# BEFORE THE TENNESSEE REGULATORY AUTHORITY NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

July 31, 2014

N RE:	)
NAVITAS TN NG, LLC.	) ) Docket No. 14-00021
ACTUAL COST ADJUSTMENT (ACA) AUDIT	)

Pursuant to Tenn. Code Ann. §§ 65-4-104, 65-4-111 and 65-3-108, the Utilities Division of the Tennessee Regulatory Authority gives notice of its filing of the Navitas TN NG, LLC.'s ACA Audit Report in this docket and would respectfully state as follows:

REGULATORY AUTHORITY

- 1. The present docket was opened by the Authority to hear matters arising out of the audit of Navitas TN NG, LLC.'s (hereafter the "Company") ACA filing covering the period January 1, 2013 to December 31, 2013.
- 2. The Company's ACA filing was received on March 7, 2014, and the Audit Staff (hereafter the "Staff") completed its audit of same on July 29, 2014.
- 3. On July 30, 2014, the Utilities Division submitted its preliminary ACA audit findings to the Company via e-mail. The Company responded on July 30, 2014 via e-mail and this response has been incorporated into the final report.

4. The Utilities Division hereby files its Report attached as Exhibit A with the Tennessee Regulatory Authority for deposit as a public record and approval of the findings and the recommendations contained therein.

Respectfully Submitted:

Tiffany Underwood Utilities Consultant

Utilities Division of the

Tennessee Regulatory Authority

#### **CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

I hereby certify that on this 31<sup>st</sup> day of July 2014, a true and exact copy of the foregoing has been either hand-delivered or delivered via U.S. Mail, postage pre-paid, to the following persons:

Herbert H. Hilliard Chairman Tennessee Regulatory Authority 502 Deadrick Street 4<sup>th</sup> Floor Nashville, TN 37242

Thomas Hartline, President Navitas Utilities Corp. 18218 East McDurmott, Suite I Irvine, CA 92614

Wayne Irvin
Office of the Attorney General
Consumer Advocate and Protection Division
P. O. Box 20207
Nashville, TN 37202

Vance Broemel
Office of the Attorney General
Consumer Advocate and Protection Division
P. O. Box 20207
Nashville, TN 37202

Tiffany Underwood

## **EXHIBIT A**

#### COMPLIANCE AUDIT REPORT

OF

## NAVITAS TN NG, LLC.

## ACTUAL COST ADJUSTMENT

**Docket # 14-00021** 

PREPARED BY

## TENNESSEE REGULATORY AUTHORITY

**UTILITIES DIVISION** 

July 2014

## **COMPLIANCE AUDIT**

## NAVITAS TN NG, LLC.

## ACTUAL COST ADJUSTMENT

## Docket # 14-00021

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>P</u>	PAGE NO.
I.	INTRODUCTION	1
II.	AUDIT OPINION	1
III.	SUMMARY OF COMPANY FILING	1
IV.	BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON COMPANY	2
V.	JURISDICTION AND POWER OF THE TENNESSEE REGULATOR AUTHORITY	Y 3
VI.	DESCRIPTION OF PURCHASED GAS ADJUSTMENT (PGA) RULI	E 4
VII.	SCOPE OF AUDIT	5
VIII.	ACA FINDINGS	6
IX.	CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	11
APPE	NDIX A (PGA FORMULA)	13
	ACHMENT 1 CULATION OF ACA FACTOR FOR JELLICO CUSTOMERS)	16
	ACHMENT 2 (CALCULATION OF ACA FACTOR FOR DSTOWN/FENTRESS CUSTOMERS)	17

#### I. <u>INTRODUCTION</u>

The subject of this audit is Navitas TN NG, LLC.'s ("Navitas" or "Company") compliance with the Actual Cost Adjustment ("ACA") and Refund Adjustment ("RA") of the Purchased Gas Adjustment Rule ("PGA Rule") of the Tennessee Regulatory Authority ("TRA" or "Authority"). The objective of the audit was to determine whether the purchased gas adjustments, which are encompassed by the ACA, and approved by the TRA for the twelve (12) months ended December 31, 2013, were calculated correctly and were supported by appropriate source documentation.

