

J. Steve Rahon Director Tariffs & Regulatory Accounts

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July 31, 2006

<u>Advice No. 3648</u> (U 904 G)

Public Utilities Commission of the State of California

Subject: Extension of Blythe Operational Flow Requirement Memorandum Account

Southern California Gas Company (SoCalGas) hereby submits for filing with the California Public Utilities Commission (Commission) revisions to SoCalGas' Preliminary Statement, applicable throughout its service territory, as shown on Attachment B.

<u>Purpose</u>

This filing revises Preliminary Statement Part VI, Description of Regulatory Accounts – Memorandum, Blythe Operational Flow Requirement Memorandum Account (BOFRMA). SoCalGas hereby requests that the Commission approve the extension of the BOFRMA as described herein. The purpose of the BOFRMA is to record certain charges associated with SoCalGas' Gas Acquisition Department purchasing and delivering gas to sustain operational flows at Blythe.

Background

SoCalGas must receive certain minimum quantities of gas at Blythe¹ to ensure that adequate gas is available to maintain deliveries to customers connected to the southern portion of its system. SoCalGas' System Operator² determines these minimums based on its forecast of system needs. When shippers' anticipated deliveries of gas are not expected to meet the required Blythe minimum flow levels, SoCalGas' Gas Acquisition Department is called upon to purchase additional quantities of gas to provide the necessary support to the SoCalGas system. These deliveries are outside of the purchases Gas Acquisition would otherwise make to meet the supply needs of SoCalGas' Core procurement (Core) customers. Depending upon market conditions, these system support purchases by Gas Acquisition can result in significant additional procurement costs for SoCalGas' Core customers.

¹ Blythe is the southernmost of the two SoCalGas points of interconnection with the El Paso Natural Gas Company (EPNG) pipeline.

² The SoCalGas System Operator refers to the function performed by SoCalGas' Gas Operations Department.

As a result on August 26, 2003, SoCalGas filed Advice No. (AL) 3286 seeking authority to establish the BOFRMA to record any charges SoCalGas' Gas Acquisition Department incurs to sustain operational flows at Blythe. AL 3286 was approved by the Commission effective October 5, 2003.

SoCalGas has already recorded costs in the BOFRMA relating to activity in January 2005. At the time these costs were incurred SoCalGas conferred with the Division of Ratepayer Advocates (DRA) to ensure the full costs to the Core were recorded. DRA supported the costs recorded to the BOFRMA but requested that before the BOFRMA is further extended that SoCalGas further examine the calculation of costs absorbed by the Core to sustain operational flows at Blythe. In July 2006, Gas Acquisition incurred additional costs to sustain operational flows at Blythe. SoCalGas plans to record these additional costs in the BOFRMA once the exact amount of the costs can be determined and SoCalGas has had an opportunity to consult with DRA regarding the costs.

<u>Issue</u>

As SoCalGas' Preliminary Statement is currently written, SoCalGas only has the ability to record costs to the BOFRMA through August 31, 2006 – the expiration date of SoCalGas' current transportation agreements with El Paso. The Preliminary Statement also contemplates entries to this account terminating when and if the Commission establishes a new procedure for supporting Blythe minimum flow requirements, but the Commission has not done so.

SoCalGas has entered into new transportation agreements with El Paso that will take affect after August 31, 2006.³ As a result SoCalGas' core may be required to sustain operational flows at Blythe after that date. Accordingly, SoCalGas requests an extension of the BOFRMA.

SoCalGas has also recently entered into a settlement agreement with Southern California Edison Company (SCE) that proposes shifting the responsibility for system minimum flow requirements to the system operator from Gas Acquisition and its Core customers and eliminating the BOFRMA. SoCalGas is proposing at this time a 12-month extension of the BOFRMA, which should be enough time for the Commission to consider this proposal in the settlement with SCE. The Preliminary Statement will still retain the provision that entries to the BOFRMA will be eliminated as soon as a new procedure for supporting the Blythe minimum flow requirements is implemented by the Commission.

SoCalGas therefore requests to extend the BOFRMA for one year. Continuation of the BOFRMA on this interim basis will ensure that costs incurred by SoCalGas' core customers to support the Blythe minimum flow requirements will continue to be tracked for further consideration by the Commission.

