virtual through online webinars and presentations. In-person activities resumed late in the fiscal year as COVID-19 health protection measures were lifted. The Consumer Education Team conducted a total of 47 events. The team continued a strategy of indirect engagement with relevant stakeholder organizations, focusing on small business associations, such as chambers of commerce and sector-specific associations in the tourism sector and manufacturing. Education resources were shared with these organizations for distribution to their membership. These activities also enabled the Consumer Education Team to share feedback that facilitated improvements to the UCA website and social media posts, as well as referrals to the UCA Mediation Team and the identification of regulatory and policy issues to the Regulatory Affairs Section.

Consumer Education Program Objectives

The UCA Consumer Education program supports the following Service Alberta 2021-24 Business Plan Outcomes and Key Objectives:

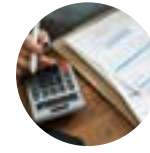
Service Alberta Outcome 3 - Consumers are protected and a competitive business environment is preserved.

Key Objective 3.1

Improve consumer protection through inspections, investigations, enforcement actions and effective legislation.

UCA Consumer Education Program Objectives

One	Electricity and natural gas consumers are aware of the energy utility service options available to them.
Two	Electricity and natural gas consumers know where to find independent and impartial information tools to assist in choosing their provider.
Three	Electricity and natural gas consumers are aware of the regulatory protections and oversight of the utilities sector, natural gas and electricity markets.
Four	Electricity, natural gas, and water utility consumers understand the line items on their monthly utility bills.
Five	Electricity, natural gas, and water utility consumers are aware of mediation services available to them if they have a dispute with their utility provider.
Six	Electricity, natural gas, and water utility consumers know where they can learn more about electricity, natural gas, and water utilities issues.



6. Financial Information

Table 5 presents the UCA's financial results (unaudited) for the 2021-22 FY.

**Table 4 - Financial Report, 2021-22
Fiscal Year ending March 31, 2022**

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS* (thousands of dollars)

Expense	Budget	Actual	Variance
Advocacy Services	947	820	127
Mediation Services	757	734	23
Regulatory Affairs	4,569	2,560	2,009
Consumer Education & Awareness	517	1,212	(695)
Power/Natural Gas Consumers Panel	16	3	13
Total Expense	6,806	5,329	1,477

*The UCA is funded 80 per cent by the Balancing Pool and 20 percent by Natural Gas Utilities.

In FY 2021-22, the UCA had an overall budget surplus of \$1.477 million:

- The Regulatory Affairs program had a surplus of over \$2 million. It was the largest contributor to the overall variance due to a surplus in contract

services as internal UCA staff were used for the majority of research and project management services on regulatory interventions instead of external consultants. In addition, the UCA shifted from primarily using fixed-price contracts to time and materials contracts, which generated further efficiencies and savings.

- Advocacy Services had a surplus of over \$127 thousand due to a vacant position that was not filled until later in the year and through restraint in supplies and services.
- Consumer Education and Awareness program had a large deficit of over \$695 thousand. In late fall 2021, the decision was made to launch an advertising campaign to inform consumers of their retail options, given forecasts were projecting very high prices during the winter. The campaign was funded by shifting the operational surplus in Regulatory Affairs and re-allocating it to Consumer Education & Awareness.
- By moving to virtual meetings, the Power and Natural Gas Consumer's Panel reduced its expenses significantly and continued its trend of running large surpluses relative to its budget allocation.



7. Power & Natural Gas Consumer's Panel Activities

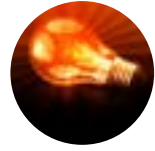
The Power and Natural Gas Consumers' Panel met three times during the Fiscal Year 2021-2022. During the May 2022 meeting, the Panel reviewed the UCA Annual report for 2020-21 and recommended its acceptance by the Minister of Service of Alberta.

The Panel met again in October 2021 and identified affordability as a growing concern for consumers that would likely be exacerbated by high power and natural gas market prices projected for winter 2021/22. The Panel recommended the UCA continue to focus on affordability in its regulatory interventions and policy development input. The Panel also recommended increasing public awareness of UCA services available to help them make utility choices that are best for their respective business, farm, and/or household.

The Panel met again in March 2022 and reviewed recent trends affecting cost increases in utility rates. The Panel recommended the UCA continue research on trends impacting the various components of consumers' bills and identify policy and regulatory options for controlling costs.

These efforts will be increasingly important in the years ahead, as electrification intensifies in more and more sectors and new technologies and business models provide new options to consumers on how they consume, store, and even generate energy. The UCA has an important role to play to support policy development by contributing small business, farm, and residential consumer considerations into the policy development process.