#### II. AUDIT OPINION

The Audit Staff's ("Staff") audit resulted in **four (4) findings**.<sup>2</sup> The net amount of these findings is \$917.17 in under-recovered gas costs. Except for the findings mentioned above, Staff concludes that the Purchased Gas Adjustment mechanism as calculated in the Actual Cost Adjustment appears to be working properly and in accordance with the TRA rules for Navitas TN NG, LLC.

#### III. SUMMARY OF COMPANY FILING

The Company submitted its ACA filings on March 7, 2014, covering the period January 1, 2013 to December 31, 2013. There were separate filings for the Jellico Division and the Byrdstown/Fentress Division. The Jellico Division filing reflected a net balance in its ACA account at December 31, 2013, of positive \$4,128.43, which represents an under-collection of gas costs from customers. The Brydstown/Fentress Division filing reflected a net balance in its ACA account at December 31, 2013, of positive \$24,660.17, which represents an under-collection of gas costs from its customers. The tables below provide a summary of each ACA account as submitted by the Company.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> See TRA Rule 1220-4-7. The ACA is more fully described in Section VI.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Refer to Section VIII for a description of the findings.

The positive ending balances of Navitas's Jellico and Byrdstown/Fentress ACA accounts indicate that the Company has under-collected these amounts from its customers as of December 31, 2013. The ACA factors are derived for each division by dividing these amounts by the projected sales volumes for the next twelve (12) months in an attempt to surcharge these amounts over a twelve month period. See Attachment 1 and Attachment 2. However, there are timing differences between the close of the audit period and the effective date of a new factor. There is always regulatory lag inherent in the true-up process. Larger companies are capable of calculating ACA factors and implementing them immediately, prior to audit. However, the smaller companies are encouraged to await the results of the Staff's audit before implementing an ACA factor.

#### SUMMARY OF THE ACA ACCOUNTS4

T :		
Line		Company
No.		(as filed)
1	Beginning Balance at 1/1/13	(\$92,386.96)
2	Activity During Current Period:	
3	Plus Purchased Gas Costs	213,508.21
4	Minus Gas Costs Recovered	115,536.90
5	Plus Interest	(1,455.92)
6	Ending Balance Including Interest at 12/31/13	\$4,128.43
•	wn/Fentress Division	
yrdstov Line No.	wn/Fentress Division	Company (as filed)
Line	wn/Fentress Division  Beginning Balance at 1/1/13	(as filed)
Line No.		_
Line No.	Beginning Balance at 1/1/13	(as filed)
Line No.	Beginning Balance at 1/1/13  Activity During Current Period:	(as filed) (\$18,925.78) 70,890.52
Line No.	Beginning Balance at 1/1/13  Activity During Current Period:  Plus Purchased Gas Costs	(as filed) (\$18,925.78)

## IV. BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON COMPANY

Navitas TN NG, LLC (local distribution company), with its local office located at 613 Sunset Trail, Jellico, Tennessee, is a wholly owned subsidiary of Navitas Assets, LLC (parent company), which has its headquarters at 3186-D Airway Ave., Costa Mesa, California. On December 20, 2010, Navitas was awarded its Certificate of Public Convenience and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> A negative number represents an over-recovery (or over-collection) of gas costs; a positive number represents an under-recovery (or under-collection) of gas costs.

Necessity (CCN) when the Authority voted unanimously to approve the transfer of control and authority from Gasco Distribution Systems ("Gasco") to Navitas.<sup>5</sup>

Navitas is a natural gas distributor, which provides service to approximately 563 customers in the City of Jellico (Campbell County), City of Byrdstown (Pickett County) and a few customers in Fentress County, all of which are located in northeast Tennessee. In addition to Tennessee, the parent company also operates in Oklahoma, Kentucky and Ohio. Navitas purchases the natural gas used to serve these areas from Delgasco, Inc, Petrol Energy, LLC, and B&W Pipeline. Navitas uses B&W Pipeline and Spectra Energy, Inc. to transport the gas.

