

- BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF UTAH -

In the Matter of the Application of)
Questar Gas Company for an Increase)
in Rates and Charges)

DOCKET NO. 99-057-20
PROTECTIVE ORDER

ISSUED: February 2, 2000

By The Commission:

At the direction of the Commission, pursuant to § 54-4-1.5, UCA, the Division of Public Utilities, Committee of Consumer Services, and Intervenors have initiated discovery in the above-captioned proceeding. Questar Gas Company ("Questar"), on the 26th day of January, 2000, submitted an unopposed Motion and Proposed Order to the Commission in the above-entitled proceeding seeking a Protective Order. Questar states in its Motion that the entry of a Protective Order will expedite the production of documents and other information to parties seeking to prepare for hearings in this matter, and will afford necessary protection to valuable confidential, trade secret, and business information.

The Commission finds that sufficient grounds exist for entry of a Protective Order.

ORDER

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED, that:

1. (a) Confidential Information. All documents, data, information, studies, and other materials furnished or made available pursuant to any interrogatories or requests for information, subpoenas, depositions, or other modes of discovery that are claimed by the parties to be of a trade secret or confidential nature shall be furnished pursuant to the terms of this Order, and shall be treated by all persons accorded access thereto pursuant to this Order as constituting trade secret, confidential commercial, and financial information (hereinafter referred to as "Confidential Information"), and shall neither be used nor disclosed except for the purpose of this proceeding, and solely in accordance with this Order. All material claimed to be Confidential Information shall be so marked by the party or its affiliates by stamping each individual page with the designation, "CONFIDENTIAL -- SUBJECT TO PROTECTIVE ORDER IN DOCKET 99-057-20." All copies of documents so marked will be made on yellow paper. For purposes hereof, notes made pertaining to or as the result of a review of Confidential Information shall be considered Confidential Information and subject to the terms of this Order. Parties filing electronically should file both a confidential and non-confidential version clearly marked as such.

(b) Use of Confidential Information and Persons Entitled to Review. All Confidential Information made available pursuant to this Order shall be given solely to counsel for the parties which shall include the Division of Public Utilities ("Division") and the Committee of Consumer Services ("Committee"), and shall not be used or disclosed except for purposes of this proceeding; provided, however, that access to any specific Confidential Information may be authorized by counsel, solely for the purpose of this proceeding, to those persons indicated by the parties as being their experts in this matter. Persons designated as experts shall not include persons employed by the parties who could use the information in their normal job functions to the competitive disadvantage of the party providing the Confidential Information. Any member of the Public Service Commission and its staff, under and pursuant to the applicable provisions of Title 54, Utah Code Ann., the Utah Rules of Civil Procedure and the Rules of the Commission, may have access to any Confidential Information made available pursuant to this Order, and shall be bound by the terms of this Order, except for the requirement of signing a nondisclosure agreement.

(c) Nondisclosure Agreement. Prior to giving access to Confidential Information as contemplated in paragraph 1(b)

above to counsel or any expert designated to testify in this proceeding, counsel for the party seeking review of the Confidential Information shall deliver a copy of this Order to such person, and prior to disclosure such person shall agree in writing to comply with and be bound by this Order. Confidential Information shall not be disclosed to any person who has not signed a Nondisclosure Agreement in the form which is attached hereto and incorporated herein as Appendix A. The Nondisclosure Agreement (Appendix A) shall require the person to whom disclosure is to be made to read a copy of this Protective Order and to certify in writing that he or she has reviewed the same and has consented to be bound by its terms. The agreement shall contain the signatory's full name, permanent address and employer, and the name of the party with whom the signatory is associated. Such agreement shall be delivered to counsel for the providing party prior to the expert gaining access to the Confidential Information.

