

STATE OF NEW YORK
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

At a session of the Public Service
Commission held in the City of
Albany on July 19, 2006

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

William M. Flynn, Chairman
Patricia L. Acampora
Maureen F. Harris
Robert E. Curry, Jr.
Cheryl A. Buley

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

ORDER MODIFYING ELECTRONIC DATA
INTERCHANGE (EDI) STANDARDS FOR THE DROP,
CONSUMPTION HISTORY, MONTHLY USAGE,
RATE READY AND SINGLE RETAILER BILLING AND
ACCOUNT ASSIGNMENT TRANSACTIONS

(Issued and Effective July 21, 2006)

BY THE COMMISSION:

BACKGROUND AND SUMMARY

Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) systems facilitate the efficient exchange of retail access information between distribution utilities and Energy Service Companies (ESCOs) through the use of standard message formats for common retail access transactions such as enrolling customers for ESCO commodity service, exchanging bill determinants for consolidated billing, and providing details of customer payments. The New York EDI Collaborative, organized in 1998, is responsible for the identification of all retail access data needs and the determination of which needs should best be met by the development or modification of an EDI standard.¹ In this order,

¹ New York's published standards adhere to EDI X12 4010 protocols issued by the Accredited Standards Committee of the American National Standards Institute.

modifications in some EDI standards proposed by Staff or utility parties are considered and adopted.

The standards affected by this order include the TS814 Drop (used to communicate a request to terminate ESCO commodity service on an account),² the TS814 Consumption History (used by ESCOs to request customer's consumption history),³ the TS867 Monthly Usage (used to provide ESCOs with current consumption for their accounts),⁴ the TS248 Account Assignment (used to reassign responsibility for a receivables balance from the utility billing party to the ESCO),⁵ and the TS810 Invoice - Utility Rate Ready Consolidated Billing (used to provide ESCOs

² Version 2.0 of the 814 Drop Transaction Set Standard is comprised of the TS814 Drop Request & Response Implementation Guide, the TS814 Drop Data Dictionary and the Drop Business Processes Document.

³ Version 1.2 of the 814 Consumption History Request Transaction Set Standard is comprised of the TS814 Consumption History Request Implementation Guide, the TS814 Consumption History Data Dictionary and the Business Processes - Consumption History Document.

⁴ Version 2.2 of the 867 Monthly Usage Transaction Set Standard consists of the TS867 Monthly Usage Implementation Guide, the Monthly Usage Data Dictionary and the Usage Business Processes (Monthly). Version 2.0 of the Usage Business Processes (Monthly) is not modified as a result of this Order and remains as previously issued in Case 98-M-0667 on November 26, 2002.

⁵ Version 2.0 of the 248 Account Assignment Transaction Set Standard consists of the TS248 Account Assignment Implementation Guide and the Account Assignment for Consolidated Billing Business Process (All Consolidated Billing Models).

with details of charges billed to their customers).⁶ These modifications are necessary (a) to allow utilities to send an 'acknowledge' response when an ESCO drop request pertains to specific off system accounts; (b) to enable National Fuel Gas Distribution Corporation (NFG) to track the Gas Pool Id associated with accounts that are being dropped; (c) to enable Orange & Rockland Utilities, Inc. (O&R) to process drop, consumption history and monthly usage transactions for only the un-metered portion of service on an electric account that contains both metered and un-metered service; (d) to enable utilities offering rate ready consolidated billing to provide more detailed tax information in 810 Invoices sent to ESCOs and to achieve consistency in the code used to identify local sales tax amounts in any type of 810 Invoice transaction; (e) to enable NFG to provide its participating ESCOs with estimated consumption for a calendar month period for each active account to match the 810 Invoice transaction containing estimated charges for a calendar month period; (f) to enable utilities who have implemented the Purchased Receivables method of payment processing to use a 248 Account Assignment transaction to reassign responsibility for collection of certain receivables on active accounts to an ESCO and (g) to recognize that the Single

⁶ Version 1.2 of the 810 Invoice for Utility Rate Ready Billing Transaction Set Standard is comprised of the TS810 Invoice - Utility Rate Ready Billing Implementation Guide, the Utility Rate Ready Data Dictionary and the Consolidated Billing Business Processes (Utility Rate Ready). The Consolidated Billing Business Processes Document is not modified as a result of this Order and remains as previously issued in Case 98-M-0667 on June 21, 2002.

