**EXHIBIT NO. \_\_\_(JvdH-1T)  
DOCKETS UE‑151871/UG-151872  
PSE EQUIPMENT LEASING SERVICE   
WITNESS:  JOHN VAN DEN HEUVEL**

**BEFORE THE**

**WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND**  **TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION,**  **Complainant,**  **v.**  **PUGET SOUND ENERGY,**  **Respondent.** |  | **Dockets UE-151871**  **UG-151872** |

**DIRECT TESTIMONY OF**

**JOHN VAN DEN HEUVEL**

**ON BEHALF OF SMACNA-WW**

**June 7, 2016**

**SMACNA-WW**

**DIRECT TESTIMONY OF  
JOHN VAN DEN HEUVEL**

**CONTENTS**

1. **Introduction.........................................................................1**
2. **HVAC Market in Western Washington...........................2**
3. **Ductless Heat Pump Systems.............................................6**

**IV. Need for Leasing Services in PSE Service Territory.......8**

**I. INTRODUCTION**

**Q Please state your name and your position.**

A My name is John van den Heuvel. I am the Vice President of Supplies and Sales at GENSCO, an HVAC Distributor serving the states of Washington, Oregon, Montana, Idaho, and Alaska. I work out of the main distribution center in Fife, Washington, which serves all five states.

**Q What has been your role in the HVAC industry?**

A I have worked at GENSCO for 37 years. During that time, I have been part of several Manufacturer’s Distributor Advisory Councils, including Honeywell, Heat and Glo, Trane and, most recently, Mitsubishi. These councils are designed to understand the changing needs of consumers and to devise and create products and programs that provide solutions for those consumers.

**Q** **Please describe GENSCO, its role in the HVAC industry and its relationship to contractors and others selling HVAC Equipment?**

A GENSCO is a “One Stop Shop” HVAC Distributor, providing almost everything an HVAC contractor would need to complete a Residential or Commercial HVAC installation.

**Q Can you provide some idea of the size and scope of GENSCO’s operation?**

A. Yes. Our Fife Distribution Center includes 436,034 square feet of warehouse space. We receive equipment from manufacturers and then ship it to contractors with whom we do business. We provide approximately 30% of the equipment sold in our trading area.

**Q How to you know that?**

The manufacturers of HVAC heating and cooling products report their shipments of units to the distributors in each market, specified by product family and by “efficiency rating”. The Air Conditioning, Heating & Refrigeration Institute (AHRI) gathers this data to provide accurate, objective “market share” information.

**Q What equipment does GENSCO stock and distribute?**

We stock all types of HVAC Equipment, including gas furnaces, heat pumps, ductless heat pumps, and air conditioners from the following manufacturers: Trane, American Standard, Rheem and Ameristar for gas furnaces, air conditioners, and heat pumps, and Mitsubishi for ductless heat pumps.

GENSCO also distributes installation supplies. These encompass everything an HVAC contractor would use in the installation of HVAC Systems and water heaters, including ductwork, venting, linesets (which carry refrigerant from the outdoor HVAC unit to the indoor unit), pads, condensate pumps, etc.

GENSCO has between a 40% and 55% market share in installation supplies throughout our trading area, though it varies depending on the specific area. This is a subjective measure, based on interviews done with the manufacturers (our suppliers) on their market share and our portion of that.

**II. HVAC MARKET IN WESTERN WASHINGTON**

**Q Are there other brands of HVAC equipment in the market in Western Washington?**

A. Yes, a number of them, but they are distributed by other companies.

**Q Does GENSCO also distribute hot water heaters?**

A. Yes. However, we are a minor player in the traditional hot water (tank) heater market. By “traditional” I mean water heaters that simply heat water and keep it heated at all times, even when there is not a demand for it. However, we are a reasonable-sized player in the efficient tankless water heating business.

**Q Please describe tankless hot water heaters.**

A Tankless heating solutions provide high efficiency and do not heat water without any demand. This segment of the marker is growing dramatically, as consumers understand the waste associated with heating water just “in case” they may have to use for it.

**Q** **Please describe the current market for HVAC products, both electric and gas, in the Puget Sound Energy service territory.**

A. The current market for HVAC products, both electric and gas, in Western Washington, essentially the Puget Sound Energy service territory, is competitive and robust, due to the number of contractors providing an extensive variety of HVAC solutions to those consumers. There is no unmet demand.

**Q Do you know the number of HVAC contractors doing business in the PSE service territory.**

A Yes, I have researched that question. Using zip codes that match the counties in which PSE does business, there are over 1400 contractors. These range in size and are broken down as follows:

* + 633 contractors buying between $500 and $1000 worth of product from GENSCO each month;
  + 517 contractors buying between $1,000 and $5000 of product each month; and
  + 260 contractors buying $5000 or more worth of product each month.

These dollar figures are wholesale prices, not the retail prices the contractors charge to their customers.

**Q** **Let’s explore the evolution of the market for HVAC equipment. What was the market like when you got into this industry?**

A Back in 1979 when I first started in this industry, the choices on HVAC equipment were very limited for consumers. Standard equipment included a standing pilot gas furnace (with an efficiency less than 70%), oil furnaces, and a fledgling heat pump. The latter was quite inefficient, but it offered cooling. We also had the standing pilot tank water heater

There were not any choices of efficiency, comfort, sound, quality, reliability, and longevity of systems. The manufacturer made the equipment, and the customers just chose among the very few options that were available.

**Q How has that evolved to today?**

A In today’s consumer market, in which HVAC is a significant segment (as the consumer’s 3rd largest purchase in their life usually falls under this market segment behind buying a house and buying a new car), the solutions for HVAC have grown dramatically and the pace of new options is mind-boggling. Further, the consumer now is a driving force in what the manufacturers make. This is driven in part by the Internet, which has given the the consumer the unique ability to conduct research and learn of options for different solutions to their heating, cooling, comfort and healthy indoor climate needs.

**Q Give us a picture of the number and types of options available today.**

A The list includes many different types of heating and cooling equipment and hot water heating equipment. There are “zoned system” and those with “traditional” zoning. There is equipment with controls to allow programming, even remote programming. There is a full array of options for indoor climate control, including air cleaning (electronic and media filters) and pathogen eradicators (plasma ionizers and ultraviolet), humidification and dehumidification. I don’t believe that these system enhancements are included in the PSE tariff, and some of these are installed on almost every HVAC installation. It would seem that this cost would be paid separately by the consumer to the installing HVAC contractor, which creates additional complexity compared to any other HVAC transaction today.

The following table summarizes the products we carry and are supplied to us by Trane, American Standard, Rheem, Ameristar and Mitsubishi. This list includes just the main equipment, not accessories. The term “SKU” stands for “stock keeping unit” which simply means individual types of equipment.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Type of Equipment** | **Number of Product Families** | **Number of SKUs (individual products)** |
| Gas furnaces | 30 | 389 |
| Air conditioners | 23 | 126 |
| Heat pumps | 23 | 121 |
| Air handlers | 20 | 113 |
| Ductless heat pumps | 30 | 233 |

In other words, we offer over 980 individual products that are available to consumers to day. And this product offering continues to expand. Please understand, that this is a synopsis of the brands that we offer, which, as I indicated above, covers 30% of the Unitary HVAC residential market. This means that there are at least **three times as many options available** when we include the other brands that consumers have access to today.

Filed with my testimony are Exhibits Nos.\_\_\_ - \_\_\_ (JvdH-2 through 6) are current product lists for Rheem, American Standard, Ameristar, Mitsubishi, and Trane, respectively.

**III. DUCTLESS HEAT PUMP SYSTEMS**

**Q Please describe the evolution of ductless heat pump systems in the market.**

A In 2007 in our trading area ductless heat pumps represented 5% of all HVAC installed systems. In 2015, this market segment was 25% of all HVAC installed systems. And that market segment continues to grow.

**Q Do you have an opinion as to why we are seeing such large growth in the ductless heat pump market in Western Washington?**

A We can debate about why this is the case, and, no doubt, some of the electric utility rebates have helped. However, here are some other facts:

* The Northwest Energy Efficiency Alliance (NEEA) is an alliance representing 140+ Northwest utilities to accelerate the innovation and adoption of energy efficient products in the Pacific Northwest
* NEEA reports that in 2015, 9,539 ductless systems were rebated in our five-state trading area. However, for that year, AHRI reports that 42,402 ductless units went into that trading area.
* This means that one unit in four was soldwith the aid of a rebate and **three out of four (75%) were sold by HVAC contractors based strictly on the merits of the product.**
* These ductless systems offer zoned solutions, which means that various parts of the house can be conditioned (heated or cooled) as the consumer decides without the necessity to heat or cool the entire dwelling.
* The systems are extremely efficient and are shown in AHRI in the highest efficiency category under heat pumps.
* In 2007, there were basically three main suppliers of this product to the US market: Mitsubishi, Daikin, Fujitsu
* Today, there are approximately 30 suppliers of these products in the US market

Consumers want choices, and their demands for solutions have driven manufacturers to make products to solve the consumer’s needs. The ductless example above is how a robust market is created where a variety of contractors and a variety of manufacturers (brands) set out to give the consumer what they need and what they deserve.

**Q How does this history of the expansion of the ductless heat pump market relate to PSE’s proposed lease tariff?**

A In my opinion the PSE proposal would limit the choices that the current unregulated market provides. The tariff offers very limited choices for the consumer in both brands and solutions. Some of the most innovative products, such as the ductless heat pump with zoned solutions, is not on the limited menu of options that PSE proposes to offer. It seems to me that this unduly limits the choices for consumers, no matter if they are educated, internet savvy, or not! Consumers in America expect and deserve choices, and this proposal undermines that expectation. In addition, and perhaps more distressing to a consumer who uses both electric and natural gas provided by PSE, is the fact that they may not be offered the best solution for them, but instead a convenient solution for the utility. This should not be allowed to happen.

**IV. NEED FOR LEASING SERVICES IN PSE SERVICE TERRITORY**

**Q.** **Please describe your understanding about the need for leased HVAC or hot water heater equipment in the PSE service territory.**

A I do not believe that there is a need for a leasing service. Consumers are savvy when it comes to buying something that’s going to last for 10 to 15 years, their research of products, benefits and solutions they will be receiving, and also on financing options.

Financing is a natural part of consumer purchases today, and consumers, if they need to finance, will go to a credit union or use a financing option provided by the contractor which is through a third party company. The manufacturers of HVAC gear (Trane, AMS, Rheem, Lennox, Carrier, Mitsubishi, etc.) offer programs that “buy down” the interest rate, making it easier for consumers to buy their product.

Also, it is becoming more prevalent that the consumer will access the equity of their home to make improvements to their home via a second mortgage and that is at a very reasonable interest rate, where their utility savings with their new HVAC system, will help them make that payment.

**Q Does this conclude your testimony?**

A Yes.