(d) Availability of Documentation. As to highly sensitive documents and information, the parties shall have the right, at their option, to refuse to provide copies to counsel for other parties or to their experts as defined in paragraph 1(b). Should the parties refuse to provide copies, such documents shall be made available for inspection and review by counsel or experts at a place and time mutually agreed upon by the parties. Where copies are not provided, the counsel or expert reviewing the Confidential Information may make limited notes regarding the Confidential Information for reference purposes only. Such notes shall not constitute a verbatim or substantive transcript of the Confidential Information. For purposes hereof, notes made pertaining to or as the result of a review of Confidential Information shall be considered Confidential Information and subject to the terms of this Order.

2. (a) Challenge to Confidentiality. This Order establishes a procedure for the expeditious handling of Confidential Information; it shall not be construed as an agreement or ruling on the confidentiality of any document.

(b) In the event that the parties hereto are unable to agree that certain documents, data, information, studies, or other matters constitute Confidential Information or highly sensitive documents and information referred to in paragraph 1(d) above, the party objecting to the classification as Confidential Information or highly sensitive documents and information shall forthwith submit the objection to the Commission for its review pursuant to this Order. When the Commission rules on the question of whether any documents, data, information, studies, or other matters submitted to them for review and determination are Confidential Information, the Commission will enter an order resolving the issue.

(c) Any party at any time upon ten (10) days prior notice may seek by appropriate pleading, to have documents that have been designated as Confidential Information, or which were accepted into the sealed record in accordance with this Order, removed from the protective requirements of this Order or from the sealed record, and placed in the public record. If the confidential or proprietary nature of this information is challenged, resolution of the issue shall be made by the Commission after proceedings *in camera* which shall be conducted under circumstances such that only those persons duly authorized hereunder to have access to such confidential matter shall be present. The record of such *in camera* hearings shall be marked "CONFIDENTIAL - SUBJECT TO PROTECTIVE ORDER IN CASE NO. 99-057-20." It shall be transcribed only upon agreement by the parties or Order of the Commission, and in that event shall be separately bound, segregated, sealed, and withheld from inspection by any person not bound by the terms of this Order, unless and until released from the restrictions of this Order, either through agreement of the parties, or after notice to the parties and hearing, pursuant to an Order of the Commission. In the event the Commission should rule in response to such a pleading that any information should be removed from the protective requirements of this Order or from the protection of the sealed record, such Order of the Commission shall not be effective for a period of ten (10) days after entry of the Order.

3. (a) Receipt into Evidence. Provision is hereby made for receipt of evidence in this proceeding under seal. At least ten (10) days prior to the use of or substantive reference to any Confidential Information as evidence, the party intending to use such Confidential Information shall make that intention known to the providing party. The requesting party and the providing party shall make a good faith effort to reach an agreement so the information can be used in a manner which will not reveal its trade secret, confidential, or proprietary nature. If such efforts fail, the providing party shall separately identify, within five (5) business days, which portions, if any, of the documents to be offered or referenced on the record containing Confidential Information shall be placed in the sealed record. Only one (1) copy of documents designated by the providing party to be placed in the sealed record shall be made and only for that purpose. Otherwise, parties shall make only general references to Confidential Information in these proceedings.

(b) Seal. While in the custody of the Commission, these materials shall be marked "CONFIDENTIAL - SUBJECT TO PROTECTIVE ORDER IN CASE NO. 99-057-20," and due to their trade secret nature they shall not be considered as records in the possession of or retained by the Commission within the meaning of the open meetings or public records statutes.

(c) In Camera Hearing. Any Confidential Information which must be orally disclosed to be placed in the sealed record in this proceeding shall be offered in an *in camera* hearing, attended only by persons authorized to have access to the Confidential Information under this Order. Similarly, cross examination on or making substantive reference to Confidential Information, as well as that portion of the record containing references thereto, shall be marked and treated as provided herein.

(d) Appeal. Sealed portions of the record in this proceeding may be forwarded to any court of competent jurisdiction on appeal in accordance with applicable rules and regulations, but under seal as designated herein for the information and use of the court.