## V. <u>JURISDICTION AND POWER OF THE TENNESSEE REGULATORY</u> <u>AUTHORITY</u>

Tennessee Code Annotated (T.C.A.) §65-4-104 gave jurisdiction and control over public utilities to the Tennessee Public Service Commission. By virtue of Chapter 305 of the Public Acts of 1995, jurisdiction and control over public utilities was transferred from the Tennessee Public Service Commission to the Tennessee Regulatory Authority (the "TRA" or "Authority") on July 01, 1996. T.C.A. §65-4-104 states that:

The Authority shall have general supervision and regulation of, jurisdiction, and control over, all public utilities...

T.C.A. states further in §65-4-111 that the public utilities are to maintain a Uniform System of Accounts:

The Authority shall have the power after hearing, upon notice, by order in writing to require every public utility... to keep its books, records, and accounts so as to afford an intelligent understanding of the conduct of its business, and to that end to require every public utility of the same class to adopt a uniform system of accounting. Such system shall conform, where applicable to any system adopted or approved by the Interstate Commerce Commission of the United States. And to furnish annually, or at other times as the Authority may require, a detailed report of finances and operations as shown by said system of accounts.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> In Re: Joint Petition of Navitas TN NG LLC and Gasco Distribution Systems, Inc. for Approval of Transfer of Control and Authority of Gasco Distribution Systems, Inc., Docket No. 10-00220, TRA Order (December 30, 2010).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Quarterly Report period ending December 31, 2013.

The TRA responded to T.C.A. §65-4-111 by establishing its own rule 1220-4-1-.11 regarding the uniform system of accounts which public utilities should maintain. The TRA's rule provides:

The following uniform system of accounting will be followed by utilities and other companies making periodic reports to the Authority:

1. For Classes A and B gas companies - Uniform System of Accounts as adopted by the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners as revised June 30, 1972, and any amendments or revisions pertaining thereto.

The TRA received its authority to examine the books and records of public utilities from T.C.A. §65-4-105 which states that the TRA would possess all the other powers conferred on the TRA. T.C.A. §65-3-108 gives the TRA:

full power to examine the books and papers of the said companies, and to examine, under oath, the officers, agents, and employees of said companies...to procure the necessary information to intelligently and justly discharge their duties and carry out the provisions of this chapter and chapter 5 of this title.

The Utilities Division of the TRA is responsible for auditing those companies under the Authority's jurisdiction to ensure that each company is abiding by Tennessee statutes as well as the Rules and Regulations of the Authority. Tiffany Underwood of the Utilities Division conducted this audit.

#### VI. DESCRIPTION OF PURCHASED GAS ADJUSTMENT (PGA) RULE

#### **Actual Cost Adjustment Audits:**

The PGA Rule can be found in Chapter 1220-4-7 of the Rules of the Tennessee Regulatory Authority. The PGA Rule permits the Company to recover, in a timely fashion, the total cost of gas purchased for delivery to its customers and to assure that the Company does not overcollect or under-collect gas costs from its customers.

The PGA consists of three major components:

- 1) The Actual Cost Adjustment (ACA)
- 2) The Gas Charge Adjustment (GCA)
- 3) The Refund Adjustment (RA)

The ACA is the difference between the revenues billed to customers by means of the GCA and the cost of gas invoiced to the Company by suppliers plus margin loss (if allowed by order of the TRA in another docket) as reflected in the Deferred Gas Cost account. The ACA then "trues-up" the difference between the actual gas costs and the gas costs recovered from the customer through a surcharge or a refund. The RA refunds the "true-up" along with other supplier refunds. For a more complete definition of the GCA and RA, please see the PGA Formula in Appendix A.

Section 1220-4-7-.03(2) of the PGA Rule requires:

Each year, the Company shall file with the [Authority] an annual report reflecting the transactions in the Deferred Gas Cost Account. Unless the [Authority] provides written notification to the Company within one hundred eighty (180) days from the date of filing the report, the Deferred Gas Cost Adjustment Account shall be deemed in compliance with the provisions of these Rules. This 180-day notification period may be extended by mutual consent of the Company and the [Authority] Staff or by order of the [Authority].