Retailer Model is no longer offered by Rochester Gas and Electric Corporation (RG&E).⁷

Notices of the proposed modifications were published in the State Register on August 4, 2004 (TS810 Invoice - Utility Rate Ready Billing and TS814 Drop), August 11, 2004 (TS814 Consumption History), December 29, 2004 (TS867 Monthly Usage, TS814 Drop and TS810 Invoice - Single Retailer Model), and June 14, 2005 (TS248 Account Assignment). The minimum periods for the receipt of the comments pursuant to the State Administrative Procedure Act have expired for all of the notices.

Comments on the proposed Drop and Consumption History Standards were filed by Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation d/b/a National Grid (National Grid), and jointly by New York State Electric & Gas Corporation and RG&E (NYSEG/RG&E). National Grid also submitted comments on the proposed Account Assignment and Monthly Usage Standards. No comments were received on the proposed Invoice Standards for Utility Rate Ready Consolidated Billing or Single Retailer Model.

CHANGES

Drop, Consumption History and Monthly Usage Transactions

The customer's utility account number is used for validating all EDI transactions; this segment must be present in each transaction or it will be rejected. When the initial versions of the standards were first issued in New York, the

⁷ This change, in addition to the changes in the TS867 Monthly Usage requested by NFG, necessitated substantial changes in the TS810 Invoice - Single Retailer Model to retain consistency across all standards. A number of segments and elements previously required by RG&E's implementation of Single Retailer are deleted or modified. Version 2.0 of the 810 Invoice - Single Retailer Model Transaction Set Standard consists of the TS810 Invoice Implementation Guide, the TS810 Invoice - Single Retailer Model Data Dictionary, and the Billing Business Processes - Single Retailer Model.

Collaborative adopted a general rule that an EDI transaction, regardless of the type of transaction, would affect all meters and/or un-metered service points associated with the account number present in the transaction. O&R, however, tracks metered and un-metered service on the same electric account in different systems. It seeks modification of the Utility Account Number segment in the Drop, Consumption History and Monthly Usage standards to add a third data element to that segment in order to differentiate between transactions pertaining to metered versus un-metered service on electric accounts in their service territory.

National Grid opposes the change in the structure of the Utility Account Number segment in the Drop and other standards because this structure does not comply with the principles established in New York that all meters on the customer's account are, for example, dropped when utility or ESCO initiated Drop Requests are processed. NYSEG/RG&E also opposes the use of this segment to describe the type of services on an account because alternative structures are technically superior to the O&R approach.

Discussion

The change in the Utility Account Number segment requested by O&R is approved.⁸ Although NYSEG/RG&E and National Grid proposed alternative processes for distinguishing between metered and un-metered service on the same account, the O&R proposal is preferable. The proposed change in the Account Number segment can be replicated in almost every other transaction standard in use in New York; other alternatives

⁸ A request to modify the Enrollment, Change and Accounts Receivable Advisement standards in the same manner was approved in an order issued in this proceeding on May 19, 2006.

would have been more cumbersome and therefore more costly to implement. Accordingly, the structure previously adopted for other standards will also be reflected in the Drop, Consumption History and Monthly Usage standards.

Drop and Consumption History Standards - Other Changes

National Grid requests that an 'Acknowledge' code be added to the Drop standard for use by the utility in responding to Drop request transactions for accounts that have traditionally been processed offline.⁹ NFG requests that a Gas Pool Id segment be added to the Drop standard for use in its service territory. Staff recommended modifying or deleting various notes, segments, and elements in the Drop and other standards referencing use of the Single Retailer Model in RG&E's service territory since RG&E no longer offers that model.

National Grid opposes the NFG request to add a Gas Pool Id segment to the Drop standard if transmitting that segment would be required in every service territory. Grid points out that the 814 Enrollment Standard provides for communicating the Gas Pool Id on accepted new gas enrollments to the ESCO and the 814 Change Standard provides for utilities and ESCOs to communicate a change in the Gas Pool Id associated with a customer. National Grid sees no need to transmit a Gas Pool Id in Drop transactions because it is redundant and the associated re-programming to implement such a change is needlessly costly.

⁹ Certain accounts, such as those for municipal entities, are not part of the utility's Customer Information System. For these accounts, manual processes have traditionally been used to record history, bill and process a change in account details. Accordingly, an immediate electronic 'accept' or 'reject' response to an EDI Drop Request is impractical.

