Q. Should there be a failure of the existing customer service system before the successful implementation of a new system, what contingency plan is in place so that Newfoundland Power's customers can continue to receive the services provided by the failed parts of the system?

A. Newfoundland Power's Customer Service System ("CSS") is a critical business application. CSS is used to deliver all customer programs and services and respond to all customer enquiries. Failure of CSS would result in significant manual effort to maintain minimum service levels.[1] It would practically result in delayed customer bills, substantially longer wait times and the inability to resolve certain customer enquiries.

Newfoundland Power has contingency plans in place for all of its critical applications, including CSS. The contingency plan for CSS has 3 principal elements:

(i) **Disaster recovery** – CSS has a disaster recovery server. The disaster recovery server is always online and continuously monitored. If the production server fails, CSS is transitioned to the disaster recovery server. Step-by-step procedures are used to ensure a successful transition so that normal operations resume as soon as possible. The specific procedures to be executed depend on the type of failure. The objective of the procedures is to ensure system recovery within 4 to 24 hours, depending on the type of failure. An annual drill is completed to ensure the effectiveness of the procedures**.**

(ii) **Replication of customer data –** Key customer data is replicated via Newfoundland Power's customer website each night. This includes customers' contact, usage, billing and payment information. An in-house designed tool is available to Customer Service Representatives to access this data in the event of CSS failure. This ensures that basic customer enquiries can continue to be resolved until CSS is returned to normal operations.

(iii) **Paper forms** – Newfoundland Power has paper forms distributed to all agents. These forms mimic the CSS screens that provide the most common and critical customer service functions when Customer Service Representatives are responding to enquiries. This allows Customer Service Representatives to manually record information related to customer requests in the event of system failure. Examples of forms include power outage information and final meter reading requests. Urgent matters are addressed

[1] For example, Newfoundland Power bills an average of approximately 14,000 customers each day. If CSS were to fail, customer billing would require manually: (i) recording each customer's meter reading; (ii) comparing the reading to the previous month to calculate the customer's energy usage and charges; and (iii) creating and issuing individual customer invoices. These manual requirements would be well beyond the day-to-day capabilities of Newfoundland Power.

manually. Other matters are held for processing until the system failure is resolved.

This contingency plan serves to minimize the impacts of short-term system failures on customers and Company operations.