#### VII. SCOPE OF AUDIT

To accomplish the audit objective, the Staff conducted in-house audit work, during which the Company's calculations of gas costs incurred and gas costs recovered were examined. The Staff also audited a sample of customer bills to determine if the proper PGA rates and ACA rates were being applied in the Company's calculation of the customers' bills. These bills were selected to be representative of the residential, commercial and industrial customers in each of the Company's service areas. The sample was selected from all twelve months of the audit period. Staf found an error on bills for Jellico customers. A description of the error can be found in Section VIII (Finding 3).

#### VIII. ACA FINDINGS

Staff's audit findings totaled a **net under-recovery of \$917.17**. This is the result of four (4) findings and represents an additional under-recovered amount, which when added to the Company's calculated balance, results in a <u>net</u> ending balance in the ACA account of a **positive \$29,705.77 in under-recovered gas costs.**<sup>7</sup> A summary of the ACA account as filed by the Company and as adjusted by the Staff is shown below, followed by a description of the findings.

#### SUMMARY OF THE ACA ACCOUNT\*\*:

Line		Navitas Combined Filing	Staff Audit Results	Difference (Findings)
1	Beginning Balance at 1/1/2013	\$ (111,312.74)	\$ (104,167.07)	\$ 7,145.67
2	Plus Purchased Gas Costs	284,398.73	278,158.73	(6,240.00)
3	Minus Gas Costs Recovered	142,723.43	142,764.14	40.71
4	Plus Interest	(1,573.96)	(1,521.75)	52.21
5	Ending Balance at 12/31/2013	\$ 28,788.60	\$ 29,705.77	\$ 917.17

<sup>\*\*</sup>A number in ( ) is a negative or credit balance which represents an over-collection of gas costs.

#### **SUMMARY OF FINDINGS:**

FINDING #1	Jellico – Beginning Balance	\$6,711.06	Under-Recovery
FINDING #1	Byrdstown/Fentress - Beginning Balance	434.61	Under-Recovery
FINDING #2	Byrdstown/Fentress - Gas Cost Recovered	40.71	Under-Recovery
FINDING #3	Jellico – Franchise Fee	(6,240.00)	Over-Recovery
FINDING #4	Jellico - Interest	39.18	Under-Recovery
FINDING #4	Byrdstown/Fentress - Interest	13.03	Under-Recovery
	Net Result	<u>\$917.17</u>	<b>Under-Recovery</b>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> The ending balance is made up of 4,638.67 for the Jellico Division and \$25,067.10 for the Byrdstown/Fentress Division.

#### **FINDING #1:**

#### Exception

The Company's ACA filing did not reflect the prior year Staff Audited ACA Ending Balance of negative \$85,675.90 for Jellico and negative \$18,491.17 for Byrdstown/Fentress as its beginning balance for this year.

#### **Discussion**

Audit Staff adjusted the Company's beginning balance for Jellico from negative \$92,386.96 to negative \$85,675.90 and for Byrdstown/Fentress from negative \$18,925.78 to negative \$18,491.17. This error resulted in a \$6,711.06 under-recovery in the Jellico ACA Account and \$434.61 under-recovery in the Byrdstown/Fentress ACA Account.

## **Company Response**

#### **FINDING #2:**

#### **Exception**

The Company understated its gas cost recoveries.

#### Discussion

The PGA (or gas cost) recoveries are calculated by multiplying the sales volumes by the applicable PGA and ACA rates. In calculating its PGA recoveries, the Company used incorrect sales volumes for January 2013 for its Byrdstown Division. The result of this error is an increase of \$40.71 in PGA recoveries for the Byrdstown/Fentress Division.

## Company Response

#### FINDING #3:

#### Exception

The Company over-collected franchise fees from its Jellico customers.

#### Discussion

The Authority approved the renewal of Navitas' franchise agreement with the City of Jellico in Docket No. 12-00011. According to the franchise agreement, the Company can bill its customers a 2.5% franchise fee based on gas usage and an additional \$2.00 per month flat franchise fee to reimburse the City's legal expense relating to the franchise agreement.