Discussion

The NFG request to include a Gas Pool Id segment in Drop transactions is adopted; other utilities may require this segment in Drop transactions at their discretion. National Grid's request to add an 'Acknowledge' code to the Drop standard is also approved; a similar code is already present in the TS814 Enrollment Standard. The modifications recommended by Staff to ensure consistency between the EDI standards and recent orders in other proceedings affecting retail access programs are also adopted.

In addition, the Consumption History Implementation Guide and Data Dictionary are updated to remove some inconsistencies between those documents and the current Uniform Business Practices (UBP). Specifically, the segment used to communicate fees associated with utility provision of customer's history information via EDI is deleted because utilities are no longer permitted to assess fees for consumption history provided via EDI. Further, utilities will now be required to include data segments for service address (where a specific address is available¹⁰) in responses accepting an ESCO request for consumption history because this information is required by the UBP.

The Business Process documents for the Drop and Consumption History standards are further revised to reflect, where applicable, the text of the most recent version of the

¹⁰ Transmitting service address information in responses accepting consumption history requests is currently optional; the use of these segments is now revised to 'conditional' to recognize that a specific service address may not be available for every un-metered service point on electric accounts.

UBP,¹¹ the recent order adopting ESCO Referral Programs,¹² and various orders dealing with implementation of Chapter 686.¹³

Standards for Utility Rate Ready Consolidated Billing

A consolidated bill provides customers with one bill containing charges for both distribution utility delivery service and ESCO commodity service. Utilities are required to offer consolidated billing services to their active ESCOs but may choose between the Rate or Bill Ready methods. In the Rate Ready method each ESCO must provide the utility in advance with rates, rate codes or prices (fixed and/or variable), tax rates, contact information, and any bill messages applicable to its accounts. The utility uses this information in conjunction with current consumption for each ESCO account to calculate the ESCO charges for presentation on the customer's bill. After the bill is issued, the utility transmits an 810 Invoice transaction to the ESCO containing the details of the billed charges.

In order to provide ESCOs with more detailed tax information for their accounts, National Grid proposed to add a code (GR) for gross receipts tax to the segment currently used to communicate tax information such that both sales and gross receipts taxes could be provided to ESCOs. Staff recommended that the code currently used to identify sales taxes (SL) in the 810 Rate Ready Invoice Standard be revised in order to be

¹¹ Cases 98-M-1343 and 98-M-0667, EDI and UBP Proceedings, Order Modifying Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) Standards and Uniform Business Practices, Attachment B, (issued May 19, 2006).

¹² Case 05-M-0858, Energy Service Company Referral Program Proceeding (issued December 22, 2005).

¹³ Cases 98-M-1343, 99-M-0631, and 03-M-0117, UBP, Billing and HEFPA Proceedings (issued June 20, 2003, December 5, 2003 and June 22, 2005).

consistent with the code used for the same purpose in the 810 Invoice standards for Utility Bill Ready Consolidated Billing and Single Retailer (LS).

Discussion

No comments were received on the proposed changes in the 810 Invoice for Utility Rate Ready Billing; the standard is revised as proposed.

Monthly Usage Standard

An 867 Monthly Usage transaction is currently used by the distribution utility to provide to the ESCO its customer's current consumption (dual, rate ready or bill ready billing) or usage (Single Retailer Model) data. Consumption data is sent at the time the utility is rendering a bill to the customer; usage data is sent after a meter is read and the data has been validated. In most instances, an EDI Invoice transaction containing customer charges is linked to the specific 867 monthly usage transaction containing the data used to calculate those charges.

In NFG's implementation of the Single Retailer model,¹⁴ three types of 810 Invoice transactions are transmitted to a Single Retailer ESCO:

¹⁴ In this model, an ESCO purchases delivery service from the distribution utility and then resells it along with commodity service to its end use customers. The ESCO is the only entity issuing bills to the customer; therefore the content of the customer's bill is limited to data obtained from the customer by the ESCO and data transmitted to the ESCO by the Utility. The Single Retailer ESCO receives meter reading data and other factors necessary to calculate billed charges in the 867 monthly usage transaction so that the ESCO will be able to provide their customers with the level of bill detail similar to the level currently provided in either a utility bundled bill or a consolidated bill rendered by the Utility. In addition to Single Retailer, NFG also supports dual and utility rate ready consolidated billing.

EURC¹⁵ Cycle Invoice - contains current or cancelled delivery charges for a cycle for each customer enrolled with an ESCO. These charges are based on the usage data contained in a corresponding 867 monthly usage transaction for each customer.

EURC Calendar Month Estimate Invoice - contains delivery charges for a calendar month period for each customer enrolled with an ESCO. These charges are based on an estimate of the customer's usage for the calendar month period. There is no corresponding 867 transaction for this invoice.

