



Diane Roy
Vice President, Regulatory Affairs

Gas Regulatory Affairs Correspondence
Email: gas.regulatory.affairs@fortisbc.com

Electric Regulatory Affairs Correspondence
Email: electricity.regulatory.affairs@fortisbc.com

FortisBC
16705 Fraser Highway
Surrey, B.C. V4N 0E8
Tel: (604)576-7349
Cell: (604) 908-2790
Fax: (604) 576-7074
www.fortisbc.com

October 5, 2021

Movement of United Professionals
c/o Allevato Quail & Roy, Barristers and Solicitors
405-510 West Hastings St.
Vancouver, BC
V6B 1L8

Attention: Mr. Jim Quail

Dear Mr. Quail

Re: FortisBC Inc. (FBC)
Project No. 1599231
Annual Review for 2022 Rates (Application)
Response to Canadian Office and Professional Employees Union, Local 378
(known as Movement of United Professionals or MoveUP) Information Request
(IR) No. 1

On August 6, 2021, FBC filed the Application referenced above. In accordance with the regulatory timetable established in British Columbia Utilities Commission Order G-226-21 for the review of the Application, FBC respectfully submits the attached response to MoveUP IR No. 1.

If further information is required, please contact the undersigned.

Sincerely,

FORTISBC INC.

Original signed:

Diane Roy

Attachments

cc (email only): Commission Secretary
Registered Parties

FortisBC Inc. (FBC or the Company) FBC Annual Review for 2022 Rates Application (Application)	Submission Date: October 5, 2021
Response to Canadian Office and Professional Employees Union, Local 378 (known as Movement of United Professionals or MoveUP) Information Request (IR) No. 1	Page 1

1 **1.0 Present Situation**

2 1.1 Aside from the “business-as-usual” issues that regulated energy utilities face, what
3 does FortisBC Inc. consider to be the greatest strategic challenges that it faces
4 today. Please discuss how FBC intends to address them over the coming year.

5
6 **Response:**

7 FBC identified the following challenges in its operating environment in Section B1 of its 2020-
8 2024 MRP Application:

- 9 • Policy direction and mandate from all levels of government towards decarbonization;
- 10 • Rising customer expectations with respect to service, engagement channels and keeping
11 pace with other service providers;
- 12 • Increased need for engagement with stakeholders and Indigenous communities as a
13 result of stakeholder activism and provincial and federal policy changes;
- 14 • Increased need for maintenance and investment in our aging infrastructure to continue to
15 provide safe, reliable services along with increased need to provide for physical and cyber
16 security; and
- 17 • Increased need for innovation and the adoption of new technologies to improve
18 operations, enhance customer service levels and meet decarbonization policy objectives.

19 These challenges remain relevant and are being addressed as discussed in the MRP Application.
20 Further, these considerations and other strategic risks and challenges will be discussed in detail
21 in the Long Term Electric Resource Plan and the upcoming Generic Cost of Capital hearing.

22

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Response to Canadian Office and Professional Employees Union, Local 378 (known as Movement of United Professionals or MoveUP) Information Request (IR) No. 1	Page 2

1 **2.0 Demand Forecast**

2 **2.1 Climate Change, Unstable Weather and Load Forecasting**

3 Reference: p. 13

4 3.4 LOAD FORECAST

5 FBC's total load consists of the weather normalized residential, commercial and
6 wholesale load and the industrial, lighting and irrigation load.

7 2.1.1 Please discuss the impact of climate change and accelerated extremes and
8 volatility in weather patterns on load forecasting.

9
10 **Response:**

11 Please refer to the response to CEC IR1 5.2.

12

13

14

15 2.1.2 What is FBC's degree of confidence that the extreme weather conditions that are
16 occurring in FBC's service territory this year are anomalous?

17

18 **Response:**

19 Please refer to the response to MoveUp IR1 2.1.4.

20

21

22

23 2.1.3 Please describe the underlying assumptions about long-term stability in weather
24 conditions in relation to the practice and technique of weather normalization.

