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Witness: Brendan J. O'Brien, Garrett J. Murray and Erin M. Travassos
Request from: Public Utilities Regulatory Authority

Question:

(VACANT POSITIONS) Application, WP C-3.5; Interrog. Resp. OCC-322, and Interrog. Resp. OCC-326, Att. 1. Regarding the vacancy factor displayed on WP C-3.5 and the positions vacant on December 31, 2025:

a. State the purpose of the 2%, and 6% vacancy percentages shown on Schedule WP C-3.5 when no deduction is taken. State whether a vacancy factor was applied to the 41 incremental positions.
b. Reconcile the statement in the response to OCC-326 that 14 EESCO positions and one CL&P position remain unfilled to OCC-326, Attachment 1, in which 64 entries carry a status of Closed and 15 a status of Frozen on August 14, 2026, and further entries a status of Open. State the number of the 333 positions that were subsequently filled, closed without being filled, frozen, and remain open.
c. State whether a hiring freeze, hiring restriction or headcount reduction target was in effect at CL&P or EESCO at any time during calendar year 2024, 2025 or 2026. If so, provide the governing documents and identify the positions affected.
d. State the annualized payroll cost of the positions filled after December 31, 2025, and identify where that cost appears in the Rate Year cost of service.

Response:

a. The 2% and 6% vacancy percentages shown on Schedule WP C-3.5 are shown for informational purposes only. No vacancy deduction was taken as noted in footnote a of Schedule WP C-3.5, the Test Year Pro-Forma base salaries at 12/31/2025 only include active/filled positions and do not include inactive/unfilled positions, therefore vacancy is already accounted for and no adjustment is needed. The projected 41 incremental positions included in the Rate Year do not have a vacancy factor applied. These are new positions outside of the Test Year that the Company anticipates filling and therefore should be included in the cost of service.

b. The apparent discrepancy results from the fact that the total of 333 referenced in the Company's response to OCC-326[i] represents the number of individual positions associated with the requisitions listed in OCC-326 Attachment 1, as reflected in Column C. Because a single requisition may be associated with more than one position, the requisition status counts shown in OCC-326, Attachment 1 (e.g., Open, Closed, or Frozen) cannot be directly

compared to the total position count of 333. As of August 14, 2026, OCC-326, Attachment 1, contained requisitions in various statuses, including Open, Closed, and Frozen. Subsequent disposition of the 333 positions was determined based on the status of the underlying requisitions and associated positions. Please refer to Table 1, below summarizes the disposition of the requisitions and positions:

Table 1

Requisition Status	**Count of Requisitions**	**Count of Positions on Requisitions**
Closed	64	96
Frozen	15	17
Open	15	16
Filled	156	204
Grand Total	250	333

c. For the 2024 through 2026 period, in an effort to mitigate increases to its cost of service, particularly in light of inflationary cost pressures impacting many aspects of the Company's business (and of its customers' utility rates), Eversource exercised stringent controls to limit the number of new positions enabled throughout the Company as part of its annual budget review and approval process, requiring most business areas to maintain staffing levels at or below prior-year headcount. Requests for incremental headcount to address operational or business needs were subject to review and approval by the applicable Executive Vice President.

In addition, as part of the Company's continuous and ongoing effort to operate as efficiently as possible, Eversource undertook an initiative in 2025 to identify potential opportunities for targeted cost reductions across its budgeted cost base to eliminate unnecessary positions on a targeted basis and at the same time to evaluate opportunities to address performance considerations for affected positions. While the initiative was not primarily intended to reduce headcount, the assessment identified opportunities to streamline certain functions and eliminate 45 positions. These actions were taken as part of a broader cost management effort designed to align resources with business needs while maintaining safe and reliable service. These labor-related cost reductions are factored into the Company's cost of service presented in this proceeding, given that payroll and payroll-related costs reflected in the Company's proposed rate year cost of service reflect the 2025 year-end head count numbers.

d. Other than positions specifically identified in the Company's application in this proceeding, positions filled after December 31, 2025, are not included in the Rate Year

cost of service. The payroll expense included in the Company's cost of service reflects only those full-time equivalent employee positions that were both active and filled as of December 31, 2025, and excludes any inactive or unfilled positions. The Company updated its projected incremental Full Time Equivalent ("FTE") counts included in the request for recovery in the rate year in the Company's response to OCC-333[ii]. Please refer to OCC-333 Attachment 1, for the salary detail associated with these positions.

