

MANITOBA) Order No. 48/03
)
THE PUBLIC UTILITIES BOARD ACT) March 20, 2003

BEFORE: G. D. Forrest, Chairman
Mario J. Santos, Member
M. Girouard, Member

**APPLICATION BY THE CONSUMERS' ASSOCIATION OF
CANADA (MANITOBA) INC. AND MANITOBA SOCIETY OF
SENIORS FOR AN AWARD OF COSTS FOR
PARTICIPATING IN THE CONSIDERATION OF AN
APPLICATION BY CENTRA GAS MANITOBA INC. FOR
APPROVAL OF PRIMARY GAS SALES RATES EFFECTIVE
FEBRUARY 1, 2003**

The Public Utilities Board (the "Board") by way of public notice dated December 16, 2002 invited written comments from interested parties on Centra Gas Manitoba Inc.'s ("Centra") Application for approval of Primary Gas Sales Rates effective February 1, 2003. Counsel for the Consumers' Association of Canada (Manitoba) Inc. and the Manitoba Society of Seniors (CAC/MSOS) forwarded a written submission to the Board dated February 13, 2003. A further copy of the submission signed on behalf of CAC/MSOS was forwarded to the Board by way of letter dated March 13, 2003.

Counsel for the Consumers' Association of Canada (Manitoba) Inc. and the Manitoba Society of Seniors (the "Applicant") filed the appropriate hearing and summary sheets by way of letter dated February 13, 2003. The total claim for costs is \$3,660.76 comprised of professional fees of \$3,235.00, disbursements of \$186.26 and GST of \$239.50.

The Applicant indicated that they had reviewed and responded to the application on behalf of the residential customers in a responsible fashion at minimal cost as contemplated by the quarterly review process.

The Applicant submitted that there was no duplication. The Applicant also noted its lack of financial resources and substantial interest in the process and the outcome of the proceedings.

The Applicant requested that an Order as to costs be rendered as soon as possible.

By letter dated February 24, 2003, Centra indicated that it had no comments with respect to the application.

BOARD COMMENTS

The Applicant is well known to the Board as an intervenor on matters relating to Centra. The Board is satisfied that the Applicant has insufficient financial resources to present its case adequately without an award of costs. The Applicant represents a group which has a substantial interest in the outcome of the proceedings.