25

26 **Response:**

27 For the purposes of the short-term load forecasts used to develop annual rates in these annual
28 reviews (or revenue requirement applications depending on the rate-setting mechanism in place
29 at the time), FBC develops normalization factors based on the most recent ten years of weather
30 observations. Normalization factors are updated annually.

31 FBC does not make forward-looking assumptions about weather conditions/stability when
32 developing normalization factors and has therefore not made any assumptions about the long-
33 term stability of weather conditions when preparing the 2022F load forecast.

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Response to Canadian Office and Professional Employees Union, Local 378 (known as Movement of United Professionals or MoveUP) Information Request (IR) No. 1	Page 3

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2

3 2.1.4 If these conditions are not anomalous but rather indicate an emerging era of
4 relatively extreme and unstable conditions, what are the implications for load
5 forecasting for FBC this year and going forward?

6
7

Response:

8 At this time FBC does not have any data to suggest that the recent events are not anomalous or
9 that they signify a new era of extreme or unstable conditions. As a result, there are no implications
10 for the current or near term load forecast methods at this time. However, if the events were not
11 anomalous and volatility did increase, FBC would expect higher forecast variances in the future.

12 FBC has established a working group to investigate the recent weather events and the findings
13 of that working group will be incorporated into future forecasts as required.

14 Please also refer to the response to CEC IR1 5.2.

15
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18 2.1.5 Please reproduce Figures 3-3 and 3-4 applying non-normalized data.

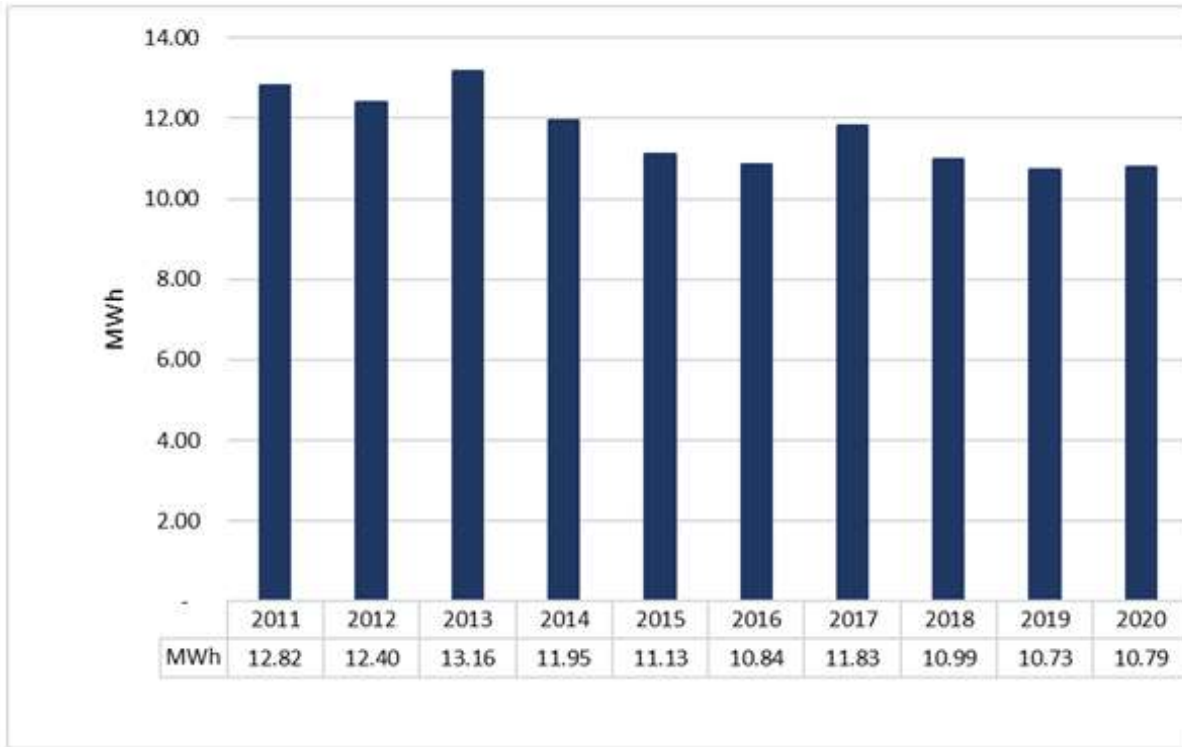
19
20

Response:

