

STATE OF NEW YORK
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

At a session of the Public Service
Commission held in the City of
Albany on November 19, 2015

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Audrey Zibelman, Chair
Patricia L. Acampora
Gregg C. Sayre
Diane X. Burman

CASE 12-M-0476 - Proceeding on Motion of the Commission to
Assess Certain Aspects of the Residential and
Small Non-residential Retail Energy Markets in
New York State.

CASE 98-M-1343 - In the Matter of Retail Access Business Rules.

CASE 06-M-0647 - In the Matter of Energy Service Company Price
Reporting Requirements.

CASE 98-M-0667 - In the Matter of Electronic Data Interchange.

ORDER APPROVING MODIFICATIONS TO
THE ELECTRONIC DATA INTERCHANGE STANDARDS

(Issued and Effective December 7, 2015)

BY THE COMMISSION:

INTRODUCTION

By this Order, the Commission approves the
modifications to the Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) Standards
proposed in the EDI Working Group's report filed on July 24,
2015. EDI is the uniform system used by energy services
companies (ESCOs) and utilities for the electronic exchange of

retail access data.¹ The modifications to EDI approved in this Order are necessary for the ESCOs and the utilities to implement requirements of the Commission's Order Taking Actions to Improve the Residential and Small Non-residential Retail Access Markets, issued in these proceedings on February 25, 2014 (February Order).²

BACKGROUND

In 2000, the Commission established standards for EDI that ensure uniformity in business communications between ESCOs and utilities.³ From time to time, these standards have been modified to reflect changes in the Uniform Business Practices (UBP) and to accommodate operational changes in competitive retail energy markets in New York State. In the February Order, the Commission called for modifications to EDI to accommodate transactions used by ESCOs to provide bill credits to Assistance Program Participants (APP) customers billed under either the utility rate ready or bill ready consolidated billing models.

The February Order also called for the creation of two additional EDI transactions. First, the February Order identified a need for a transaction through which a utility would identify whether a customer is a recipient of a Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) benefit or a participant in the

¹ Case 12-M-0476 et al., Proceeding on Motion of the Commission to Assess Certain Aspects of the Residential and Small Non-residential Retail Energy Markets in New York State, July 2015 Report on EDI Standards Development (filed July 24, 2015) (EDI Report).

² Case 12-M-0476 et al., Order Taking Actions to Improve the Residential and Small Non-residential Retail Access Markets (issued February 25, 2014) (February Order).

³ Case 98-M-0667, In the Matter of Electric Data Interchange, Opinion and Order on Implementation of Electronic Data Interchange (issued April 12, 2000).

utility-administered income-based discount program. In addition, the February Order called for the creation of a transaction allowing an ESCO to indicate whether it was providing a customer with an energy-related value-added product or service, and the nature of that product or service. In light of requests for clarification of the term "energy-related value-added," the EDI Working Group did not present a proposal for this transaction in the April 7, 2015 EDI Report.

As required by the February Order, Staff held an initial collaborative meeting on March 24, 2014 to facilitate the development of the required EDI changes. As an outgrowth of the collaborative, stakeholders established the EDI Working Group, which consists of utilities, ESCOs, EDI Service Providers and Staff.

On March 2, 2015, the Commission directed the EDI Working Group to consider ways to streamline the EDI development, implementations, and testing process and submit a report of its findings within two months. The EDI Working Group requested an extension, which was granted by the Secretary to the Commission until July 20, 2015 and again until July 24, 2015. On July 24, 2015, the EDI Working Group submitted an EDI Report, which included proposed Revised EDI Standards and recommended that the proposed revisions be adopted as the New York EDI Data Standards and Test Plans.

THE EDI REPORT

As one feature of the ESCO application process, the UBP currently require ESCOs to demonstrate basic EDI proficiency by submitting a series of EDI transactions to the Department of Public Service (DPS) Test Moderator. The EDI Working Group proposes that the utility perform Phase I testing as a prelude to Phase III testing. In cases where the ESCO contracts with an

EDI Service Provider to provide its EDI services and that EDI Service Provider has an existing relationship with the utility, Phase I testing would not be necessary. If the utility does perform a Phase I test, in such instances where, for example, an ESCO is performing its own in-house EDI services, a fee to cover expenses formerly borne by DPS Staff is reasonable. Under this proposal, whether a Phase I test was performed by the utility or the utility determined the test was unnecessary for the ESCO, the utility would inform DPS Staff that the ESCO has met the Phase I testing requirement of UBP 2.B.2.

Because some ESCOs choose to transact EDI using in-house systems, the proposal was broadened to afford those ESCOs with a means of accessing streamlined Phase I testing. In another enhancement, a proposal was crafted providing EDI Service Providers not currently serving ESCOs in New York with a means to enter the market and while qualifying to participate in the streamlining proposal (Established status). For example, if an EDI Service Provider wishes to be added to the Established EDI Service Provider list, it may request to test with the utility or contract for EDI Testing Certification from an Established EDI Service Provider. When determining if the new EDI Service Provider has satisfactorily established itself, the utility may take into consideration whether or not the new EDI Service Provider is testing with an Established EDI Service Provider or is providing EDI services to other ESCOs in the utility's service territory.

