

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Safety and Enforcement Division
Electric Safety and Reliability Branch

San Francisco, California
Date: June 27, 2013
Resolution ESRB-3

RESOLUTION

RESOLUTION ESRB-3, ORDER GRANTING PACIFIC GAS AND ELECTRIC COMPANY'S (PG&E) REQUEST TO PERMIT SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA GAS COMPANY (SoCalGas) AND OTHER MUNICIPAL AGENCIES TO PERMANENTLY ATTACH REMOTE METER READING EQUIPMENT TO PG&E ELECTRIC DISTRIBUTION POLES AND STREETLIGHT POLES IN ACCORDANCE WITH GENERAL ORDER 95, RULE 34.

SUMMARY

1. By letter of July 12, 2012, PG&E petitioned the Commission to allow municipal agency, water district, and Southern California Gas Company (collectively referred to herein as "Agencies" or individually as "Agency") owned remote meter reading equipment as permanent attachments under General Order (GO) 95, Rule 34.
2. GO 95, Rule 34 requires permanent attachments that are foreign to the purposes of overhead electric line construction be approved by the Commission.
3. This resolution authorizes PG&E to treat Agency-owned remote meter reading equipment as permanent attachments under GO 95 Rule 34.

BACKGROUND

Currently, authorized third-party attachments to PG&E's electric distribution poles and streetlight poles are limited in scope to electrical supply, communication systems, and government-owned cameras and gunshot detectors. Increasingly, PG&E has received requests from various Agencies to provide space on distribution poles and street light poles to support meter reading equipment used to provide remote data collection. PG&E proposes to authorize such third-party use of its distribution poles and streetlight poles in accordance with all applicable rules of GO 95 and PG&E's construction standards. This resolution will allow PG&E the flexibility to offer Agencies the ability to maintain such attachments on distribution poles and street light poles for periods in excess of one year.

Under GO 95 Rule 34, an attachment is considered permanent when the duration of the attachment is estimated to be one year or more. Rule 34 requires that all permanent attachments be approved by the Commission and the pole owner(s). Furthermore, GO 95

Rule 34 provides that temporary attachments may be authorized by a utility, provided that the installation is restricted to a period of one year or less.

PG&E anticipates that attachments of remote meter reading equipment will normally exceed one year. Therefore, PG&E requested Commission approval to treat such installations as permanent attachments. For a jointly-owned distribution pole, PG&E will obtain the approval of the joint pole owner(s) in accordance with the existing procedures of the Northern California Joint Pole Association. This will allow PG&E to enter into license agreements authorizing such attachments to distribution poles and streetlight poles in accordance with the provisions of GO 69-C. GO 69-C governs easements on utility property. As a condition to any such license, PG&E will require that the attachments be installed and maintained in accordance with all applicable rules in GO 95. This resolution will allow PG&E to offer Agencies the ability to maintain permanent attachments on PG&E distribution poles and streetlight poles.

DISCUSSION

The Safety and Enforcement Division's Electric Safety and Reliability Branch (ESRB) evaluated this variance request, taking into consideration its impact on public and worker safety. Factors influencing the ESRB's evaluation included the remote meter reading equipment's effect on climbing and/or working space, on the poles, as well as maintenance of the remote meter reading equipment. PG&E stated that to minimize the impact on public and worker safety the following safety measures shall be done:

- Prior to the installation of remote meter reading equipment, PG&E will ensure that the safety factor of the pole will not be reduced below the required value, and will ensure approval of such installation from the joint pole owners.
- The remote meter reading equipment and any dedicated Agency- owned supply equipment will be treated as Communication Equipment and meet all such requirements.
- PG&E will require that remote meter reading equipment be installed and maintained in accordance with all applicable rules in GO 95.
- If and when PG&E becomes aware of any GO 95 violations of remote meter reading equipment, it will document the violations and notify the owner to correct the violations immediately.

ESRB recommends that PG&E's request be approved, contingent on the safety measures proposed by PG&E as described previously.

COMMENTS ON DRAFT RESOLUTION

The Draft Resolution was mailed to the parties of interest on May 24, 2013, in accordance with Cal. Pub. Util. Code § 311(g). _____ comments or protests were filed.

FINDINGS

1. PG&E petitioned the Commission by letter on July 12, 2012 to allow remote meter reading equipment as permanent attachments under GO 95, Rule 34.
2. The requested variance applies only to remote meter reading equipment installed on poles in which PG&E is either the sole or partial owner.
3. PG&E proposed the following safety measures shall be done in order to minimize the impact on public and worker safety:
 - Prior to the installation of remote meter reading equipment, PG&E will ensure that the safety factor of the pole will not be reduced below the required value, and will ensure approval of such installation from the joint pole owners.
 - The remote meter reading equipment and any dedicated Agency-owned supply equipment will be treated as Communication Equipment and meet all such requirements.
 - PG&E will require that remote meter reading equipment be installed and maintained in accordance with all applicable rules in GO 95.
 - If and when PG&E becomes aware of any GO 95 violations of remote meter reading equipment, it will document the violations and notify the owner to correct the violations immediately.
4. In accordance with the exemption authorization provided in GO 95, Rule 15.1, ESRB recommends that this request be approved, subject to the safety measures proposed by PG&E.

THEREFORE, IT IS ORDERED THAT:

1. The Pacific Gas and Electric Company shall be allowed to treat Agency-owned remote meter reading equipment as permanent attachments to distribution poles and street light poles.
2. In the case of a proposed attachment to a jointly-owned distribution pole, PG&E shall obtain the approval of the affected joint pole owner(s) in accordance with the existing procedures of the Northern California Joint Pole Association.
3. The approval of PG&E's requested variance is subject to the safety measures proposed by PG&E (see Finding No. 3).
4. This resolution shall be effective immediately.

I hereby certify that this Resolution was adopted by the California Public Utilities Commission at its regular meeting on June 27, 2013. The following Commissioners approved it:

Paul Clanon
Executive Director