21 Figures 3-3 and 3-4 have been updated to show non-normalized (actual) data only. Actual data
22 is not available for 2021 and 2022; therefore, these years have not been included in the revised
23 Figures 3-3 and 3-4.

1

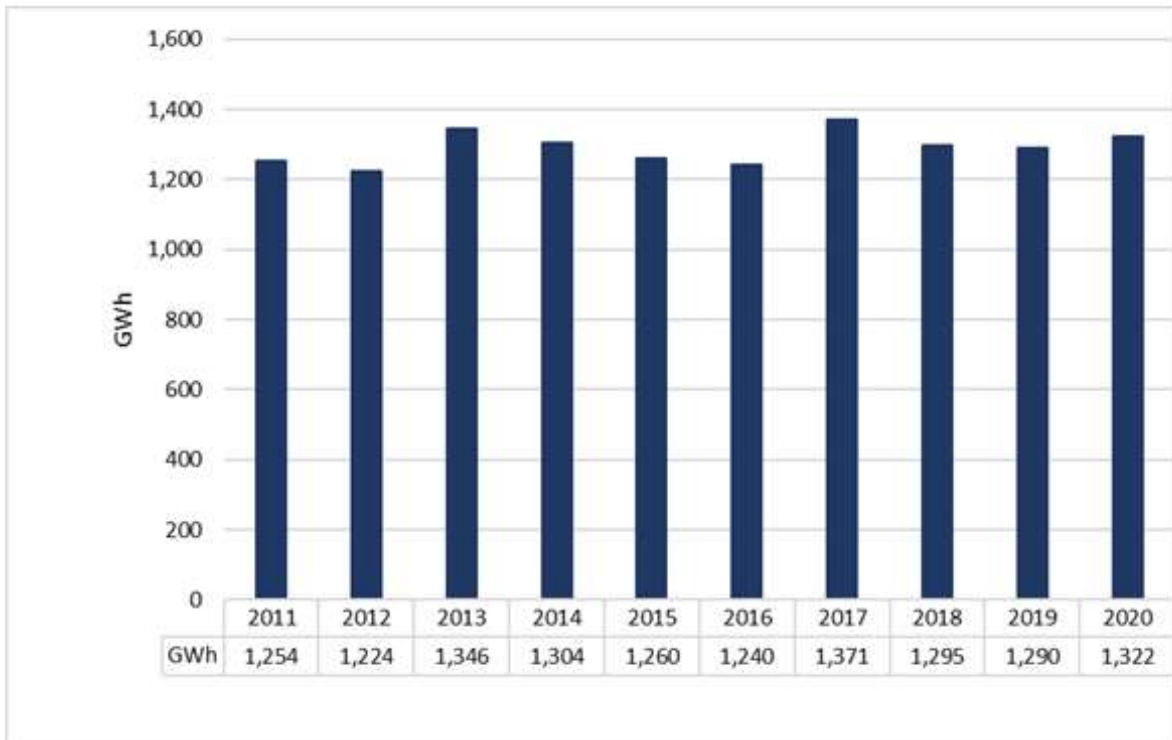
Figure 3-3: Actual After-Savings Residential UPC (MWh)



2

3

Figure 3-4: Actual After-Savings Residential Energy (GWh)



4

5

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Response to Canadian Office and Professional Employees Union, Local 378 (known as Movement of United Professionals or MoveUP) Information Request (IR) No. 1	Page 5

1 **3.0 Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic: Back To Normal**

2 Reference Application p. 106:

3 Based on the current outlook regarding the COVID-19 pandemic in BC, FBC
4 expects the impact on the Company's operating costs to decline in the coming
5 months and eventually end. FBC's current plans are to resume normal operations
6 coinciding with the Province achieving Step 4 of the Province of BC Four Step
7 Restart Plan, currently planned for September 7, 2021. Step 4 includes the lifting
8 of restrictions with normal social contact allowed and workplaces fully reopened.

