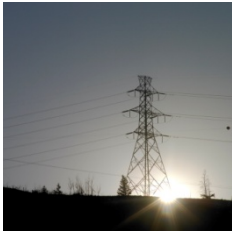


# Customer Connection

## Improving Customer Service



### Customer Survey Results Q1 and Q2 2011

*In our ongoing commitment to customer service, AltaLink continues to survey customers and collect feedback on customer interconnection projects.*

### Customer Survey Results Q1 and Q2 2011

In our ongoing commitment to customer service, AltaLink continues to survey customers and collect feedback on customer connection projects.

AltaLink regularly executes these surveys to collect information that will help us improve our service for customers. We continue to seek efficiencies to our internal processes and to advocate and collaborate with industry partners for further improvements to the AESO Connection Process.

Our one page survey captures customer feedback at three distinct points in the Connection Process:

- The first survey is done at the Connection Proposal delivery stage (for those customers who utilized AltaLink as a consultant to complete their Connection Proposal),
- the second survey is done at the Proposal to Provide Service (PPS) delivery stage, and
- the third and final survey is done after energization and final costs.

Questions in the survey focus on AltaLink's ability to meet commitments, identify and maintain budget, provide customer service, assist customers in navigating the Connection Process, and the overall Connection Process itself.

We utilize these results to seek improvements to the process and to improve the way AltaLink works with our customers within it.

### The following provides a brief overview of the results for the first half of 2011:

- 1) For those customers who opted to have AltaLink complete the Connection Proposal, results indicated an average 77 per cent overall satisfaction rating with our role at this point of the Connection Process. Customers were pleased overall with AltaLink's ability to complete the key deliverables (Connection Plan, Connection Study Scope, and Connection Proposal) on time. There remains concern with the Connection Process, particularly around the length of time to navigate the process, inability to deviate from it, and confusion over roles and responsibilities at the various stages.
- 2) The PPS stage survey produced results only for the first quarter of 2011. AltaLink again performed well, with a 77 per cent overall satisfaction rating, particularly around our ability to clearly explain our estimates, deliver on time and provide excellent customer service along the way. The overall Connection Process was again noted as an area requiring improvement for similar reasons noted above, while AltaLink's role in navigating customers through the Connection Process was identified as helpful and positive.
- 3) The Energization survey produced results only for the first quarter of 2011. AltaLink's overall customer

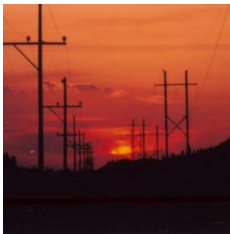
satisfaction rating averaged 80 per cent, scoring exceptionally high on meeting commitments on time and on budget while providing excellent customer service. The notable exception, and where scores were lowest, again involved the Connection Process and all parties' (Transmission Facility Owners, Alberta Electric System Operator, Alberta Utilities Commission, and Distribution Facility Owner) roles in helping customers through it in a streamlined and efficient fashion. More collaboration, clarity of roles, and accountability were noted as areas all could improve on.

We also heard concerns about AltaLink's process timelines and the effect on customer-requested In Service Dates, particularly around the siting and consultation process. In an effort to clarify the process and timelines around these, AltaLink provided customers with a brochure in our March 2011 newsletter. This brochure, titled "Your Guide to AltaLink's Siting and Consultation Process" can be found on our website by [clicking here](#).

The survey feedback clearly indicates that the most significant area requiring improvement is the overall Connection Process.

AltaLink continues to recognize the challenges of the Connection Process in Alberta and strives to work closely with customers and key partners on process enhancements and clarity. Initiatives between industry partners include regular reviews of project milestones as well as increased communication regarding both process and milestone targets.

## Feature stories



### Living with our environment

*AltaLink is dedicated to improving the quality of life in the areas we serve.*

### The value of transmission

*AltaLink is committed to making Alberta's electricity transmission grid more reliable by operating its facilities in a safe, efficient manner and increasing capacity only where necessary.*

### Living with our environment

Beyond the steel, wood and wires of transmission, AltaLink believes in being a part of the communities in which we operate. Our commitment extends to the people and the land that could be affected by the operation of our transmission business.

While our primary role is to provide safe and reliable electric transmission service, we are dedicated to helping improve the quality of life in the areas we serve.

### Why protecting the environment is important to AltaLink

AltaLink builds transmission structures in the natural environment. We have an obligation and a responsibility to preserve the beauty and integrity of these natural areas for people today and in the future.