SoCalGas is authorized to represent that DRA supports this request to extend the BOFRMA for a one year period, pending the Commission's consideration of SoCalGas' settlement agreement with SCE. If the BOFRMA is not eliminated within the 12-month period, SoCalGas must confer with DRA prior to recommending any further extension of the BOFRMA.

³ SoCalGas' new transportation agreements with EPNG were approved by the Commission in AL 3443. They have an initial step down on August 31, 2009, and run in part through August 31, 2011.

Protest

Anyone may protest this Advice Letter to the California Public Utilities Commission. The protest must state the grounds upon which it is based, including such items as financial and service impact, and should be submitted expeditiously. The protest must be made in writing and must be received within 20 days of the date this Advice Letter was filed with the Commission. There is no restriction on who may file a protest. The address for mailing or delivering a protest to the Commission is:

Energy Division - IMC Branch California Public Utilities Commission 505 Van Ness Avenue, 4th Floor San Francisco, CA 94102

Copies of the protest should also be sent via e-mail to the attention of both Jerry Royer (<u>jir@cpuc.ca.gov</u>) and to Honesto Gatchalian (<u>inj@cpuc.ca.gov</u>) of the Energy Division. A copy of the protest should also be sent via both e-mail <u>and</u> facsimile to the address shown below on the same date it is mailed or delivered to the Commission.

Attn: Sid Newsom Tariff Manager - GT14D6 555 West Fifth Street Los Angeles, CA 90013-1011 Facsimile No. (213) 244-4957 E-mail: <u>snewsom@SempraUtilities.com</u>

Effective Date

SoCalGas believes that this filing is subject to Energy Division disposition and respectfully requests that this advice letter be approved on August 30, 2006, which is thirty (30) days after the date filed.

Notice

A copy of this advice letter is being sent to the parties listed on Attachment A, which includes the parties in SoCalGas' GCIM Year 11 Application No. (A.) 05-06-030.

J. STEVE RAHON Director Tariffs and Regulatory Accounts

Attachment

CALIFORNIA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

ADVICE LETTER FILING SUMMARY

	ENERGY UT			
MUST BE COMPLI	ETED BY UTILITY (At	tach additional pages as needed)		
Company name/CPUC Utility No. S	OUTHERN CALIFO	RNIA GAS COMPANY/ U 904 G		
Utility type:	Contact Person: Si	id Newsom		
\Box ELC \boxtimes GAS	Phone #: (<u>213</u>) <u>2</u>	44-2846		
PLC HEAT WATER	E-mail: <u>snewsom@</u>	esemprautilities.com		
EXPLANATION OF UTILITY T	YPE	(Date Filed/ Received Stamp by CPUC)		
ELC = Electric GAS = Gas				
PLC = Pipeline HEAT = Heat	WATER = Water			
Advice Letter (AL) #: <u>3648</u>				
Subject of AL: <u>Extension of Blythe</u>	Operational Flow R	equirement Memorandum Account		
Keywords (choose from CPUC listing	g): <u>Memorandum</u>	Account, Natural Gas, Procurement		
AL filing type: Monthly Quarter	v			
If AL filed in compliance with a Com	mission order, indi	cate relevant Decision/Resolution #:		
		ntify the prior AL		
Summarize differences between the	AL and the prior wi	ithdrawn or rejected AL ¹ :		
Resolution Required? Yes No				
Requested effective date: $8/30/06$		No. of tariff sheets: <u>2</u>		
•	$\frac{1}{1} \int \frac{1}{1} \int \frac{1}$			
Estimated system annual revenue e				
Estimated system average rate effect				
classes (residential, small commerci		L showing average rate effects on customer ıltural, lighting).		
	0 0	ent Part VI, Table of Contents - General		
Service affected and changes proposed ¹ : <u>None – Extension of BOFRMA</u>				
Service and changes proposed : Rone Extension of Bor Rant				
Pending advice letters that revise the same tariff sheets: <u>None</u>				
Protests and all other correspondence regarding this AL are due no later than 20 days after the date of this filing, unless otherwise authorized by the Commission, and shall be sent to:				
CPUC, Energy Division	•	outhern California Gas Company		
Attention: Tariff Unit		ttention: Sid Newsom		
505 Van Ness Avenue		55 West Fifth Street, ML GT14D6		
San Francisco, CA 94102		os Angeles, CA 90013-4957		
jjr@cpuc.ca.gov and jnj@cpuc.ca.gov	SI	newsom@semprautilities.com		

 $^{^{\}scriptscriptstyle 1}$ Discuss in AL if more space is needed.