9 And Reference p. 107

10 Upon resumption of normal operating conditions expected later this year, FBC will
11 no longer be tracking COVID-19 pandemic related net incremental O&M costs.

12 And reference *B.C. may not move to Step 4 by Sept. 7 as COVID-19 case counts increase:*
13 *Dr. Henry Vancouver Sun August 20 2021*¹ -

14 “British Columbia may not advance as expected to the next step in its COVID- 19
15 restart plan as case counts surge in the Interior Health region, the province's top
16 doctor says.

17 “As provincial health officer Dr. Bonnie Henry was announcing tighter restrictions
18 to cover all of the Interior Health region, she said it won't be a surprise if the
19 province doesn't advance to Step 4 in September.”

20 (We note that the Application is dated August 6, 2021.)

21 3.1 Please confirm that Step 4 did not occur on September 7, 2021.

22

23 **Response:**

24 Confirmed.

25

26

27

28 3.2 Please confirm that British Columbia has not projected a date when Step 4 is
29 anticipated to occur.

30 **Response:**

31 FBC is not aware of a projected date for Step 4 of BC's Restart Plan.

¹ <https://vancouversun.com/news/local-news/covid-19-increase-in-b-c-covid-19-cases-prompts-restrictions-in-interior-health>

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Response to Canadian Office and Professional Employees Union, Local 378 (known as Movement of United Professionals or MoveUP) Information Request (IR) No. 1	Page 6

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4 3.3 Please confirm that FBC’s service territory is located within a Provincial Health
5 Authority region that has continued to experience higher COVID-19 infection rates
6 than the provincial average.

7

8 **Response:**

9 FBC’s service territories include the Central Okanagan (Peachland, West Kelowna, Westbank
10 First Nation, Kelowna and Lake Country) and Interior Health region (Thompson, Cariboo,
11 Shuswap, Okanagan, Kootenay Boundary and East Kootenay). These areas have experienced
12 higher COVID-19 infection rates than the Provincial average in the latter part of August through
13 the end of September.

14

15

16

17 3.4 Please outline the anticipated operational and financial impacts of a two, four or
18 six- month delay in attaining “normal operations” beyond the timeframe anticipated
19 in the Application.

20

21 **Response:**

22 FBC considers that normal operating conditions can be supported once all Provincial restrictions
23 are lifted, normal social contact is in place, and workplaces are fully opened with no capacity
24 and/or use constraints.

25 While normal operating conditions may not yet be present, FBC has taken several steps on the
26 path towards normal operations. More specifically, a formal return to site for employees that had
27 been working remotely during the COVID-19 pandemic began in September². Throughout
28 September and October, FortisBC’s M&E, MoveUP and MoveUP CSC employees are
29 commencing a return to site with an occupancy guideline of 50 percent so employees can take
30 advantage of in-person interactions and collaboration in their daily work routines. This includes
31 offices and worksites throughout FBC’s service territory, including the communities within service
32 areas shared with FEI, and 100 percent of these employees are expected to spend time onsite.
33 In addition, opening up access to sites for customers and visitors has begun.

34 When in the offices and worksites, similar to the practice throughout the pandemic, the Company
35 will be rigorously following government guidelines and taking a conservative approach in its

² While a portion of employees had remained working from site to support business needs throughout the pandemic, commencing in June employees were invited to return to site voluntarily under an overall occupancy guideline of 50 percent.



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Response to Canadian Office and Professional Employees Union, Local 378 (known as Movement of United Professionals or MoveUP) Information Request (IR) No. 1	Page 7

1 response to ensure the safety of employees, customers and communities. Consistent with this,
2 a number of safety measures and protocols are in place to keep employees and customers safe.