The EDI Working Group proposes that the Commission consider conforming changes to implement the streamlining proposal by updating UBP Sections 2.B.2 and 2.C. The revision to Section 2.B.2 requires ESCOs to submit the name of the utility that will conduct Phase I testing, rather than the name of the DPS Test Moderator. The revision to Section 2.C allows

the named utility, instead of DPS, to verify that the Phase I testing requirement has been met. These revisions are the result of a collaborative dialogue among representatives from utilities, ESCOs, and EDI Service Providers that will result in a more efficient ESCO application process. This Order adopts the specific revised UBP language, as set forth in Appendix A.

The EDI working group proposes modifications to the Technical Operating Profile Supplement 2 to clarify that streamlined Phase III testing procedures discussed in the October 2014 Report apply not only to the revised EDI Standards proposed in that filing, but also to Phase III testing applicable to an ESCO entering a utility's territory entering the market for the first time. Generally, an experienced ESCO does not require the same degree of testing as an ESCO that is a new market entrant. While full Phase III testing may be warranted in some circumstances, utilities should have the flexibility to scale and scope Phase III testing for circumstances present.

The EDI Working Group also discussed ways to streamline the process for filing EDI changes and obtaining Commission approval. Currently when changes are proposed to the EDI transactions and filed with the Commission, utilities will wait until the Commission issues an Order adopting the proposed changes. The regulatory process usually takes a few months, even when the EDI transactions are not contentious. The EDI Working Group believes that certain changes to EDI transactions do not require formal regulatory review, including modifications associated with mature business practices, non-mandatory EDI modifications, retirement of obsolete or unused EDI transaction components, and/or corrections of errors in the current EDI Standards documents. The Working Group proposed an Expedited EDI Standards Approval Process to develop the system changes

necessary as a prelude to testing and implementation after a shorter period than would occur with a full regulatory review. With the adoption of the expedited EDI Standards Approval Process, the EDI Working Group believes that utilities and ESCOs could begin systems development necessary as a prelude to testing and implementation after a shorter period than would typically occur with a full regulatory review.

In addition, included in the July report are additional modifications to the EDI Standards to support ESCO calculation of APP credits including development of a new EDI transaction designed to convey utility pricing history. Other EDI modifications proposed close some of the bill presentation and processing gaps that arise when the ESCO issuing the APP credit is no longer serving the customer receiving the credit.

The report also revises the EDI Standards Documents to:

- Support utility optional exchange of customer email addresses and facsimile numbers with ESCOs.
- Update the examples and/or business process descriptions/diagrams in various EDI Standards Documents.
- Add clarifying notes/language in various EDI Standards Documents.
- Remove references to specific utility implementations, add references to Utility Maintained EDI Guides, and modify/remove outdated language.
- Address miscellaneous errata.

NOTICE OF PROPOSED RULEMAKING

Pursuant to the State Administrative Procedure Act (SAPA) §202(1), a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking was published in

the State Register on August 26, 2015 [SAPA No. {12-M-0476SP12}]. The time for submission of comments pursuant to the Notice expired on October 12, 2015. No comments were received.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The February Order identified certain changes to EDI that should facilitate the continued development of the retail access markets in New York State. The EDI Standards must be modified to effectuate requirements regarding customers who participate in utility low income assistance programs.⁴ In addition, the Commission directed the EDI Working Group to consider ways to streamline the EDI development, implementation, and testing process. The Working Group proposed an Expedited EDI Standards Approval Process to develop the system changes necessary as a prelude to testing and implementation after a shorter period than would occur with a full regulatory review. The Expedited EDI Standards Approval Process will apply to EDI transactions for which the EDI Working Group has reached consensus, including modifications associated with mature business practices, non-mandatory EDI modifications, retirement of unused EDI transaction components, and/or corrections of errors. The EDI Report included revised EDI Standards, as well as revised UBP language, that incorporate these modifications. In addition, the revised EDI Standards include modifications that allow for the effective functioning of EDI. These modifications were achieved through a collaborative process of interested stakeholders and will result in a more efficient system.

⁴ This Order does not address the remaining policies related to Assistance Program Participants.

The Commission orders:

1. Revisions to the EDI Standards documents, as set forth in the EDI Report submitted in these proceedings on July 24, 2015, are adopted.

2. Revisions to the Uniform Business Practices, as set forth in Appendix A to this Order, are adopted.

3. These proceedings are continued.

By the Commission,

(SIGNED)

KATHLEEN H. BURGESS
Secretary

APPENDIX A

Modifications* to Provisions of the Uniform Business Practices to effectuate Modifications to the Electronic Data Interchange Standards

UBP.2.B.2 - Applicants shall submit to the Department the name of the utility that will test ~~Test Moderator~~ designated EDI transactions required for syntactical verification in the Phase I testing program. The Department shall maintain a list of ESCOs that successfully complete Phase I test requirements by transaction type.

UBP.2.C. - The Department shall review the application package ~~and conduct EDI Phase I testing as required for~~ each applicant. An ESCO shall notify the Department of any major changes in the information submitted in the Retail Access Eligibility Form and/or application package that occurs during the Department review process. The Department shall advise the applicant, in writing, if the applicant submitted the required information and if satisfaction of Phase I EDI testing is successfully completed requirement has been verified by the utility designated by the applicant.

* Please note that the UBP additions are underlined and the deletions are identified by a strikethrough.