ESCO Summary Invoice - contains charges assessed by the Utility and payable by the ESCO¹⁶ plus the sum of its customer's delivery charges for a calendar month period purchased by the ESCO for resale to its customers.

NFG now proposes to use an 867 monthly usage transaction to provide a calendar month estimate of usage to provide its ESCOs with the supporting details for charges (and credits) communicated in an 810 EURC Calendar Month Estimate Invoice. To accomplish this objective NFG suggests adding an additional code to the 867 Transaction Set Standard for Monthly Usage, for use in its service territory, to differentiate an 867 containing actual usage from 867 transactions containing calendar month estimates. In addition to this change, Staff recommends correcting the segment note for the Metered Base Load segment to clarify that base load data is associated with a meter rather than an account.

¹⁵ EURC stands for end use retail customer.

¹⁶ For example, charges for over/under deliveries, surcharges and credits for upstream capacity, operational flow order related charges, late fees, etc.

National Grid has no objection to the NFG request as long as such requests are treated as requests for waivers to permit NFG transmittal of estimated account-by-account meter data. National Grid does object to the change if the Commission seeks to impose these obligations on other utilities.

Discussion

The modifications in the 867 Standard for Monthly Usage proposed by NFG and Staff are adopted. NFG may use an 867 transaction to transmit either estimated usage for a calendar month period or actual usage for a cycle period to ESCOs participating in its retail access program. Other distribution utilities or meter reading entities are not required to transmit this data but may do so at their discretion.

Account Assignment Standard (Collection Activities)

When a retail access customer receives a consolidated bill and the payment processing method in effect is Pay-As-You-Get-Paid¹⁷ or Purchased Receivables (POR) With Recourse,¹⁸ a utility billing party may assign responsibility to the non-billing party (ESCO) for collecting or applying an outstanding receivable on their account for the customer. Reassignment of collection responsibility for arrears (or disposition of a credit balance) is most likely to occur when commodity service with an ESCO is terminated and a balance remains on the customer's account following issuance of the final bill for that ESCO.

¹⁷ A payment processing method whereby the billing party forwards payment to the non-billing party only after receiving payment from the customer.

¹⁸ A distribution utility that purchases accounts receivable with recourse sends payments to an ESCO at predetermined intervals for amounts billed but may offset subsequent purchase payments against, or obtain reimbursement from, an ESCO of any unpaid amounts.

Alternatively, the customer's account may remain active with an ESCO but amounts billed to the customer that remain unpaid beyond the time period acceptable to the billing party may be reassigned to the ESCO for collection. In this scenario, the billing party has purchased from the ESCO the full amount of the charges billed to its customer. If the customer eventually does not pay the amounts billed, under terms documented in a Billing Services Agreement between the parties, the utility may 'charge back' amounts unpaid to the ESCO at periodic intervals specified in the agreement.

Since the initial version of the 248 Account Assignment Standard was issued in 2002, provisions of the revised Home Energy Fair Practices Act implemented in 2003 or later, and changes in the Uniform Business Practices have resulted in changes in the payment processing method used by utility billing parties. Most utilities have now migrated to the Purchased Receivables Without Recourse method;¹⁹ and this change has decreased the need to use an Account Assignment transaction to communicate the reassignment of unpaid balances, either while an account is active with an ESCO or after commodity service has been terminated for that ESCO.

In conjunction with several recent orders affecting retail access programs, Staff issued a revised 248 Account Assignment Standard for comment. In addition to revising the description of the business process in the Account Assignment Standard, Staff proposed to add a new data segment (REF*22) to the Transaction Standard to enable billing parties to describe

¹⁹ A distribution utility that purchases accounts receivable without recourse sends payments to an ESCO at predetermined intervals for amounts billed that are not in dispute and generally has no right to seek reimbursement from an ESCO of any unpaid amounts.

in more detail the nature of the amounts being reassigned to the ESCO for collection when the Purchased Receivables Without Recourse model is in effect. These modifications would permit utilities to still use a 248 transaction to assign collection responsibility to an ESCO in a limited number of scenarios. This would include reassignment of pre-existing balances on ESCO accounts prior to implementation of POR, taxes billed but not collected from customers²⁰ and amounts collected from an ESCO residential customer to effect a reconnection of service that are less than the total amount billed by the ESCO.²¹

National Grid supports the addition of codes to the TS248 Account Assignment to enable utility billing parties to provide more detail regarding the amount(s) being reassigned to the non-billing party for collection but it does not support the manner in which the additional detail would be communicated in a 248 transaction.