ATTACHMENT A

Advice No. 3648

(See Attached Service Lists)

Advice Letter Distribution List - Advice 3648

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Advice Letter Distribution List - Advice 3648

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ATTACHMENT B Advice No. 3648

Cal. P.U.C. Sheet No.	Title of Sheet	Cancelling Cal. P.U.C. Sheet No.
Revised 40823-G	PRELIMINARY STATEMENT, PART VI, DESCRIPTION OF REGULATORY ACCOUNTS - MEMORANDUM, Sheet 15	Revised 38014-G
Revised 40824-G	TABLE OF CONTENTS	Revised 40822-G

PRELIMINARY STATEMENT <u>PART VI</u> <u>DESCRIPTION OF REGULATORY ACCOUNTS - MEMORANDUM</u> (Continued) C. <u>DESCRIPTION OF ACCOUNTS</u> (Continued) BASELINE MEMORANDUM ACCOUNT (BMA) (Continued)

b. A debit entry equal to the administrative costs associated with the medical baseline program changes.

- c. An entry equal to the recorded revenue to amortize the account balance in rates upon Commission approval.
- d. An entry equal to the interest on the average balance in the account during the month, calculated in the manner described in the Preliminary Statement, Part I, J.

The disposition of the BMA balance shall be determined in Phase 2 of R.01-05-047.

BLYTHE OPERATIONAL FLOW REQUIREMENT MEMORANDUM ACCOUNT (BOFRMA)

The BOFRMA is an interest bearing memorandum account that is not recorded on the Utility's financial statements. The purpose of this account is to track certain costs associated with SoCalGas' Gas Acquisition Department's purchase and delivery of gas to sustain operational flows at Blythe.

The BOFRMA will be effective through the earlier of September 2007, or the date a new procedure for supporting Blythe minimum flow requirements is established by the Commission.

Utility shall maintain the BOFRMA by making entries at the end of each month as follows:

- a. The BOFRMA shall be charged for volumes in excess of the Core's commitment of 355 MMcfd for deliveries at Blythe at a rate equal to the applicable daily basin index price, defined as the Permian Basin Area Midpoint indices as referenced in *Gas Daily*, plus the full transportation rate (including fuel) on EPNG delivered into SoCalGas less the Southern California bidweek border price, defined as the simple average of two published indices reported in *Natural Gas Week* and *Natural Gas Intelligence*, consistent with SoCalGas' Gas Cost Incentive Mechanism (GCIM). The charges will be made only when the System Operator requires Gas Acquisition to purchase supplies to sustain the minimum flow requirements at Blythe. The minimum flow order request by the SoCalGas System Operator in excess of 355 MMcfd will be posted and recorded per Remedial Measure 16.
- b. An entry equal to the interest on the average balance in the account during the month, calculated in the manner described in the Preliminary Statement, Part I, J.

The disposition of the BOFRMA balance shall be determined in SoCalGas' Biennial Cost Allocation Proceeding (BCAP).

(Continued)

ISSUED BY Lee Schavrien Vice President Regulatory Affairs

(TO BE INSERTED BY CAL. PUC)		
DATE FILED	Jul 31, 2006	
EFFECTIVE	Aug 30, 2006	
RESOLUTION N	NO.	

Sheet 15

TABLE OF CONTENTS

The following listed sheets contain all effective Schedules of Rates and Rules affecting service and information relating thereto in effect on the date indicated thereon.

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Т

Т

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(Continued) ISSUED BY Lee Schavrien Vice President Regulatory Affairs

(TO BE INSERTED BY CAL. PUC) DATE FILED Jul 31, 2006 EFFECTIVE Aug 30, 2006 RESOLUTION NO.