In the last ACA Audit (Docket No. 13-00038), Audit Staff questioned these franchise fees and discovered that the company had over-charged the \$2 flat franchise fee to the customers. Audit Staff requested the Company to provide documentation in its next ACA audit to support the amount assessed and collected through the most current billing date of May 2013. In Docket No. 13-00038, the Audit Report also stated that the amount of the over-collection be a finding in Navitas' current ACA filing covering January – December 2013.

During the current ACA audit, Audit Staff reviewed supporting documentation of the \$2 franchise fee to verify that the correct franchise fee amount was collected. The Company provided documentation showing that \$5,000 was reimbursed to the City of Jellico and that \$11,240 was assessed to customers associated with the \$2.00 franchise fee. The Company over-recovered \$6,240, which is the difference between the franchise fee the Company assessed (\$11,240) and the City of Jellico's reimbursable expense according to the franchise agreement (\$5,000). This error resulted in a \$6,240.00 over-recovery in the Jellico ACA Account.

#### **Company Response**

#### **FINDING #4:**

#### **Exception**

The Company overstated the amount of interest due to customers in its ACA filing.

#### **Discussion**

Staff recalculated interest based upon Audit Findings #1 to #3. This resulted in a decrease of reported interest due to customers of Jellico of \$39.18 and \$13.03 for Byrdstown/Fentress. The total difference of \$52.22 represents an under recovery of gas costs.

## **Company Response**

#### IX. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff reviewed the gas costs and recoveries of Navitas TN NG, LLC. for the twelve (12) month period ended December 31, 2013. Based on the filing as shown in Section VIII, the **net balance** in the refund due customers account (ACA Account) as of December 31, 2013 should be a **positive \$4,638.67** for the Jellico Division and a **positive \$25,067.10** for the **Byrdstown/Fentress Division.** This means that as of December 31, 2013 the Company had under-collected these amounts from its Jellico and Byrdstown/Fentress customers.

In order to recover the Jellico and the Byrdstown/Fentress balances, the correct ACA adjustment factor to be applied to customer bills in the Jellico Division is a positive \$0.0093 per CCF (see Attachment 1), and the correct ACA adjustment factor to be applied to customer bills in the Byrdstown/Fentress Division is a positive \$0.2517 per CCF (see Attachment 2).

Staff recommends that these factors be implemented beginning with the Company's September 2014 billing and should stay in effect until new factors are calculated and approved in Navitas' next ACA filing covering the period January 1, 2014 through December 31, 2014.

It is important for Navitas to closely monitor its ACA balance on a monthly basis. As actual data is gathered at the end of each month, the ACA schedule can be updated to the latest balance. This balance, along with gas cost increases and decreases in the market, should be a factor in the Company's decision whether a tariff filing to adjust the PGA adjustment factor is needed. If the Company filed more frequent PGA adjustments customers would see smaller increases or decreases throughout the year, instead of a drastic change in rates at the end of the audit. Staff, therefore, recommends that the Company monitor its ACA balance more closely and report balance quarterly to determine if a PGA filing is necessary.<sup>8</sup>

In the cover letter of the Company's audit filing on March 7, 2014, Navitas requested that it be allowed to combine the Jellico and Byrdstown ACA balances and move forward with one ACA adjustment for both divisions in the future. Navitas reasons that the Byrdstown's ACA balance has switched from a refund to customers to a surcharge due from customers and that this change would be significant to Byrdstown customers' bills. If the ACA for both divisions is combined, however, the rate change for Byrdstown customers' bills would be small because they would be subsidized by the Jellico Division customers.

After reviewing the Company's request, Staff opines that the Company's request is not reasonable and fair to Jellico customers. The Jellico and Byrdstown/Fentress Divisions are run like two separate companies, with different vendors, cost and customer sales

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> TRA Rule 1220-04-07 (PGA Rule) does not require the Company to quarterly file its ACA balance nor does it prevent the Authority from ordering it. These reports could ensure that the gas costs are more evenly spread to customers over the year.

volumes. It is not fair to the Jellico division customer to pay for gas costs that does not serve their area. Therefore, Staff recommends that the Company continue to file ACA adjustments separately and maintain separate ACA Accounts for each division.

