

BEFORE THE WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

**Dockets UE-170033 and UG-170034
Puget Sound Energy
2017 General Rate Case**

PUBLIC COUNSEL DATA REQUEST NO. 358

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Re: Puget Sound Energy's Response to Public Counsel Data Request No. 015.

Please explain why the budget for the Call Center has decreased since 2013 in light of the fact that actual operating costs exceeded the budget in 2013-2015 and the number of calls handled by customer call center agents has not decreased in the last two years.

Response:

The Customer Call Center ("CCC") budget level for 2013 was developed knowing that a new customer information system ("CIS") would be deployed on April 1, 2013. This budget anticipated that PSE would experience call management challenges as the new system went live and into the anticipated period of stabilization through 2013 and 2014. In the April 29, 2014 Final Order Granting Petition for Mitigation,¹ PSE identified in item 7 that substantial numbers of temporary staff were required to augment the existing 170 full-time CCC staff. The CCC improved efficiencies that were anticipated in 2013 were harder to achieve and were eventually realized through incremental changes in 2014 and 2015. However, in 2015, changes in PSE's credit/collections practices resulted in higher call volumes than anticipated, and this offset some of the efficiency improvements. In the Prefiled Direct Testimony of Greg J. Zeller, Exhibit No. ___ (GJZ-1T), section VI PSE's Outage Management and Customer Information Systems, the technology, process and training improvements from 2013 through 2016 are discussed.

¹ Order 24 - Final Order granting Petition for Mitigation of Consolidated Dockets UE-072300 and UG-072301.