

BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF UTAH

---

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION OF )	
QUESTAR GAS COMPANY TO INCREASE )	DOCKET NO. 13-057-05
DISTRIBUTION NON-GAS RATES AND )	
CHARGES AND MAKE TARIFF )	UTILITY COST MANAGEMENT
MODIFICATIONS )	CONSULTANTS EXHIBIT 1.0

---

PRE-FILED DIRECT TESTIMONY

OF

TRAVIS RIGBY

ON BEHALF OF

UTILITY COST MANAGEMENT CONSULTANTS

PROVIDING COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS AND

STATEMENTS OF IMPACT

October 28<sup>th</sup>, 2013

Table of Contents

PURPOSE OF TESTIMONY .....3

UCMC COMPARISONS and RECOMMENDATION .....4

IMPACTS and EXTENSION .....8

SUPPLEMENTAL TESTIMONY .....9

**Exhibits**

UCMC Exhibit 1.1 .....COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

UCMC Exhibit 1.2 ..... IMPACT STATEMENTS

UCMC Exhibit 1.3 ..... DUNFORD ANALYSIS

**PURPOSE OF TESTIMONY**

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20

**Q: Please state your name, business address, employer, and current position or title for the record.**

A: My name is Travis Rigby, and my business address is 102 East Cobblecreek, Cedar City, Utah 84721. My company is Utility Cost Management Consultants (UCMC). My current position is a Chief Financial Officer.

**Q: Have you previously filed testimony in this proceeding?**

A: No.

**Q: Will any other witnesses be presenting supplemental testimony with this filing?**

A: Yes. One additional witness will present Supplemental Direct Testimony in support of this filing: Dale Hatch, CFO of Dunford Bakers, Former Utah State Budget Director.

**Q: What is the purpose of the Supplemental Direct Testimony?**

A: To propose a fair alternative to this rate increase.

**Q: What is the purpose of your testimony in this proceeding?**

A: Persuasion against increasing transportation costs as outlined in this rate case. To demonstrate analysis which shows Questar combined Transportation Service (TS) non-gas in Utah are currently as high or higher than non-gas fees allowed in

21 nearby states. To express the significant impact smaller public and private entities  
22 would experience if this rate adjustment is approved, and to propose an extension  
23 for making related rate changes in 2014.

24 **COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS**

25 **Q: How do the Utah Questar TS non-gas costs compare to other mountain states**  
26 **in this region?**

27 A: Investigations and experience demonstrate that proposed TS increases would  
28 result in Questar Gas having the highest TS fees in the region. For small TS  
29 customers, current Questar TS fees are consistent with neighboring markets. The  
30 majority of TS customers are considered “small.” By broad definition, small  
31 customers consume under 50,000 Dth annually. The primary differences between  
32 Questar and other utilities in surrounding states are:

- 33 • Questar’s administration fees are substantially higher than comparable  
34 providers. I am unaware of other utilities that charge sizeable  
35 administration fees. Questar requires an annual fee of \$4,500 on top of the  
36 monthly service fee. Such administration fees are nonexistent in  
37 surrounding regions and negate TS benefits for smaller consumers.
- 38 • Customers are unable or are provided only limited ability to pool meters.  
39 Utilities researched, including Questar, charge on a declining scale, where  
40 reduced rates are applied at elevated consumption. Utilities in

41 surrounding states allow enhanced capability to pool meters, which  
42 expands TS cost benefits to additional facilities. By contrast, it is  
43 extremely difficult to pool multiple meters on TS with Questar.  
44 Limitations on meter pooling prevent customers from receiving the more  
45 economic pricing afforded by higher levels of consumption. Utilities  
46 researched, including Questar, charge on a declining scale where reduced  
47 rates are applied at elevated consumption. Ability to pool meters greatly  
48 enhances TS benefits, especially to small customers. Severe restrictions on  
49 this ability mean that Questar customers are effectively excluded from  
50 cost-savings opportunities that comparable users in surrounding states are  
51 given.