Environmental sustainability is a core value at AltaLink. We will continue to improve our environmental performance and act as a responsible corporate citizen. AltaLink is committed to mitigating the impact of our facilities on the environment and we ensure that our operations are in compliance with environmental regulations.

### How AltaLink is addressing its impact on the environment

**By not being afraid to be first.** AltaLink is the first Canadian utility to develop an Avian Protection Plan (APP). Our APP is a management system designed to reduce the impact that our substations, power poles and power lines can have on birds.

**By putting on a jacket.** We install covers, called GREENJACKET™, to protect wildlife from contacting electrical equipment in our substations and causing power outages. We have retrofitted 43 substations with

GREENJACKET™ covers.

**By building a home for birds.** Where they once had a strong presence in southern Alberta's grasslands, ferruginous hawks are now an endangered species. Safe nesting sites are essential to supporting a strong population. To aid in this recovery, AltaLink has installed five nesting platforms for ferruginous hawks.

**By leaving a nest where it is.** When birds nest on power poles, we accommodate the nests whenever possible. A nest is only removed and relocated if it poses a risk to the safety of the bird or the reliability of the transmission system. AltaLink has successfully relocated 10 osprey nests.

**By identifying bird collision zones.** AltaLink has an avian safe standard that requires all projects to be reviewed for potential bird collision sites. If there is potential for collision, it must be mitigated or avoided. As an example, we install bird markers which make the line more visible and help to reduce collisions between 60 and 90 per cent.

**By avoiding sensitive environmental areas.** Whether it is an important water body or popular bird watching site, AltaLink strives to avoid sensitive areas when siting a new transmission line.

**By measuring up.** We have an environmental management system that we use to identify, manage and mitigate environmental risks such as chemicals, spills, and other waste. We are constantly challenging ourselves to improve on our environmental performance.

### The value of transmission

AltaLink is committed to making Alberta's electricity transmission grid more reliable by operating its facilities in a safe, efficient manner and increasing capacity only where necessary.

We deliver electricity under a variety of operating conditions and continuously changing customer demands. Our transmission system connects generation facilities to major load centres, such as cities and large industrial plants.

To ensure system reliability, we manage our transmission facilities through our system control centre, which operates continuously on a real-time basis and coordinates the flow of electricity with the Alberta Electric System Operator (AESO) and other transmission facility owners.

Currently, Alberta is a net importer of electricity. As a province we import five times more electricity than we export, and it is highly unlikely that Alberta will become an exporter in the short-term. New transmission facilities are required to provide consumers with access to electricity generated in new plants being built within the province.

In many cases, this new electricity will be generated at a lower cost than power generated in older facilities. Access to lower cost power enables a more competitive electricity industry to develop resulting in lower prices for Albertans.

Like most jurisdictions across North America, Alberta requires major investments in its electrical infrastructure. Since the last major upgrades to Alberta's electrical grid more than 25 years ago system capacity has grown to the point where existing transmission facilities have no reserve capacity to deliver more electricity and where system reliability is at risk.

Building a more robust transmission system is a form of risk management that can prevent potential power outages or shortages. To manage this risk the AESO is working with AltaLink to identify transmission facilities and lines where system reinforcement and upgrades are required.

During the second quarter of 2011, AltaLink received approval from the Alberta Utilities Commission (AUC) to build a 240-kilometre transmission line and related substations from the Brooks area to south of Medicine Hat. The project will allow several wind farms with a proposed capacity of more than 1,200 megawatts to connect to the electricity grid.

AltaLink also received approval to upgrade and expand the transmission system in the Yellowhead region, west of Edmonton. The transmission system which includes the Hinton, Edson and Drayton Valley areas will be upgraded to address reliability concerns and to enable important regional economic growth.

The AUC held a public hearing during the spring to review the recommended transmission line routes that would serve the growing Heartland area, northeast of Edmonton. A decision from the AUC is anticipated later this year.

The AUC has scheduled a hearing for November to review the routes for the Western Alberta Transmission Line. This project upgrades the most critical power corridor in the province between Lake Wabamun, a region that produces approximately 50 per cent of Alberta's electric energy and Calgary, southern Alberta's largest load centre and a key supply point for southern Alberta.

To reinforce central Alberta's aging transmission system in the Red Deer region AltaLink is currently consulting with landowners, local governments and other stakeholders in the area.

