

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA



FILED

01/14/19
04:59 PM

Order Instituting Investigation and Order to Show Cause on the Commission's Own Motion into the Operations and Practices of Pacific Gas and Electric Company with Respect to Locate and Mark Practices and Related Matters.

Investigation 18-12-007

COMMENTS OF THE OFFICE OF THE SAFETY ADVOCATE

I. INTRODUCTION

Pursuant to the December 14, 2018 Order Instituting Investigation (OII), the Office of the Safety Advocate (OSA) hereby files these Comments. This OII provides notice that the Commission will determine whether Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E) has violated legal requirements for the utility to timely locate and mark natural gas pipelines to ensure that third party construction excavation does not damage pipes and other components and thus diminish safety. This OII also directs PG&E to show cause as to why the Commission should not find violations in this matter, and why the Commission should not impose penalties, and/or any other forms of relief, if any violations are found. PG&E is directed in this order to provide a report on these matters, provide answers to certain questions, and to provide other specified information to the Commission.

OSA, as a party to this proceeding, advocates to assist the Commission to hold public utilities accountable for their safe operation. The Governor and legislature approved legislation in late 2016 that created the OSA. The legislation mandates that OSA, among other things, advocates for improvements to public utility safety management systems, safety culture, and aging infrastructure.

II. ISSUES AND SCOPE

OSA agrees that the Scoping Issues in the OII should remain within the Scope of the OII. Commission should also include within the Scope additional issues that OSA identifies below. OSA reserves the right to further revise the Scope, if necessary, during the Prehearing Conference (PHC).

The Commission should expand the scope of this proceeding to include corrective actions for the utility for any identified violations or program deficiencies that the Commission may determine in the course of this proceeding. The scope of these corrective actions should explicitly be allowed to be broad, to include, but not limited to, programmatic, structural, and organizational improvements.

Additionally, the scope of this proceeding should include consideration for opportunities to expand Commission oversight, and other activities, in order to prevent identified violations or program deficiencies, if determined by the Commission, from recurring in the future. And, the scope of this proceeding should include recommendations for corrective actions to be evaluated in a separate proceeding that may then be more broadly applied across multiple utilities.

III. SCHEDULE AND HEARING

OSA agrees that hearings are necessary. OSA requests that the Commission include Testimony and Briefs in the schedule. OSA looks forward to addressing any further scheduling issue at the PHC.

IV. CONCLUSION

OSA looks forward to participating in this proceeding. OSA will address any preliminary issues not included in these Comments at the PHC.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ RASHID RASHID

Rashid Rashid
Attorney

January 14, 2019

The Office of the Safety Advocate
California Public Utilities Commission
320 W. 4th Street, Suite 500
Los Angeles, CA 90013
Telephone: (415) 703-2705
E-mail: rashid.rashid@cpuc.ca.gov