(e) Return. Unless otherwise ordered, Confidential Information, including transcripts of any depositions to which a claim of confidentiality is made, shall remain under seal, shall continue to be subject to the protective requirements of this Order, and shall be returned to counsel for the providing party within 30 days after final settlement or conclusion of this matter including administrative or judicial review thereof. In order to facilitate their ongoing regulatory responsibility, this paragraph shall not apply to the Commission, the Division of Public Utilities, or the Committee of Consumer Services, which may retain confidential information obtained under this Order subject to the other terms of this Order. The providing party shall be notified in advance by any state regulatory agency which intends to use any of the retained confidential information in any subsequent case.

4. Use in Pleadings. Where reference to Confidential Information in the sealed record is required in pleadings, cross-examinations, briefs, arguments, or motions, it shall be by citation of title or some other nonconfidential description. Any further use of or substantive references to Confidential Information shall be placed in a separate section of the pleading or brief and submitted to the Commission under seal. This sealed section shall be served only on counsel of record (one copy each), who have signed a Nondisclosure Agreement. All the protections afforded in this Order apply to materials prepared and distributed under this paragraph.

5. Use by the Commission.

(a) Use in Decisions and Orders. The Commission will attempt to refer to Confidential Information in only a general or conclusionary form and will avoid reproduction in any decision of Confidential Information to the greatest possible extent. If it is necessary for a determination in this proceeding to discuss Confidential Information other than in a general or conclusionary form, it shall be placed in a separate section of this Order or Decision under seal. This sealed section shall be served only on counsel of record (one copy each) who have signed a Nondisclosure Agreement. Counsel for other parties shall receive the cover sheet to the sealed portion and may review the sealed portion on file with the Commission once they have signed a Nondisclosure Agreement.

6. Segregation of Files. Those parts of any writing, depositions reduced to writing, written examination, interrogatories, and answers thereto, or other written references to Confidential Information in the course of discovery, if filed with the Commission, will be sealed by the Commission, segregated in the files of the Commission, and withheld from inspection by any person not bound by the terms of this Order, unless such Confidential Information is released from the restrictions of this Order either through agreement of the parties or, after notice to the parties and hearing, pursuant to the Order of the Commission and/or final order of a court having jurisdiction.

7. Preservation of Confidentiality. All persons who may be entitled to receive, or who are afforded access to any Confidential Information by reason of this Order, shall neither use nor disclose the Confidential Information for purposes of business or competition, or any other purpose other than the purposes of preparation for and conduct of this proceeding, and then solely as contemplated herein, and shall take reasonable precautions to keep the Confidential Information secure and in accordance with the purposes and intent of this Order.

8. Reservation of Rights. The parties affected by the terms of this Protective Order retain the right to question,

challenge, and object to the admissibility of any and all data, information, studies, and other matters furnished under the terms of this Protective Order in response to interrogatories, requests for information or cross-examination on the grounds of relevancy or materiality. This Order shall in no way constitute any waiver of the rights of any party to contest any assertion by a party or finding by the Commission that any information is a trade secret, confidential, or privileged, and to appeal any assertion or finding.

9. The provisions of this Order are specifically intended to apply to data or information supplied by or from any party to this proceeding, and any nonparty that supplies documents pursuant to process issued by the Commission.

DATED at Salt Lake City, Utah, this Wednesday, February 2, 2000.

/s/ Stephen F. Mecham, Chairman

/s/ Constance B. White, Commissioner

/s/ Clark D. Jones, Commissioner

Attest:

/s/ Julie Orchard

Commission Secretary

APPENDIX A TO PROTECTIVE ORDER

IN DOCKET NO. 99-057-20

I have reviewed the Protective Order entered by the Public Service Commission of Utah in Docket No. 99-057-20 with respect to the review and use of confidential information and agree to comply with the terms and conditions of the Protective Order.

Signature:

Name (type or print):

Residence Address:

Employer or Business Name:

Business Address:

Party Represented:

Date Signed: