

**BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION  
OF THE STATE OF MISSOURI**

Richard D. Smith,	)	
	)	
Complainant,	)	
	)	
v.	)	Case No. EC-2007-0106
	)	
Union Electric Company, d/b/a AmerenUE,	)	
	)	
Respondent.	)	
	)	

**STAFF’S REPORT**

**COMES NOW** the Staff of the Missouri Public Service Commission (Staff) and, for its report of its investigation of Richard D. Smith’s complaint against Union Electric Company d/b/a AmerenUE (AmerenUE), states:

1. On September 19, 2006, Richard D. Smith filed with the Commission his complaint against AmerenUE alleging degradation in electrical service in 2006, including outages, surges and extension of outage periods due to the transfer of local service crews out of his area during the storms of 2006. With his complaint he included a petition signed by numerous individuals requesting their service provider be returned from AmerenUE to Black River Electric Cooperative (Black River). For the relief he requests Mr. Smith states, “Wherefore, Complainant now requests the following relief: to be reinstated with Black River Electric Co-op of Fredericktown, Mo. as our electrical provider, as we were in the past.”

2. AmerenUE filed its response stating it was making upgrades in the area that will improve the quality of service to Mr. Smith and Black River filed its response opposing transfer of AmerenUE customers to Black River.

3. In the attached memorandum marked Appendix A, the Staff states that the construction of a substation and scheduled upgrades should improve service quality on the circuit serving Mr. Smith and some of his neighbors along John Smith Road near Potosi, Missouri, and, therefore, recommends the Commission dismiss this case.

4. In its memorandum the Staff reports that Mr. Smith was one of about 2950 members of Black River Electric Cooperative that were transferred to become customers of AmerenUE as part of an agreement between Black River and AmerenUE that established exclusive service territories, and transferred members and customers between them. The Commission approved the transfers of the members, customers and territorial agreement in 1996 by its March 22, 2006, Report and Order on Rehearing issued in Case No. EO-95-400.<sup>1</sup> The Staff further reports that, due to the facilities in the area, Mr. Smith and his neighbors along John Smith Road near Potosi, Missouri, would experience similar electrical service outages. The Staff reports AmerenUE is improving the circuit upon which Mr. Smith and his neighbors along John Smith Road are served by installing a new substation near Belgrade, Missouri which will reduce Mr. Smith's distance from the substation from about 25 miles to about 10 miles and by installing new conductors on the line serving him. Both should reduce outages on the circuit serving Mr. Smith and his neighbors along John Smith Road.

WHEREFORE, the Staff submits this Report on its investigation of Mr. Smith's Complaint and recommends the Commission dismiss that Complaint.

---

<sup>1</sup> 4 MPSC 3d 77 (Report and Order before Rehearing at 4 MPSC 3d at 66).

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Nathan Williams

Nathan Williams  
Deputy General Counsel  
Missouri Bar No. 35512

Attorney for the Staff of the  
Missouri Public Service Commission  
P. O. Box 360  
Jefferson City, MO 65102  
(573) 751-8702 (Telephone)  
(573) 751-9285 (Fax)  
[nathan.williams@psc.mo.gov](mailto:nathan.williams@psc.mo.gov)

### **Certificate of Service**

I hereby certify that copies of the foregoing have been mailed, hand-delivered, transmitted by facsimile or electronically mailed to all counsel of record this 20<sup>th</sup> day of November 2006.

/s/ Nathan Williams

Nathan Williams

## **MEMORANDUM**

TO: Missouri Public Service Commission Official Case File  
Case No. EC-2007-0106, Richard D. Smith Electric Service Complaint  
Against AmerenUE

FROM: James L Ketter, Energy Department – Engineering Analysis

/s/ Daniel I. Beck 11/20/06      /s/ Nathan Williams 11/20/06  
Energy Department / Date      General Counsel's Office / Date

Subject: Staff Investigation

Date: November 20, 2006

## **OVERVIEW**

On September 19, 2006, Richard D. Smith filed a complaint against AmerenUE concerning electric service to his home and neighbors along John Smith Road near Potosi, Missouri. Mr. Smith complains of numerous power outages and power surges. Also, priority of restoration work and utilization of service crews is an issue for the complainant.

Mr. Smith states that Black River Electric Cooperative (Black River) was the initial electric service provider for the section of John Smith Road where he lives and he would prefer to have electric service from Black River. The Commission approved a territorial agreement between AmerenUE and Black River in Case No. EO-95-400 in which the Commission established service areas, as between them, exclusive to each electric service provider. The Commission authorized transfer of electric customers between AmerenUE and Black River, in conformance with the exclusive service areas.

## **STAFF INVESTIGATION**

Mr. Smith was one of the members of Black River transferred to AmerenUE pursuant to the terms of the territorial agreement approved by the Commission in Case No. EO-95-400. In that case, approximately 3000 AmerenUE customers were transferred to Black River and approximately 2950 members of Black River were transferred to AmerenUE. This territorial agreement established, between AmerenUE and Black River, exclusive service territory for each electric supplier in ten counties. The concentration of electric customers south of Potosi in Washington, County, is part of the AmerenUE service territory in which AmerenUE is the exclusive supplier.

John Smith Road is presently served by three different AmerenUE electric circuits. The west end of John Smith Road is served from an AmerenUE substation, Potosi-53, and the east end of John Smith Road is served from the same substation but a

different circuit, Potosi-56. Mr. Smith is served through a substation transferred from Black River, from a circuit identified as Black River-51. Mr. Smith's home is at the point where the Black River-51 circuit comes cross country and intersects John Smith Road. The outage history for Mr. Smith would be reflective of other electric customers that are served through this circuit on that portion of John Smith Road. Black River-51 is the circuit referred to by AmerenUE in its response to the complaint and Mr. Smith is approximately 25 miles from the substation.

The length of a circuit measured from the substation to an electric customer can have an impact on the outages experienced by a customer. Problems that can occur that might impact service quality are more numerous on a lengthy circuit verses a shorter circuit. The history of outages for Mr. Smith include thunderstorms, lightning, broken pole, equipment malfunction and trees. The greater the exposure of a line to these elements, the greater the chances of an electric outage.

Restoration efforts during major storms are typically centered at the substation by restoring circuits at their source at the substation and working outward, with the intention of restoring as many customers as possible in the shortest time. The length of the present circuit serving Mr. Smith would contribute to the length of time for restoration because of the distance to the power source. Mr. Smith is also on a single phase line which typically has fewer customers per mile, and consequently lower priority than three phase lines.

The major storm that moved through the AmerenUE service territory that caused the damage to the electric system, not only affected the Potosi area but it caused extensive electric outages in the St. Louis metropolitan area. The extent of the damage was so severe that AmerenUE requested assistance from other utility companies. This was the first time that AmerenUE utilized cooperative crews to assist with a restoration effort. AmerenUE had more linemen working this outage than it has had in any previous outage.

In response to recognized reliability problems in this portion of its service territory, AmerenUE is making major improvements to the electric facilities that presently serve John Smith Road from the Black River-51 circuit by constructing a new substation near Belgrade, Missouri. The land has been acquired for this substation and the contractor is starting construction, with an expected completion date of June 2007. The site is at a point where an AmerenUE transmission line crosses the existing Black River-51 circuit. The location of this new substation will reduce the circuit length from the substation to Mr. Smith's home from approximately twenty-five (25) miles to approximately ten (10) miles. AmerenUE will also upgrade the conductor size for the circuits from the substation, which will add to the load carrying capacity of the line and the reliability of the electric facilities. In its answer to the complaint, AmerenUE states that addition tree trimming will be done during the reconductoring project which should improve reliability in the future. The cost of this project is budgeted at \$4.3 million.

Mr. Smith brought to Staff's attention that in the AmerenUE answer to the complaint it showed an outage starting on July 24, 2006, that lasted 56 hours and 38 minutes for his meter, when in fact the storm outage started on July 19, 2006. Attached as Appendix 1 is an outage history provided by AmerenUE that reflects the service outage of 159 hours and 20 minutes, or 6.6 days. Mr. Smith points out that problems

encountered during an outage of this length, in addition to the heat of the summer, is the loss of frozen and refrigerated items.

The outage report shows numerous tree contacts as the cause, mostly associated with storms. Tree trimming on this circuit was completed in 2002 and started again in October 2006. Much of this right-of-way for this circuit is cross country in a heavily forested area.

Major storms caused significant outages for Mr. Smith and other AmerenUE electric customers in the Potosi area during 2006. The Potosi area of the AmerenUE service territory required outside crews three times during 2006 to assist with restoration of electric service. Black River sent crews to assist with restoration after the July 19, 2006 storm. In most instances, AmerenUE can call on significant resources from other districts from within the company to assist the local crews in restoring electric service after storms.

Staff recognizes the significance of the addition of the new Belgrade Substation and its impact for Mr. Smith's electric service reliability. The shorter distance of the new substation and the upgrade in the conductors out of the substation are expected to greatly improve service reliability. The performance of the improvements will determine if further additions or changes are necessary to provide better electric service reliability. Staff believes that this new substation provides the best solution for Mr. Smith and the other electric customers on this circuit.

On November 17, 2006, in Case No. EO-2007-0037, Staff filed a report on AmerenUE storm outage planning and restoration effort following the storms on July 19 and 21, 2006. In this report Staff recommends that rules be implemented to address tree trimming, infrastructure maintenance and inspection, and system reliability. These additional reporting rules, if adopted, will provide the Staff with timely data to identify performance trends throughout AmerenUE service territory, including Potosi.

