



## **Update from your Chair, Clint Schwalbe**

### **Expanding services is the way to remain strong and viable.**

We know several years ago we were losing some services to our contracted DSO, who was competing against us. One of the key factors was potential members were being offered financial incentives to mitigate their startup costs. Under these circumstances it was impossible for TREA to compete and it was a very awkward situation to lose potential members to the company that was contracted to operate our distribution system.

Under the Agreement for Co-operation and Joint Venture, we are able to utilize the principles of EQUUS' Investment in Service Program which allows us to offer competitive financial mitigations for prospective members which positions your Tomahawk REA for future growth.

### **System Reliability is important to all members and to position the TREA for prospective services.**

The electric utility industry has developed several measures of reliability including the Average Service Availability Index (ASAI); sometimes called the service reliability index. This measurement takes into account the ratio of the total number of customer hours that service was available during a given time period to the total customer hours demanded. The ASAI goal is "four-nines" or 99.99% reliability.

Keep in mind the great percentage of utility services are located in urban areas where services are very centralized. Therefore when measurements for urban/rural or exclusive rural service (like TREA) approach the ideal number it says a lot for that distribution system because rural distribution is far less centralized. We are pleased to report the period from January 1 to December 31, 2016, the TREA service area measured 99.96% - a clear indication that system improvements implemented since the Agreement are having a positive effect.

### **Member Service from EQUUS goes above and beyond.**

Recently, during a distressful time for one of our members, we were gratified to confirm that our faith in a fellow REA as our DSO was not unfounded. Circumstances brought PLT Sean Ryan out to deal with the TREA system as a result of a fire on a member's property.

When that obligation was completed, PLT Ryan did not leave to go home on the statutory holiday. He remained to assist our member who had just experienced a distressful event and called a colleague, who also left his family on the statutory holiday, to assist in the service reconnect for the member. Neither employee was obligated to do that but they represent the member service commitment that formed the basis of our decision to enter into the Agreement of Co-operation and Joint Venture with EQUUS.

**But despite these successes and as your Chair, I want you to know I am very concerned about the actions of a small group of disgruntled, pro-sale members who are intent on dismantling Tomahawk REA. Their efforts have cost the REA thousands of dollars and they continue to try to undermine the REA's credibility and viability. If you believe in your REA and are one of the 87% majority of members who are happy with your electricity services, then you need to step up.**

**You need to attend the next AGM and you need to vote for Directors who are committed to the long term future of your REA. If you don't your REA may be returned to the control of our competitor, Fortis or worse, Tomahawk REA will be sold. If you want to learn how you can support Tomahawk REA's continued sustainability – call Clint (780-542-5799) or Wayne (780-727-4187) and plan to attend the AGM and vote for Directors who believe in your REA.**

## Compliance Plan Approval

Under the Electric Utilities Act / Code of Conduct Regulation, utility companies are required to submit to, and receive approval from, the Alberta Utilities Commission (AUC) for their respective compliance plans. Compliance plans outline parameters for the conduct and business practices of the utility, including the relationship among distributors, regulated rate suppliers and affiliated providers designed support the fair, efficient and openly competitive operation of the electricity market. The Plan also contains the process to qualify the respective utility is operating in compliance.

Numerous interventions by the Society (publicly citing Fortis as a source) resulted in legal fees close to \$30,000. TREA had no choice but to engage legal representation as TREA must comply and file a plan for approval in order to operate your distribution system. Despite the frivolous and costly interventions, the AUC approved the TREA Plan. (Of note, however, is that other small REAs filed similar plans with no additional cost.) Tomahawk REA's Compliance Plan is listed on: [www.tomahawkrea.com](http://www.tomahawkrea.com), but the key message for members is as follows.

*All members are free to purchase electricity services through Tomahawk REA's regulated rate tariff or from a retailer of their choice. The delivery of electricity is not affected by your choice. If you change who you purchase electricity services from, you will continue receiving electricity from the Tomahawk REA.*

*For a current list of retailers you may choose from, visit <http://www.ucahelps.alberta.ca> or call 310-4822 (toll free in Alberta).*

## Secondary Line Responsibility

Recently a member experienced a fire onsite and did not realize that the effort of our DSO Powerline Technician to assist in re-establishing the member's secondary line power was not the responsibility of the TREA. While we appreciate his commitment, we also want to remind our membership that powerlines on your personal property (that is secondary lines) are the responsibility of the individual member and not part of the TREA distribution system.

Additionally we want to ensure members that the TREA system is equipped with fail-safes (e.g., OCR switches, etc.) which are designed to de-energize sections of the lines to restrict disruptions and lessen impacts to other members during these types of natural or man-made events.

For power troubles or service requests,  
please contact EQUUS.

Toll-free: 1.888.627.4011  
4804 - 41 Street (R.R. 21), Box 1178  
Onoway, Alberta T0E 1V0  
[www.equs.ca](http://www.equs.ca)



**Tomahawk**  
Rural Electrification Association

Tomahawk REA inquiries:

Phone: 1.780.514.8732

Fax: 1.780.339.2212

Email: [tomahawk.rea@gmail.com](mailto:tomahawk.rea@gmail.com)

Box 28, Tomahawk, Alberta T0E 2H0

[www.tomahawkrea.com](http://www.tomahawkrea.com)

*All members are free to purchase electricity services through Tomahawk REA's regulated rate tariff or from a retailer of their choice. The delivery of electricity is not affected by your choice. If you change who you purchase electricity services from, you will continue receiving electricity from the Tomahawk REA. For a current list of retailers you may choose from, visit [www.ucahelps.alberta.ca](http://www.ucahelps.alberta.ca) or call 310-4822 (toll-free in Alberta).*