8. Appendices

Appendix A

Mandate

The UCA is established by the *Government Organization Act*, Schedule 13.1. The Act assigns the following responsibilities to the UCA:

- (a) to represent the interests of Alberta small business, farm and residential consumers of electricity and natural gas before proceedings of the Alberta Utilities

The UCA's mandate is set out in Schedule 13.1 of the *Government Organization Act*.

Commission and other bodies whose decisions may affect the interests of those consumers;

- (b) to disseminate independent and impartial information about the regulatory process relating to electricity and natural gas, including an analysis of the impact of decisions of the Alberta Utilities Commission, other bodies and the courts relating to electricity and natural gas;
- (c) to inform and educate consumers about electricity, natural gas and water utilities issues;
- (d) to disseminate independent and impartial information to assist electricity and natural gas consumers in choosing a distributor, provider or retailer, including
- (i) complaints made under this Schedule, the *Electric Utilities Act* or the *Alberta Utilities Commission Act* and the outcome of any recommendation, hearing or settlement,
 - (ii) investigations, orders, administrative penalties or convictions conducted, awarded or made under the *Electric Utilities Act*, the *Alberta Utilities Commission Act* or the *Consumer Protection Act*,
 - (iii) compliance records of a distributor, provider or retailer in adhering to the standards and codes prescribed under the *Electric Utilities Act*, the *Alberta Utilities Commission Act* and the *Consumer Protection Act*, and
 - (iv) any other matters the Utilities Consumer Advocate considers necessary to carry out the purposes of this clause;

- (e) to assist in the resolution of any consumer issue, complaint or dispute between a consumer and a distributor, provider or retailer relating to the provision of electricity, natural gas or water as the Utilities Consumer Advocate considers appropriate and, if a resolution is not reached, to refer the complaint to the person, body or authority the Utilities Consumer Advocate considers appropriate;
- (f) to develop and undertake activities that the Utilities Consumer Advocate considers appropriate for the purposes of
- (i) preventing the disconnection of electricity or natural gas provided by a retailer or provider to a consumer, or
 - (ii) facilitating the reconnection of electricity or natural gas provided by a retailer or provider to a consumer;
- (g) to carry out such other responsibilities relating to electricity, natural gas and water as the responsible Minister determines.





Appendix B

Proceeding Intervention Criteria

The UCA may intervene in a proceeding based on the combination of the priorities below (high, medium or discretionary) and the resources available.

Proceeding and Policy Priorities:

1. Base load high priority work - mandatory participation

- Generic Cost of Capital
- General Revenue Applications (GRAs), General Tariff Applications (GTAs) and all subsequent related proceedings including
 - Interim requests that are excessive
 - Review and Variance requests
 - Appeals to the Alberta Court of Appeal
- Retail energy and non-energy proceedings and all subsequent related proceedings
- Regulated Rate Initiative proceedings including PBR and Capital Trackers

2. Medium priority work - participation depending on constraints

- Policy matters and generic proceedings that affect multiple un-affiliated utilities
 - AUC initiated
 - Utility Asset Disposition
 - Code of Conduct
 - Minimum Filing Requirements
 - Service Quality
 - Distribution Inquiry
 - Department of Energy initiated
 - Harmonization of regulations
 - Market consultations
 - Others
 - Industry initiated
 - Transmission constraint management
- Policy matters for affiliated utilities that have the potential to set precedents
 - Pension management
 - Others
- Complaints by or on behalf of specific customers

3. Discretionary work/Optional participation

- Facilities Applications
- Needs Identification
- Markets - AESO Rules

- National Energy Board matters related to TransCanada Alberta System (NGTL)
- Interim filings
- Compliance filings
- True up or rider applications
- Research on policy implications of emerging technologies on utilities

Issue Intervention Criteria:

Within proceedings, the UCA will take positions on specific issues based on the following criteria. The validity of these specific criteria and the success on specific issues will be monitored and modified on an ongoing basis.

1. Impact on Alberta consumers - Potential benefit or harm

- (a) Costs
 - (i) timing
 - (ii) magnitude
 - (iii) direct channel to consumers
 - (iv) reasonableness or prudence
- (b) service reliability and quality
 - (i) for all service types (retail, distribution, transmission and wholesale)
 - (ii) for both physical operations and customer service
- (c) terms and conditions of service
- (d) Intergenerational equity
- (e) Legitimate or reasonable request from constituents

2. Past successes or failures on specific, related or similar issues

- (a) Have we exhausted all avenues?
- (b) Was the best case put forward?

3. Resource availability to address the specific issues

- (a) Internal
- (b) External

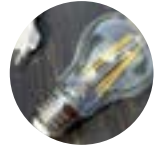
4. Regulatory precedent, support or impact

- (a) Aligned with the regulatory compact
- (b) Within Alberta
- (c) In other Canadian jurisdictions
- (d) In other jurisdictions including the US

5. Regulatory Affairs principles to be defended

6. Alternative means exist for addressing the issues (i.e. another proceeding or policy input)

7. Are the UCA's interests adequately represented by other interveners?



Appendix C

Power & Natural Gas Consumers' Panel Biographies

Panel Mandate

Created under s. 7 of the *Government Organization Act*, the Power and Natural Gas Consumer's Panel ("the Committee") is an advisory agency accountable to the Minister of Service Alberta ("Minister") and responsible for providing advice and guidance regarding current and emerging energy consumer issues.