Staff has found no evidence of any tariff, rule or statute violations by AmerenUE associated with this formal complaint. Staff recommends that this complaint be dismissed because AmerenUE has a major project for upgrades to the electric facilities in progress to improve reliability on this circuit.

**BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION  
OF THE STATE OF MISSOURI**

Richard D. Smith,

Complainant,

v.

Union Electric Company, d/b/a AmerenUE,

Respondent.

Case No. EC-2007-0106

**AFFIDAVIT OF JAMES L. KETTER**

STATE OF MISSOURI )

) ss

COUNTY OF COLE )

James L. Ketter, of lawful age, on oath states: that he participated in the preparation of the foregoing Staff Investigation in memorandum form, to be presented in the above case; that the information in the Staff Investigation was given by him; that he has knowledge of the matters set forth in such Staff Investigation; and that such matters are true to the best of his knowledge and belief.

  
James L. Ketter

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 20<sup>th</sup> day of November, 2006.



SUSAN L. SUNDERMEYER  
My Commission Expires  
September 21, 2010  
Callaway County  
Commission #06942066

  
Notary Public

My commission expires 9-21-10

Outage record for Richard D Smith at 12787 John Smith Road for the period 2001-2006

DATE	TIME	HR/MIN	TYPE	CAUSE/ACTION	WEA	MAJ	FEEDER
08/06/06	16:34	0 49	DEVICE	OVERHD EQUIP MALFUNC	CALM	N	481051
07/25/06	21:14	16 16	DEVICE	TREE CONTACT	TSTRM	N	481051
07/23/06	23:17	45 57	GROUPED	TREE CONTACT	RAIN	N	481051
07/22/06	00:20	46 10	GROUPED	TREE LIMB BROKEN	TSTRM	N	481051
07/19/06	21:12	50 57	GROUPED	OVERHD EQUIP MALFUNC	MSTRM	N	481051
07/13/06	12:30	0 01	FEEDER	DROPPED FOR SAFETY	CALM	N	481052
04/02/06	16:56	50 41	GROUPED	TREE LIMB BROKEN	MSTRM	N	481051
03/11/06	21:45	16 15	DEVICE	TREE CONTACT	RAIN	N	481051
12/07/05	20:33	2 22	MAINTAIN	DROPPED FOR SAFETY	CALM	N	481051
09/29/05	04:52	5 53	DEVICE	TREE CONTACT	WINDS	N	481051
09/28/05	17:30	9 16	GROUPED	OVERHD EQUIP MALFUNC	TSTRM	Y	481051
08/26/05	13:34	1 26	DEVICE	TREE CONTACT	TSTRM	N	481051
04/21/05	00:06	3 17	DEVICE	OVERHD EQUIP MALFUNC	TSTRM	N	481051
08/25/04	15:59	0 51	DEVICE	TREE LIMB BROKEN	TSTRM	N	481051
08/17/03	21:33	4 14	GROUPED	OVERHD EQUIP MALFUNC	HEAT	N	481051
12/01/02	12:00		ACTION>>	** TREE TRIMMING **	CALM		481051
11/07/02	10:15	1 14	DEVICE	TREE TRIMMERS	CALM	N	481051
09/24/02	20:20	0 34	MAINTAIN	DROPPED FOR SAFETY	CALM	N	481051
09/19/02	08:57	2 28	DEVICE	OVERHD EQUIP MALFUNC	RAIN	N	481051
06/21/02	10:10	0 01	MAINTAIN	DROPPED FOR SAFETY	CALM	N	481051
02/25/02	08:12	3 53	DEVICE	OVERHD EQUIP MALFUNC	CALM	N	481051
07/26/01	09:54	6 26	DEVICE	TREE CONTACT	CALM	N	481051
03/15/01	07:36	0 49	MAINTAIN	DROPPED FOR SAFETY	RAIN	N	481051
03/13/01	13:09	3 51	MAINTAIN	OVERHD EQUIP MALFUNC	WINDS	N	481051
-----TO VIEW OUTAGES OLDER THAN 5 YEARS PRESS PF9 -----							
** NO MOMENTARY OUTAGES **							

OUTAGES LOGGED FOR STORM OF JULY 19, 2006

07/25/06	21:14	16 16	DEVICE	TREE CONTACT	TSTRM	N	481051
07/23/06	23:17	45 57	GROUPED	TREE CONTACT	RAIN	N	481051
07/22/06	00:20	46 10	GROUPED	TREE LIMB BROKEN	TSTRM	N	481051
07/19/06	21:12	50 57	GROUPED	OVERHD EQUIP MALFUNC	MSTRM	N	481051

TOTAL OUTAGE TIME: 159 hrs 20 mins