

1 **Q. Please provide documentation detailing the duties/responsibilities/tasks of the**
2 **Communications Hub, by team member, including the detailed procedures that are**
3 **followed during a storm/outage event.**
4

5 A. Newfoundland Power's Communications Hub (the "Hub") was created in 2013 to
6 improve the timeliness, accuracy and consistency of customer communications during
7 major electrical system events.¹ The Hub consists of a team lead and a mixture of
8 operations, customer relations, communications, and information services employees.
9

10 The Hub team is responsible for the assembly, update and dissemination to key
11 employees of information relating to outage status and restoration. This includes
12 information from Company sources, such as the Customer Contact Centre ("CCC"),
13 System Control Centre ("SCC") and field operations. It also includes information
14 gathered from a diverse array of external sources, including customers, Newfoundland
15 and Labrador Hydro, senior Provincial Government officials, the Department of
16 Transportation and Works, Fire and Emergency Services, municipalities, critical
17 suppliers (i.e. fuel and food suppliers), school districts and seniors' homes.
18

19 The Hub was first used to communicate with customers during an outage to the Burin and
20 Bonavista Peninsulas in February of 2013.² In August of 2013, Newfoundland Power
21 conducted a storm scenario test day in order to evaluate the improvements made in the
22 aftermath of the January 2013 outage prior to the 2013-2014 hurricane season.³ During
23 this test day the Hub was assembled to provide an opportunity for team members to
24 practice Newfoundland Power's new approach to delivering customer communications
25 during major electrical system events.
26

27 The Hub was again used to communicate with customers during a winter storm that
28 caused significant power outages in central Newfoundland.⁴ The Hub was also used
29 during the electricity supply shortage, major electrical system disruptions, and winter
30 storm that occurred during the January 2-8, 2014 period. In each circumstance, the Hub
31 succeeded in facilitating improved information delivery to customers and throughout the
32 Company.

¹ The Communications Hub was created in response to major electrical events that occurred as a result of Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro's Holyrood Thermal Generation Station being unavailable for a period of 21 hours between January 11-12, 2013.

² At 9:07 am on Sunday, February 10th, 2013 Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro experienced a "bus lockout" at its Sunnyside Terminal Station which resulted in the loss of supply to Newfoundland Power's transmission systems serving the Burin and Bonavista Peninsulas. The outage affected approximately 24,400 customers. Full restoration of service was not completed until after 6:00 pm.

³ Response to Request for Information PUB-NP-025 (1st Revision) page 1 line 22 to page 2 line 16 provides additional information relating to customer service improvements made following the major electrical system events that occurred in January 2013.

⁴ Newfoundland Power experienced a winter storm in the early morning hours of November 21st, 2013. The weather conditions resulted in downed conductor and broken poles. Overall, approximately 5,000 customers located primarily in Grand Falls-Windsor, Badger, Botwood, Buchans, Norris Arm and surrounding areas experienced power interruptions.

1 Newfoundland Power's Manager of Customer Relations and Director of Public Affairs,
2 in consultation with the Vice President of Customer Operations and Engineering are
3 responsible for determining whether or not the Hub should be activated to respond to a
4 particular electrical system event.

5
6 The duties and responsibilities of the Hub team members are shown below:
7

8 ***Team Lead***

- 9 • Coordinates engagement as well as disbanding of the Hub.
- 10 • Responsible for overall management of resources and information flow including
11 interaction with managers on status of restoration efforts.
- 12 • Advises SCC of transfer of responsibility for updating and managing Informer to
13 Hub.⁵
- 14 • Activates Operations Liaisons in area offices as required.
- 15 • Coordinates updates with key stakeholders as required.

16
17 ***Operations Liaison***

- 18 • Primary contact with operations and/or regional offices.
- 19 • Provides regular status updates on outages and restoration efforts.
- 20 • Supplies technical electricity system support and access to information such as
21 single line drawings and feeder information.
- 22 • Monitors outage management system.

23
24 ***Customer Relations Liaison***

- 25 • Primary contact with CCC.
- 26 • Provides timely updates to the Customer Account Representatives via internal
27 outage blog and whiteboard.
- 28 • Reviews call volumes to assess effectiveness of customer messaging.

29
30 ***Corporate Communications Liaison***

- 31 • Primary contact with corporate spokesperson.
- 32 • Monitors and updates digital media including website, twitter and facebook.
- 33 • Ensures internal/external messaging is appropriate and consistent.
- 34 • Represents the Hub on electricity system status update meetings and conference
35 calls.

36
37 ***Information Services Liaison***

- 38 • Primary technology support for Informer and website.
- 39 • Monitors and updates Informer.

⁵ Informer refers to the application that enables Newfoundland Power to communicate outage information to customers via its website and high volume call answering system. See the response to Request for Information PUB-NP-124 for further information relating to Informer.

1 The Company does not have detailed procedures that are followed by the Hub during a
2 storm or outage event. When it is determined that the Hub is required, the Team Lead
3 will begin to coordinate efforts from the Hub’s command centre. Operations liaisons and
4 on-call staff are contacted to get the initial assessment of damages and to request regular
5 updates every two hours as a minimum. Throughout the event, the Hub manages the
6 consistency of messaging regarding system damage, areas affected and restoration times.
7 Ongoing monitoring and review of outage related information ensures customer
8 messaging is timely and accurate to manage customer expectations regarding the
9 restoration efforts. Once the number of outages has been reduced to a manageable level,
10 the Hub is disbanded and the SCC resumes responsibility for Informer.