

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Order Instituting Rulemaking on the
Commission's Proposed Policies and Programs
Governing Low-Income Assistance Programs.

Rulemaking 04-01-006
(Filed January 8, 2004)

**ASSIGNED COMMISSIONER'S RULING
APPROVING A REVISED SCHEDULE FOR COMPLETING THE LOW-
INCOME ENERGY NEEDS ASSESSMENT STUDY**

This ruling approves a revised schedule for completing the Low-Income Energy Needs Assessment Study. In Decision (D.) 03-01-020, dated January 16, 2003, the Commission adopted a funding level, schedule, and Request for Proposal (RFP) for Phase 2 of the Low-Income Energy Needs Assessment Study, and directed the Commission's Energy Division to implement Phase 2.¹ In D.03-01-020, the Commission delegated authority to the Assigned Commissioner in this proceeding to modify the funding level and schedule for the Low Income Energy Needs Assessment Study.²

¹ Phase 2 of this study is addressing the energy-related needs of the low-income customers of Pacific Gas and Electric Company, San Diego Gas & Electric Company, Southern California Edison Company and Southern California Gas Company. In addition, pursuant to Decision (D.) 02-07-033, the Needs Assessment Study is obtaining income and household size data specific to Avista Utilities' service territory for the purpose of estimating the number of CARE-eligible households. As required in D.02-08-051, the Study will include an examination of the economic demographics of Mountain Utilities' service area and an examination of the ethnic demographics in each of the small and multi-jurisdictional utilities' service territories based on recorded census information.

² See D.03-01-020, Ordering Paragraph 7.

In my June 4, 2003 Assigned Commissioner's Ruling (ACR), I approved Energy Division's request to increase funding for Phase 2 of the study from \$1,262,500 to \$1,500,000 and their request to increase sample size and make other similar improvements to the study design.³ In that ACR, I also approved a minor adjustment to the timeline for the study to accommodate the delay in the start of the study due to the sampling refinements.

A contract was signed with Kema Inc. on June 3, 2003 to begin Phase 2 of the Needs Assessment Study. However, the Department of General Services (DGS) did not approve the contract until July 21, 2003, thereby delaying the start-up date by 7 weeks. This delay also pushed the field survey start date into the Thanksgiving and December holiday season, at which time it was challenging to recruit and train field staff for the on-site element of the study.

As of April 6, 2004, 1,322 of the 1,500 onsite interviews and audits for the study had been completed. However, according to the schedule I approved in my June 4, 2003 ACR, all interviews and audits were to be completed 43 weeks after the date of the ACR, or by March 24, 2004. Until the onsite interviews and audits are completed, a thorough analysis of the data cannot be completed.

Energy Division has informed me that the most recent approved schedule provided that the analysis of census data would be complete at 37 weeks after the ACR, but the detailed data needed for this analysis has not yet been provided to us by the Census Bureau. In addition, the model needed to estimate penetration rates still needs to be approved.

³ See Assigned Commissioner's Ruling Increasing the Budget for Phase 2 Of the Low-Income Energy Needs Assessment, dated June 4, 2003.

Energy Division now requests that the timeline for the study be amended to compensate for all of the above delays. According to my June 4, 2003 ACR, the final report for the study would be due 58 weeks from the date of that ACR, or July 26, 2004. Energy Division requests that the Commission approve an extension of time for the final report to be issued to November 1, 2004 to allow for the 7 week contract start date set back and the other delays outlined above.

These delays appear to be unforeseen and not preventable. Approving the schedule revisions requested by the Energy Division to allow for completion of the study is in the public interest.

IT IS RULED that:

1. Due to the time delay in receiving contract approval from the Department of General Services and the resulting impact on initial project ramp up, and other unavoidable delays, the timetable for completing Phase 2 must be updated. A new timetable for Phase 2 is included with this Ruling as Attachment A.
2. Consistent with this new timetable, the Work Plan and Schedule Requirements of the contract (02PS5289) shall be modified, as needed, to reflect the timetable changes.

IT IS SO RULED.

Dated May 5, 2004, at San Francisco, California.

/s/ CARL WOOD
Carl Wood
Assigned Commissioner

ATTACHMENT A**Work Plan and Schedule Requirements, Phase II Tasks**

Event	June 4, 2003 ACR Dates	Newly Adopted Dates
Task 1: Refine the Work Scope	22 weeks after the 6/4/03 ACR was issued (November 5, 2003)	22 weeks after the 6/4/03 ACR was issued (November 5, 2003)
Task 2: Provide Opportunity for Public Input	Throughout the entire project until the final report is adopted by the Commission	Throughout the entire project until the final report is adopted by the Commission.
Task 3: Conduct the Onsite Surveys	43 weeks after the 6/4/03 ACR was issued (March 31, 2004)	50 weeks after the 6/4/03 ACR was issued (May 19, 2004)
Task 4: Analyze Census Data	30 weeks after the 6/4/03 ACR was issued (December 31, 2003)	50 weeks after the 6/4/03 ACR was issued (May 19, 2004)
Task 5: Develop Estimates of Potential	47 weeks after the 6/4/03 ACR was issued April 28, 2004)	55 weeks after the 6/4/03 ACR was issued (June 23, 2004)
Task 6: Characterize the Eligible Population	47 weeks after the 6/4/03 ACR was issued (April 28, 2004)	54 weeks after the 6/4/03 ACR was issued (June 16, 2004)
Task 7: Assess the Needs of the Eligible Population	52 weeks after the 6/4/03 ACR was issued (June 2, 2004)	59 weeks after the 6/4/03 ACR was issued (July 21, 2004)
Task 8: Recommendations for Results	52 weeks after the 6/4/03 ACR was issued (June 2, 2004)	59 weeks after the 6/4/03 ACR was issued (July 21, 2004)
Task 9: Develop a Method to Track Penetration Over Time	56 weeks after the 6/4/03 ACR was issued (June 30, 2004)	63 weeks after the 6/4/03 ACR was issued (August 18, 2004)
Task 10: Develop a Phase 2 Report Subtasks: Develop a draft Phase 2 report Public comments due on draft report Reply comments due on draft report Develop a final Phase 2 report Public comments due on final report Reply comments due on final report	58 weeks after the 6/4/03 ACR was issued (July 14, 2004)	65 weeks after the 6/4/03 ACR was issued (September 1, 2004) September 21, 2004 October 1, 2004 November 1, 2004 November 22, 2004 December 3, 2004
Task 11: Provide Technical Support	84 weeks after the 6/4/03 ACR was issued (January 12, 2005)	99 weeks after the 6/4/03 ACR was issued (April 27, 2005)

(END ATTACHMENT)