Prior Referenced Response:

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[i] OCC-326 Question:

Payroll (open positions). For each open position:

a. Total annual compensation, benefits and payroll taxes associated for the unfilled position
b. Length of time that the position has been open.
c. Planned hiring dates for each position,
d. Hiring dates for any of these positions that have been filled.
e. Copy of the advertisement for employment.
f. For each open position, state whether it is a CL&P employee/FTE or shared service employee/FTE.

OCC-326 Response:

Please refer to OCC-326, Attachment 1. As of December 31, 2025, there were 333 open, unfilled positions between CL&P and Eversource Energy Service Company ("ESC"):

(A) Description	(B) CL&P	(C) EESCO	(D)=(B)+(C) Total
Open/unfilled positions	30	303	333

There are no open positions in either CL&P or ESC with a target hiring date in the Rate Year.

Currently, of the open and unfilled positions at December 31, 2025, there remain 14 un-filled positions in ESC and one position in CL&P. The total annual compensation for un-filled positions in ESC (OCC-326, Attachment 1, Column K) consists of the market rate for the position and a 26.41% loader comprised of Payroll Tax + Benefits (26.26%) and Insurance (0.15%). Union positions are indicated by an asterisk (*); compensation rates are per contract. In response to (f), the path to the Eversource Career Site for each position is shown in OCC-326, Attachment 1, Column L.

[ii] OCC-333 Question

Payroll. For each of the new positions that the Company is requesting recovery of in the rate year, state whether the hiring of the positions are conditioned on their approval in this case.

OCC-333 Response:

The Company is providing an update for the Full Time Equivalent ("FTE") counts included in the request for recovery in the rate year in this response as OCC-333, Attachment 1 (note that this is an update of Exhibit CLP-REVREQ-2, Work Paper C-3.5, page 3). The Company will update the payroll expense and other affected costs as part of its next cost of service update.

The number of FTEs included in the original filing was fifty-eight (58). This number was a preliminary number and included FTEs contemplated in the Advancing the Grid plan that is above and beyond the Targeted System Plan ("TSP") requested for review and approval in this application. The updated number of incremental FTEs to be included in the rate year of the Company's cost of service is forty-one (41).

Included in the forty-one (41) full-time positions are twenty-one (21) in Vegetation Management, five (5) Power Quality positions, two (2) in Distribution Planning & Forecasting and one (1) Asset Health, these are contingent on PURA's approval in this case. In addition, for Grid Modernization there are seven (7) for Control Room Operations, three (3) for Data Innovation, and two (2) for Field Communications that the Company will consider hiring based on business needs and changing requirements as necessary, but most likely not all requested.

The Vegetation Management positions allow the Company the opportunity to improve the system's reliability and improve cost-efficiency by transitioning more work in-house to restructure vegetation management performance for the benefit of our customers. While the twenty-one (21) Vegetation Management positions appear to be incremental, in reality there is only 1 incremental resource. Of the twenty-one (21), eight (8) of the FTEs are the result of 16 employees who currently split their time 50%/50% between O&M and capital work shifting to solely working on the proposed combined O&M program, if approved, results in the equivalent of 8 incremental employees working on the O&M program; twelve (12) resources would be converted from contracted resources to internal resources of which the Company's proposed vegetation management expenses in Exhibit CLP-REVREQ-2, Work Paper C-3.31 reflect the reduction in outside contractor services; and one (1) resource would be truly incremental.

The Grid Modernization positions are needed to support large-scale distributed energy resource ("DER") integration and clean-energy advancement; develop and deploy advanced tools and analytics for integrated distribution system planning and grid modernization; and drive increased innovation and application of GenAI, LLM and machine learning capabilities.

The Company is also providing as OCC-333, Attachment 2, which is a corrected Exhibit CLP-TSP-3, page 43 of 149 that has been updated with the corrected number of FTEs in the parenthesis in the text boxes on the right.