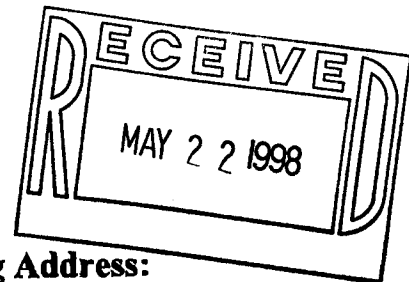


R98022

Gas Industry Standards Board

Request for Initiation of a GISB Standard for Electronic Business Transactions
or
Enhancement of an Existing GISB Standard for Electronic Business Transactions



1. Submitting Entity & Address:

Providence Gas Company

2. Contact Person, Phone #, Fax #, Electronic Mailing Address:

Name: Gary L. Beland
Title: Executive Committee Member
Phone: (401) 272-5040 ext-2223
Fax: (401) 751-0698

3. Description of Proposed Standard or Enhancement:

Order 587-G provides that "Pipelines will be permitted cost-of-service recovery in subsequent section 4 rate cases for the costs of the interactive web site only if the pipelines together with GISB create standards governing the access to, presentation, and format ("look and feel") of the sites". I am requesting that GISB develop standards consistent with the Order.

4. Use of Proposed Standard or Enhancement (include how the standard will be used, documentation on the description of the proposed standard, any existing documentation of the proposed standards, and required communication protocols):

The standards would allow shippers to perform the various tasks currently done on the existing EBB's in the same fashion as they are done today. The new standards would provide a standardized approach to be used by transportation service providers in the development of interactive web sites to replace existing EBB's.

5. Description of Any Tangible or Intangible Benefits to the Use of the Proposed Standard or Enhancement:

The benefit of this standard will be to prevent the substantial degradation in service ordered by the Commission in Order 587-G. The current EBB's provide an effective, easy to use approach to nominating and scheduling supplies and these standards are necessary to retain the benefits of an interactive system.

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The interactive approach provided by the existing EBB's has proven to be extremely valuable and the development of these standards is necessary to preserve their capability. Interactive web sites provide the best model for transportation service providers. Interactivity plays an important role in reducing errors and improving system operations. It provides immediate feed back when mistakes are made, numbers are entered incorrectly, or tariffs inadvertently violated, a capability that is extremely valuable. The interactive web site is simple, easy to use, and ideal for low-volume transactions and instances where problems need to be corrected quickly and reliably.

Another benefit is that the development of interactive web standards will further the development of industry unbundling. Interactive web sites are already being used by many LDCs. The Massachusetts Collaborative has determined that all LDCs will use them to do their electronic communication with customers and marketers. This is potentially a more important development to the industry than simply moving pipeline EBBs to the internet. To the extent that there are many more LDC's than pipelines, these standards are more important in fostering standardization than the development of EDI standards.

Overall the interactive web site standards will provide transportation service providers a low cost, user friendly model that will have much better functionality than EDI for most transactions. Costs will be lower because training will be almost unnecessary, interactivity will result in fewer costly mistakes and the development cost for smaller TSP's will be reduced by standardization.

6. Estimate of Incremental Specific Costs to Implement Proposed Standard or Enhancement:

The cost to implement these standards will depend on the approach used or required by the individual transportation service provider. For those transportation service providers who do not already have interactive web sites it will reduce development costs significantly.

7. Description of Any Specific Legal or Other Considerations:

Order 587-G and the results of the requests for rehearing.

8. If This Proposed Standard or Enhancement is Not Tested Yet, List Trading Partners Willing to Test Standard or Enhancement (Corporations and contacts):

Unknown at this time.

9. If This Proposed Standard or Enhancement is in Use, Who Are the Trading Partners:

All Shippers and transportation service providers.

10. Attachments (such as: further detailed proposals, transaction data descriptions, information flows, implementation guides, business process descriptions, examples of ASC ANSI X12 mapped transactions):

None