- 52 • Current Questar non-gas fees are in line with regional rates. Comparative  
53 rate analysis indicates similar TS non-gas pricing between Questar and  
54 neighboring utilities for small consumers. Questar currently provides a  
55 lower transmission charge but higher administration fees in comparison to  
56 other utilities, some of which charge no administration fees whatsoever.
- 57 • The cost of telemetry equipment and installation thereof is often covered  
58 by the utility in neighboring states. Questar applies these costs (up to  
59 \$5,000) to the customer. Neighboring regions often require the customer  
60 to cover only the cost of installing a phone line at the meter(s). This cost  
61 averages \$150 per meter.

- 62 • The consumption threshold for obtaining economic benefit on TS is much  
63 lower in neighboring states. Questar's heavy administration fees make it  
64 difficult for consumers under 10,000 Dth per year to benefit on TS.  
65 Economic benefit is achieved in Colorado at 1,500 Dth/year. In Montana,  
66 TS accounts are required to consume at least 5,000 Dth/year, but smaller  
67 accounts may be pooled to achieve minimal consumption requirements.
- 68 • Application and implementation policies of Questar's TS rate are strict,  
69 allowing TS activation *exclusively* on July 1 of each year and at no other  
70 time. Other states offer year-round TS application and implementation.

71 In a comparative example applying these aforementioned differences, a gas  
72 consumer with Xcel Energy in Colorado having 12 facilities in different locations  
73 was capable of pooling consumption on 12 meters. The telemetry costs were  
74 approximately \$150 per meter whereas Questar would have charged up to  
75 \$60,000. There are no administration fees whereas Questar would apply \$4,500  
76 annually for the first meter and \$2,250 (\$29,250 annual total) for each additional  
77 meter. Comparing the non-gas costs between Xcel and Questar as if the 12-pooled  
78 meters were on one meter, costs would be identical at approximately 30,000 Dth  
79 annually. The lack of heavy administration fees and telemetry costs enables  
80 customers to benefit on TS with annual consumption as low as 1,500 Dth.

81 The proposed Questar rates would have a detrimental impact eliminating any  
82 possible economic benefit for small TS customers. Furthermore, Questar would  
83 not allow for pooling at multiple locations, only meters that come off the same  
84 interconnect line that prohibits current and potential TS customers to obtain a  
85 “Large” customer classification. For example, we are aware of multiple facilities  
86 in Utah on the same side of the street and address that cannot be pooled or  
87 telemetered together due to Questar’s strict requirements. The limitation blocks  
88 customers from obtaining larger consumption levels that would capture gain on  
89 the proposed rates. Finally, Xcel Energy provides a 30-day notice for TS  
90 application with the ability to implement TS the first day of any month.

91 Please see Exhibit 1.1-Multi State Cost Sheet

92 **Q: Do any of the neighboring states to Utah ever intentionally interrupt**  
93 **customers in order to verify if they truly can be interrupted?**

94 A: None of the utilities investigated require intentional interruption-

95

96 **Q: How does Utah compare in relation to Competition Between Suppliers for**  
97 **gas purchasing?**

98 A: Utah is not deregulated overall, although IS/TS allow for competition between  
99 suppliers. This competition will be reduced significantly if distribution rates are

100 increased as proposed in this case. This change is essentially re-regulating gas  
101 supply for small TS customers in Utah. Strict FS qualification requirements and  
102 proposed IS/TS rate modifications create a form of monopoly on Questar's GS  
103 rate.

104

105

### IMPACTS

106

107 **Q: Have your clients expressed concern about the impact this cost increase**  
108 **would have?**

109 A: Utah school districts are going to see significant cost increases because of this  
110 proposed rate adjustment. One district was recently interviewed by a local  
111 television station and expressed that there would be an additional cost of between  
112 \$50,000 and \$100,000 annually. This represents the cost to employ three school  
113 teachers. Other customers have sent us requests asking for UCMC to "do anything  
114 you can to prevent this increase."

115 Please see Exhibit 1.2- Customer impact

116

### EXTENSION

117 **Q: Will there be complications next year directly related to deadlines to move**  
118 **either back to the FS or GS rates, or for larger customers to transfer to the**  
119 **TS rate?**

120 A: Yes. Should this rate case be approved, it may not make sense financially for  
121 certain end users to remain on TS. Some of our customers are already being told  
122 by Questar representatives that this change is taking place. They are furthermore



123 being directed to move to the FS rate next year where Questar representatives  
124 have stated Questar provides better FS pricing than prices offered by alternative  
125 suppliers. In specific instances, account profile analysis demonstrates that these  
126 accounts do not meet the strict load factor criteria for FS and Questar is falsely  
127 representing the FS rate if dramatic changes are not applied to FS qualifications  
128 enabling more consumers to migrate to FS. Questar has been very clear with this  
129 customer base that the Company “may not allow them back on the GS rate.”  
130 UCMC is therefore in a difficult position to be able to consult our customer base  
131 appropriately. UCMC proposes the commission consider an allowed time  
132 extension in the year 2014 to transition away from or to Transportation Service.  
133 This extension would give end users time to go through a thorough review  
134 process, and make the best decision for their facilities.

135 **SUPPLEMENTAL TESTIMONY**

136 **Q. What are your recommendations?**

137 A. I recommend adoption of perhaps the fairest QGC TS rate structure --  
138 continue to charge the annual \$4,500 administrative fee to differentiate  
139 between sizes of customer but eliminate any firm demand charge and then  
140 add a uniform rate charge to all TS customers irrespective of volume as is  
141 done for pipeline charges to the city gate. If that isn't adopted, the current

142 TS rate structure should be maintained as it is fairer to smaller TS  
143 customers than proposed rates. Any significant increase should be phased.

144

145 **Q. Your recommendations are based on what conclusions?**

146 A. An analysis of the proposed and current TS rate structures has led me to  
147 the following conclusions: (1) the huge differential in costs per dekatherm  
148 to smaller TS customers cannot be justified on a fairness basis; (2) if a  
149 small TS customer were to stop ordering gas, QGC costs would not  
150 decrease by the amount of the proposed charges to that customer; (3) the  
151 multiple of the proposed QGC transport charges per mile from the city gate  
152 over those to the city gate cannot be justified; (4) if the proposed TS rate  
153 structure were applied to the donut business, the costs of a donut to smaller  
154 customers would be unconscionable; and (5) QGC's assessment of firm  
155 demand charges to TS customers amounts to a double charge because  
156 those customers already have firm contracts with independent suppliers.

157

**ANALYSIS**

158 **Q. What analysis did you perform?**

159 A. Based on QGC current and proposed rates and information from Summit  
160 Energy that it is 28 miles from the city gate servicing Dunford, that it is  
161 355 miles from the gas fields to the city gate and the cost of transporting  
162 gas to the city gate is \$0.17832 per Dth, regardless of volume, I calculated  
163 QGS transport charges to five TS rate companies. I assumed that the five  
164 TS rate companies are located contiguously next to Dunford Bakers and  
165 one uses 10,000 Dths per year, one 20,000 (Dunford is closest to this  
166 level), one 200,000, one 2,000,000, and one 20,000,000 Dths.

167 **Q. What did the analysis show?**

168 A. Calculations, excluding any demand charges, showed that: (1) the total  
169 proposed QGC costs/charges per Dth, respectively, would be about \$1.29,  
170 \$0.98, \$0.38, \$0.22, and \$0.11 and the current charges would be about  
171 \$0.74, \$0.48, \$0.25, \$0.16, and \$0.08, respectively; (2) under the current  
172 rate structure, QGC costs per mile to deliver gas to its largest customers  
173 from the city gate are about 5 times the costs of pipeline delivery to the  
174 city gate and that under the proposed TS rate structure that multiple in  
175 costs would jump to about 8 times as much cost per mile; (3) the multiple  
176 per transported mile costs noted in paragraph (2) above under the proposed  
177 TS rate structure would be about 92, 70, 27, 16, and 8, respectively and

178 under the current rate structure are about 53, 34, 17, 11, and 5,  
179 respectively; and (4) if Dunford charged its largest customers \$1 per donut  
180 and were to apply the same methodology QGC is proposing, it would  
181 charge large customers about \$2 each, smaller customers, \$3 per donut,  
182 even smaller customers (similar in size to Dunford) \$9, and the smallest  
183 customers about \$11 per donut. Those prices would not be permitted or  
184 fair in the bakery industry and similar pricing should not be allowed for  
185 transporting gas under TS rates. How can a rate increase of 371% to  
186 smaller TS customers, the increase mentioned in the August 13 Technical  
187 Conference, be allowed?

188 Please see Exhibit 1.3-Dunford Analysis