

1 Q. **Reference: Program 21 - Purchase Mobile Devices (2023), Page i, Lines 8-9**

2 Hydro states that it replaces mobile devices every three years and does not consider life cycle
3 extension as a viable alternative. Is this replacement policy consistent with the replacement
4 policies of other electric utilities in Canada? If yes, please provide details. If not, please provide
5 the rationale for not following the practice of other electric utilities in Canada.

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8 A. Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro (“Hydro”) has not conferred with other Canadian utilities on
9 how they manage mobile devices.

10 In order to provide critical communications to personnel, utilities rely on a combination of
11 communication devices such as land-mobile radio systems, satellite phone, in-vehicle computer
12 systems, and mobile phones. Practices depend on a variety of factors including geographic
13 coverage of cellular networks, options of cellular providers, and information management and
14 cybersecurity requirements.

15 There are three key factors that affect mobile device reliability:

- 16 • Depleted battery life over time can lead to lack of response during emergency
17 situations;
- 18 • Decreased processing speed and increased risks for lost data; and
- 19 • Inability to maintain application functionality as versions advance.

20 Mobile device technology advances at a rapid rate. As more operating system upgrades are
21 released by the manufacturer, older devices typically do not respond well to new upgrades,
22 which can cause more strain on the overall performance of the device and the battery.

23 It is Hydro’s experience that most users see degraded performance and battery issues after two
24 and a half years. Therefore, a three-year replacement schedule balances user experience and

- 1 cost. Increasing the life cycle beyond three years will increase the risk of failure, which will then
- 2 increase cost for unplanned replacements and repairs.