



July 24, 2007

Re: “Calgary won’t get AltaLink Power” Letter to Editor by Mr. Joe Anglin, July 14, 2007

In a July 14, 2007 letter sent to numerous Alberta newspapers, Mr. Joe Anglin said the 500 kV transmission line planned from Genesee to Langdon is not critically required to keep the lights on in central and southern Alberta. He further said the additional power that will be transmitted is intended for the export of electricity out of the province.

Mr. Anglin’s comments and conclusions are incomplete and inaccurate.

The Alberta Electric System Operator is responsible for the safe and reliable planning, operation and development of the Alberta Interconnected Electric System. We are a not-for-profit company with no financial investment of any kind in Alberta’s power industry. Our mandate is to act in the public interest of all Albertans.

Today we see the stresses of enormous growth in our province. Growth of this magnitude affects all types of infrastructure and has a bearing on our quality of life. To address the pressures of significant increases in population, the province needs more communities, schools and hospitals as well as infrastructure to support them like water, transportation and power systems.

At present, the transmission infrastructure that delivers electricity to all Albertans is operating at or near its limits more frequently and for longer periods of time. Just last week, because of growth and air conditioning and irrigation loads as a result of warm temperatures, Alberta set a new peak in electricity demand, surpassing the three previous peaks hit this summer and breaking last summer’s record.

Operating the system near its limits, together with rising demand, means there is an increased risk of a serious outage on the system. In addition, our studies show that by 2010, without this critical system reinforcement, the reliability of the power grid in central and southern Alberta will fall below the standards for North American power system reliability. Falling below these standards shows the grid is vulnerable to a risk of system outages. We believe these risks are unacceptable for Alberta.

Like other infrastructure, we need to strengthen the transmission system to provide dependable power for Alberta’s new communities and meet the growing demand for electricity from industry, farms and business.

In central and southern Alberta alone, the rate of growth is about 100 megawatts; the equivalent of adding a city with a population of about 86,000 - the same size as Red Deer, every year. This represents only half of the total growth each year in provincial demand.

We agree with Mr. Anglin's statement that it's in the best interest of everyone to focus strictly on the facts and formulate an informed opinion. In that regard, we believe it's necessary to set the record straight about the fact that this transmission line is needed to strengthen Alberta's power system. This line is not for exports.

The fact is that Alberta has imported significantly more power than it has exported over the last several years. As we have previously published, during the last five years, 61 per cent of the electricity flowing on the interties that connect Alberta to other jurisdictions has been imported into our province to help meet our growing demand.

Mr. Anglin suggests in his letter that there are no plans to upgrade transmission facilities in the Calgary area to make use of this 500 kV addition. This is not accurate. Our 10-Year Plan, which is published on our website, explains how transmission facilities in the Calgary area will be reinforced in conjunction with the 500 kV development.

Like other types of infrastructure, we appreciate the need and siting of transmission facilities can be a sensitive issue and we support full and open public consultation. We also support dialogue based on factual information. The fact is this transmission line is critically needed for reliability of supply in central and southern Alberta.

Yours truly,

"Original Signed By"

Wayne St. Amour,
Vice-President
Corporate Services
Alberta Electric System Operator