3 The operational and financial impacts of a delay in attaining “normal operating conditions”
4 associated with Step 4 of the Province’s Restart Plan will be dependent on the progression of the
5 pandemic. As conditions for FBC are getting closer to normal, the Company will be in a position
6 to report to the BCUC on the 2020 and 2021 net incremental O&M costs as part of the 2023
7 Annual Review.

8

1 **4.0 Service Quality Indicators**

2 **4.1 All-injury Frequency Rate**

3 Reference: Application p. 120 and Table 13-3

4 4.1.1 Please provide a table showing, with respect to each relevant injury, the year and
 5 month in which it occurred, the work location where it occurred, the general nature
 6 of the incident, the occupation of the injured person, the employee status of the
 7 injured person (Excluded, MoveUP, IBEW or contractor), and the measures taken
 8 to avoid recurrence.

9
 10 **Response:**

11 The following table includes all recordable injuries June 2021 YTD.

Month - Year	Location	General Nature of Incident	Occupation of Injured Person	Affiliation	Measures Taken to Avoid Recurrence
Feb-2021	Midway	Sprain, Strain or Tear	Power Line Technician	IBEW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss with crew on the use of the right tool for the job and a reminder to follow the Safe Work Plan methodology and re-assess if the job changes. • Review the event during the next scheduled safety meeting focusing on mind on task, being conscious of mental distractions and reassess hazards if the plan changes.
Mar-2021	Kelowna	Sprain, Strain or Tear	Customer Serviceman	IBEW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate to CS's to consider holding tablets by switching arms to reduce impact. • Order smaller tablets with ergonomic carrying cases to reduce impact on CSP's arms. • Reinforce the importance of early reporting of MSI symptoms so preventative measures can be implemented early and prevent medical treatment.
Mar-2021	Oliver	Sprain, Strain or Tear	Journeyman Tradesman Fleet	IBEW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate ergonomic improvement opportunities for this activity. • Reinforce the importance of early reporting of MSI symptoms so preventative measures can be implemented early and prevent medical treatment. • Use proper ergonomics and lifting device.
Apr-2021	GDB station	Sprain, Strain or Tear	CPC Technologist	IBEW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the event during the next scheduled safety meeting highlighting the need for taking your time when conducting tasks, considering use of a buddy system in similar situations and ensuring a good ergonomic position when working on ladders.

Month - Year	Location	General Nature of Incident	Occupation of Injured Person	Affiliation	Measures Taken to Avoid Recurrence
Aug-2021	Work from Home	MSI	Field Design Specialist	MoveUP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the event during the next scheduled safety meeting highlighting the need for ergonomic assessments of home work stations to ensure the structure of the body is comfortable while working for long periods in front of the work station. Complete an ergonomic assessment of the FDS's home work station and get the recommended equipment to fix the work station.

1 As 100 percent of the relevant injuries were musculoskeletal injuries (MSIs) in nature, FBC
 2 launched an ergonomic improvement strategy earlier this year to avoid recurrence of muscular
 3 sprain and strain injuries. The strategy focuses on prevention and early intervention. In relation to
 4 prevention, the focus is on job task assessment to reduce or eliminate moving and handling risks,
 5 ergonomic training, and education on how to prepare the body correctly. In relation to early
 6 intervention, measures have been taken to respond more effectively to the early onset of muscle
 7 sprain and strain complaints, allowing for early intervention and adoption of mitigation measures
 8 such as modified and restricted duties and the provision of technology and equipment solutions.
 9 Management, supervisors and employees have been trained in the importance of early reporting
 10 and how to manage early symptoms associated with MSIs.

11
12

13

14 4.1.2 Did any workplace incidents in the past two years result in WorksafeBC
 15 investigations? If so please provide details, and copies of any resulting reports or
 16 conclusions.

17

18 **Response:**

19 No workplace incidents in the past two years have resulted in WorkSafeBC investigations.

20