Panel Members FY 2021-2022

Rhiannon Mesler - Chair, Public Member



Born and raised near Strathmore, AB, Dr. Rhiannon M. Mesler is an Assistant Professor in Marketing at University of Lethbridge. She holds a PhD and MSc from the University of Calgary, and a BA from the University of Waterloo. She has also been named to Calgary's Top 40 Under 40 and Marketing Magazine's 30 Under 30.

Tom Burton - Member representing Rural Municipalities of Alberta



Tom has had several different occupations, including General Manager for the DeBolt and District Agricultural Society, owner/operator of a trucking business, owning/operating a service station and restaurant. Tom became a member of the DeBolt Fire & Rescue in 1993, and in 1995 was selected as the Chief, retired from the department in February of 2021. Tom continues to be a councillor for the Municipal District of Greenview #16, after being elected in the 2001. Tom has served as an RMA Director since 2008. Tom represents the RMA on committees across the province, the Safety Codes Council Board of Directors, Water North Coalition, AER's Multi-Stakeholder Engagement Advisory Committee, among others.

Humphrey Banack - Member representing Alberta Federation of Agriculture



Humphrey has been involved with the Alberta Federation of Agriculture since 2003, serving as president for four years. He served as Vice-president of the Canadian Federation of Agriculture from 2011 to 2017, meeting agricultural producers from across Canada and around the world.



Richard Dunn - Public Member



Richard is a Professional Engineer with extensive senior-level experience with major Canadian energy producers who brings a solid understanding of a broad range of government-related matters, including policy and regulatory development as well as complex regulatory applications.

Bill Given - Member representing Alberta Urban Municipalities Association



Bill Given is Chief Administrative Officer for the Municipality of Jasper. He was previously Mayor of Grande Prairie from 2010 to 2020. He was first elected to Council as an alderman in 2001 and served three terms. Prior to becoming a municipal leader, Bill's career included marketing and communications consulting, and sales in the information technology sector.

Shannon Glover - Public Member



Shannon Glover is a corporate commercial lawyer with over 20 years of legal experience, the majority of it focused in the energy sector including the areas of power generation, sale and regulation. Shannon's legal experience includes commercial transactions, corporate governance and compliance, development of ESG and enterprise risk management frameworks, corporate finance and mergers and acquisitions.

Michael Ng - Public Member



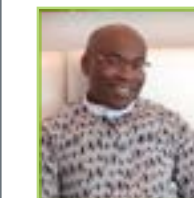
Michael is a professional engineer (PEng), project manager (PMP), and operational lead with diverse industry experience. Michael previously worked in utility project management, executing over 800 million dollars in projects for a transmission facility owner (TFO). Currently, Michael serves as an executive for an oil and gas technology company.

Don Oszli - Member representing Alberta Chamber of Commerce



Don holds a Bachelor of Commerce from the University of Alberta and is a Chartered Accountant, Certified Management Accountant and Certified Internal Auditor. For the past 25 years, Don has taught at the Institute of Chartered Professional Accountants of Alberta and created new professional development course material.

Faith-Michael Uzoka - Member-at-Large



Faith-Michael Uzoka (BSc, MS, MBA, PhD) is a Professor in the Department of Mathematics and Computing at Mount Royal University (MRU), Calgary. experience in four countries. Michael is an accomplished scholar with over 100 academic publications that have made global impacts in various aspects of human endeavour, especially in medical decision support systems.



Appendix D

Glossary

Alberta Electric System Operator – the not-for-profit organization that manages and operates the provincial power grid.

Alberta Utilities Commission - regulates the utilities sector, natural gas and electricity markets to protect the social, economic and environmental interests of Alberta where competitive market forces do not.

Balancing Pool – The Balancing Pool is responsible for helping to manage certain assets, revenues and expenses arising from the transition to competition in Alberta's electric industry.

Cost Disallowance – A cost disallowance is a difference between costs in a regulated utility's application to a regulator and the cost the regulator approves. The UCA uses cost disallowances as a performance indicator but only counts those where a regulator has cited UCA evidence and/or arguments in its decision.

Distribution Utility – is responsible for the local delivery of electricity, natural gas, or water services within a specific service territory, often one or more municipalities.

Energy Retailer – companies that sell electricity and/or natural gas directly to customers and provide billing services for energy distributors.

Transmission Utility – is responsible for transporting large volumes of electricity or natural gas, usually over large distances across the province.