The structure in the original standard used codes to distinguish balances being reassigned to the when the consolidated billing relationship had ended (code=FL) or where the consolidated billing relationship would continue but a portion of the balance on an account was being reassigned

²⁰ These amounts would be reassigned so that ESCOs may seek recovery from the taxing authority.

²¹ A residential customer whose service has been disconnected for failure to pay amounts past due, as indicated in a disconnection notice issued by the utility, may have service reconnected by paying the lesser of the amount the customer would have paid the distribution utility for commodity service versus the amount the customer was billed for ESCO commodity service during the period stated in the disconnection notice. The difference between the lesser of amount and unpaid balance on the ESCO account for that customer cannot be the basis for future collection action by the billing party and is being reassigned to the non-billing party.

(code=NO). Since this standard was first issued in 2002, changes in policy, procedures and/or regulations make it necessary to provide more detail about amounts being reassigned where the consolidated billing relationship is expected to continue. Accordingly, National Grid proposed an alternative structure where the code 'NO' could be associated with three sub-codes, each describing a different assignment reason. In testing National Grid's alternative Staff found that it is not compliant with X-12 protocols.²²

Discussion

The new data segment as modified²³ will be added to the 248 to support the need to provide more detail regarding the nature of the amounts being reassigned to the ESCO as communicated in an Account Assignment transaction.

CONCLUSION

The standards documents listed in Attachment A reflect the approved modifications as discussed herein and will be made available on the Commission's web site coincident with the issuance of this Order. These documents also incorporate certain non-controversial technical or housekeeping changes identified in the course of Staff's review. With the exception of the modifications in the TS867 Monthly Usage Transaction Set Standard requested by NFG, supplemental Phase II or Phase III testing is not necessary to support implementation of these changes but may be requested at the discretion of the ESCO (Phase III) or the Utility (Phase II). NFG should conduct

²² Accredited standards did not support the use of sub-codes in the BHT segment.

²³ The originally proposed placement of the new data segment did not comply with X-12 standards. The new segment as adopted has been repositioned from line 175 to line 170 which is compliant with X-12 protocols.

limited incremental Phase III testing for version 2.2 of the TS867 Monthly Usage Standard.

The Commission orders:

1. The standards documents listed in Attachment A to this order, in the manner described in the body of this memorandum, are approved.

2. National Fuel Gas Distribution Corporation is directed to conduct supplemental EDI testing on the version 2.2 of the TS867 Monthly Usage Transaction Set Standard for ESCOs active in its service territory within 90 days of the date of this order.

3. This proceeding is continued.

By the Commission,

(SIGNED)

JACLYN A. BRILLING
Secretary

The following documents will be available electronically from the Commission's web site at <http://www.dps.state.ny.us/98m0667.htm>

Supplement	Description
SUPPLEMENT A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TS814 Drop Request & Response Implementation Guide, Version 2.0
SUPPLEMENT B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TS814 Drop Data Dictionary, Version 2.0
SUPPLEMENT C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TS814 Drop Business Processes Document, Version 2.0
SUPPLEMENT D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TS814 Consumption History Request & Response Implementation Guide, Version 1.2
SUPPLEMENT E	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TS814 Consumption History Data Dictionary, Version 1.2
SUPPLEMENT F	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Processes - Consumption History Document, Version 2.0
SUPPLEMENT G	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TS867 Monthly Usage Implementation Guide, Version 2.2
SUPPLEMENT H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TS867 Monthly Usage Data Dictionary, Version 2.2
SUPPLEMENT I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TS810 Invoice - Utility Rate Ready Consolidated Billing Implementation Guide, Version 1.2
SUPPLEMENT J	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TS810 Invoice - Utility Rate Ready Consolidated Billing Data Dictionary, Version 1.2
SUPPLEMENT K	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consolidated Billing Business Processes (Utility Rate Ready), Version 1.2
SUPPLEMENT L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TS810 Invoice - Single Retailer Model Implementation Guide, Version 2.0
SUPPLEMENT M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TS810 Invoice - Single Retailer Model Data Dictionary, Version 2.0
SUPPLEMENT N	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Billing Business Processes - Single Retailer Model, Version 2.0
SUPPLEMENT O	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TS248 Account Assignment Implementation Guide, Version 2.0
SUPPLEMENT P	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Account Assignment for Consolidated Billing Business Processes, Version 2.0