

1 **Q. Re: 2016 Capital Plan (3.2.7 Transportation) p. 19 and 20**

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3 **Newfoundland Power outlines the following:**

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5 **“Also, commencing in 2016 and continuing through 2020, the Company plans to**
6 **increase the heavy fleet from 71 units to 80 units to accommodate the increase in the**
7 **number of journeyperson power line technicians resulting from the advancement of**
8 **apprentices. This will reduce the number of 3 person crews and increase the**
9 **number of 2 person crews, which, in turn, will improve efficiency.”**

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11 **What is the industry practice when it comes to journeyperson power line technicians**
12 **in terms of the number of members in a crew?**

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14 **A.** Newfoundland Power is aware of no “industry practice” when it comes to the number of
15 members in a crew of journeyperson Powerline Technicians (a “line crew”).

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17 The number of members in a line crew will typically depend on a number of
18 considerations. These include the work to be performed; the number and experience of
19 the line crew available to perform the work; the equipment available to perform the work;
20 the environmental conditions in which the work must be performed; and workers’ safety
21 requirements.

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23 Two and three member line crews are common in utility environments. Two member
24 line crews are able to deal with the majority of work assignments which present
25 themselves on a daily basis. Such assignments would range from the repair of service to
26 a single customer, to changing a utility pole under energized conditions, to rebuilding
27 sections of a utility line.

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29 Over the past 5 to 7 years, Newfoundland Power has increased the number of apprentice
30 Powerline Technicians (“apprentices”) in its workforce as part of its management of
31 demographics. In the short term, this initiative has tended to reduce the overall efficiency
32 of Newfoundland Power’s line crew operations.¹ A significant contributor to this
33 reduced efficiency has been the increase in 3 person line crews necessary to meet the
34 supervisory and training requirements of apprentices.

35
36 Over the next few years, Newfoundland Power expects a decrease in the number of
37 apprentices in its workforce. This will reduce the number of 3 person line crews

¹ This workforce management initiative and its impact on operating efficiency has been before the Board in Newfoundland Power’s last 2 general rate applications (see *Newfoundland Power 2010 General Rate Application*, Company Evidence, Section 2: Customer Operations, page 2-12 *et. seq.* and *Newfoundland Power 2013/2014 General Rate Application*, Company Evidence, Section 2: Customer Operations, page 2-20 *et. seq.*). For greater detail of the efficiency impacts of apprentices, see the response to Request for Information CA-NP-111 in the *Newfoundland Power 2010 General Rate Application*.

- 1 necessary to meet the supervisory and training requirements of apprentices. It will also
- 2 permit the Company to improve the overall efficiency of its line crew operations.