With Alberta anticipated to continue as one of our country's economic power houses, AltaLink is committed to managing and building a transmission system that enables the development of a more competitive and sustainable electricity market that connects consumers to diverse sources of electricity.

## AltaLink updates



### Project updates

*Check out the latest project updates.*

### Project updates

#### **Western Alberta Transmission Line hearing scheduled for November**

*The Alberta Utilities Commission hearing for the Western Alberta Transmission Line is scheduled to begin November 7, 2011.*

AltaLink filed its application for an approximate 350-kilometre Direct Current transmission line between the Edmonton and Calgary areas in March 2011. The Western Alberta Transmission Line (WATL) is proposed to connect the generation-rich area west of Edmonton to the Langdon area east of Calgary. The Alberta Utilities Commission (AUC) will review the application in a public process this November and if the project is approved, construction could begin in the spring or summer of 2012. Construction would take two to two and half years to complete.

#### **Red Deer Area Transmission Development**

*The majority of the transmission system in central Alberta is 40 to 50 years old, while the population in the towns and cities in the area has grown by more than 100,000 people.*

AltaLink is working to reinforce the aging electric system between the Wetaskiwin and Didsbury areas and is consulting with stakeholders about the Red Deer Area Transmission Development this summer. This project includes upgrading substations, rebuilding existing transmission lines, building new transmission facilities and removing existing transmission lines.

#### **Southern Alberta Transmission Reinforcement connects wind power to Albertans**

*AltaLink continues with developments in southern Alberta to reinforce the system and connect wind energy.*

The AUC approved the Cassils to Bowmanton to Whitla Transmission Projects in June 2011. We plan to begin

construction in August 2011, with an in-service date of spring of 2014. The project includes 240 kilometres of new transmission line from west of Brooks to east of Medicine Hat and onward to south of Whitla.

***Projects also underway in the southern part of the province include:***

- ***Medicine Hat 138 kV Transmission Project*** – AltaLink’s preferred and alternate routes were announced in January. Open houses were held in mid-February and the Facility Application is expected to be filed late summer 2011. The proposed project includes transmission line upgrades and a new 138 kV transmission line in the Medicine Hat area.
- ***Picture Butte to Etzikom Coulee Transmission Project and Etzikom Coulee to Whitla Transmission Project*** - The second round of consultation will begin in August 2011. The proposed Picture Butte to Etzikom Coulee Transmission Project will connect the approved Picture Butte Substation northeast of Lethbridge to the proposed Journault Substation in the area north of Wrentham. The proposed Etzikom Coulee to Whitla Transmission Project will connect the proposed Journault Substation in the area north of Wrentham to the proposed Whitla Substation located northeast of Foremost.
- ***Fidler to Chapel Rock Transmission Project*** – AltaLink began second round consultation July 2011. This project includes a new 240 kV double circuit transmission line approximately 50 kilometres from north east of Pincher Creek that will connect to the 500 kV line 1201L, west of Pincher Creek.
- ***Southern Foothills Transmission Project*** – AltaLink is currently preparing to file the facility application with the AUC. This project includes a new transmission line from south of Fort Macleod to north of High River.
- ***Blackie Area 138 kV Line Re-configuration*** – AltaLink will begin consultation in August 2011. This project includes approximately 24 kilometres of new 138 kV transmission line between the Blackie and Queenstown Substation.

**Foothills Area Transmission Development (FATD) strengthens the grid in Calgary area**

*New developments are planned in the Calgary area to connect power from new generation plants to Alberta’s electric grid to meet growing demand in the greater Calgary area.*

- ***North Foothills Transmission Project*** – AltaLink is currently finalizing our preferred and alternate routes for this new 250 kV transmission line from east of Highway 2 in the Okotoks/High River area to a substation in southeast Calgary proposed by ENMAX Power.
- ***Langdon to Janet Transmission Project*** – AltaLink is currently finalizing our preferred and alternate routes for this new 240 kV transmission line from the Langdon Substation (located southwest of the Hamlet of Langdon) to the Janet Substation (located east of Calgary at the corner of 50 Avenue and Garden Road SE).
- ***East Calgary Transmission Project*** – AltaLink recently filed our Facilities Application with the AUC for this project which includes upgrades and additions to the electric transmission system in east Calgary. If approved, construction could begin in May 2012.

## Guide to the Southern Alberta Transmission Reinforcement Project (SATR)