#### APPENDIX A

#### **PGA FORMULA**

The computation of the GCA can be broken down into the following formulas:

Non-Firm GCA = 
$$\begin{array}{c} P + T + SR CACA \\ \hline ST \end{array}$$

where

GCA = The Gas Charge Adjustment in dollars per Ccf/Therm, rounded to no more than five decimal places.

D = The sum of all fixed Gas Costs.

DACA = The demand portion of the ACA.

P = The sum of all commodity/gas charges.

T = The sum of all transportation charges.

SR = The sum of all FERC approved surcharges.

CACA = The commodity portion of the ACA.

DB = The per unit rate of demand costs or other fixed charges included in base rates in the most recently completed general rate case (which may be zero if the Company so elects and the Commission so approves).

CB = The per unit rate of variable gas costs included in base rates in the most recently completed general rate case (which may be zero if the Company so elects and the Commission so approves).

SF = Firm Sales.

ST = Total Sales.

The computation of the RA can be computed using the following formulas:

Firm RA = 
$$\frac{DR1 - DR2}{SFR} + \frac{CR1 - CR2 + CR3 + i}{STR}$$

$$\frac{CR1 - CR2 + CR3 + i}{STR}$$

Non-Firm RA = STR

where

RA =	The Refund Adjustment in dollars per Ccf/Therm, rounded to no more than five decimal places.
DR1 =	Demand refund not included in a currently effective Refund Adjustment, and received from suppliers by check, wire transfer, or credit memo.
DR2 =	A demand surcharge from a supplier not includable in the GCA, and not included in a currently effective Refund Adjustment.
CR1 =	Commodity refund not included in a currently effective Refund Adjustment, and received from suppliers by check, wire transfer, or credit memo.
CP2 -	A commodity surcharge from a supplier not

- i = Interest on the "Refund Due Customers" account, using the average monthly balances based on the beginning and ending monthly balances. The interest rates for each calendar quarter used to compute such interest shall be the arithmetic mean (to the nearest one-hundredth of one percent) of the prime rate value published in the "Federal Reserve Bulletin" or in the Federal Reserve's "Selected Interest Rates" for the 4th, 3rd, and 2nd months preceding the 1st month of the calendar quarter.
- SFR = Firm sales as defined in the GCA computation, less sales under a transportation or negotiated rate schedule.
- STR = Total sales as defined in the GCA computation, less sales under a transportation or negotiated rate schedule.

#### Navitas TN NG, LLC Calculation of the ACA Factor (for Jellico customers)

Line No.	Factor to be applied to residential, commercial and industrial customers:		
1	Beginning Balance at 1/1/13	\$ (92,386.96)	
2	Plus Purchased Gas Costs	213,508.21	
3	Minus Gas Costs Recovered	115,536.90	
4	Plus Interest	(1,455.92)	
5	Ending Balance Including Interest at 12/31/13	\$ 4,128.43	
6	Sales Volumes **	442,434	CCF
7	ACA Factor - surcharge/(refund) (Line 5 divided by Line 6)	\$ 0.0093	Per CCF

<sup>\*\*</sup> Historical sales volumes for 12 months ending 12/31/13.

#### Navitas TN NG, LLC Calculation of the ACA Factor (for Byrdstown/Fentress customers)

Line No.	Factor to be applied to residential, commercial and industrial customers:	
1	Beginning Balance at 1/1/13	\$ (18,491.17)
2	Purchased Gas Costs	70,890.52
3	Gas Costs Recovered	27,227.24
4	Plus Interest	(105.01)
5	Ending Balance Including Interest at 12/31/13	 25,067.10
6	Sales Volumes **	99,591 CCF
7	ACA Factor - surcharge/(refund) (Line 5 divided by Line 6)	\$ 0.2517 Per CCF

<sup>\*\*</sup> Historical sales volumes for 12 months ending 12/31/13.