

**EIA-915: Monthly Gas Processing and Liquids Report  
Cognitive Interviews Protocol  
March 15, 2013**

*(This protocol is a guide – the questions presented here won't necessarily be asked exactly as worded in the protocol or in this order. It is important to note that not all questions will be asked in every interview.)*

**Research Goals:**

- To confirm if the current respondent, both the person and the company, can complete the most recent EIA 915 data collection instrument and the level of effort this data request requires;
- To confirm that plants that receive natural gas can report the origin of the natural gas (i.e., natural gas received from interstate pipelines);
- And, to understand the respondent's response process and what barriers exist to form completion including data availability and timing of survey request

**Part A – Introduction**

- Introduce observers and their background

**Purpose of visit:**

Let me start by telling you a little about what we will be doing today:

- We are asking you some questions about your plant's natural gas volumes, your plant's products, and your plant's liquid stocks.
- We are attempting to collect this information on a new form, the EIA-915, 'Monthly Gas Processing and Liquids Report,' and we want to get feedback from people who will be completing the form before we finalize the survey.
- You were selected because, in the past, you completed the EIA-64A form and/or the EIA 816 and this form asks for similar information that is requested on the EIA-915 form.
- Ultimately, we are interested in how you understand our questions, how the information we ask for is kept in your records, and the challenges you may face when reporting plant-level data to EIA.
- There are no right or wrong answers, and if something doesn't make sense to you or you have any questions, please ask. It is important for us to know both things that work and don't work so we can improve the form.
- Before we get started, I'd like to audio record this interview so I don't have to later rely on my memory. This session is confidential, which means only persons directly related to this project can listen to your tapes, and the recordings are erased once our report is written. The report combines information from all of our interviews and contains no information that personally identifies you or the plant at which you work. Is it okay if I record this interview?
- Do you have any questions?

## **Part B – Background Information**

Let's begin by talking about your plant(s):

- How long has this plant been in business?
- What is the primary function of your plant?
- What kinds of activities occur at this plant/location?

What is your role at this company?

- What is your title?
- How long have you been with the company?
- How long have you been at this company?
- What are your responsibilities?
- Are you in charge of government reporting?

Do you currently complete any government forms? Can you tell me more about the other forms for which you report?

- (If needed) Do you complete any regulatory forms, State and/or Federal?
- (If needed) Do you complete any other EIA forms?
- Do you generally have the data needed to report for these forms, or do you work with others to gather this data?
- How do you usually submit these other reports? (electronically, fax, mail, email)
- Do you fill out these other forms manually or automatically?

## **Part C – EIA-915 form**

In the interest of time, we are going to move past the introductory materials and the contact information in Part 1. If we have time at the end of this meeting, we can come back to them.

(Provide brief overview of the EIA-915 Form, if appropriate.)

## **Part 2: Intake Volume of Natural Gas Processed**

Please take a few minutes to look over Part 2 of the EIA-915.

Looking at the graphic at the top of the page, can you tell me in your own words what this graphic is showing? What do you think is the purpose of this graphic?

Now let's look at **Item 2.1**. Can you tell me in your own words what this question is asking?

- What does the term “daily capacity” mean to you?
- How is “daily capacity” tracked in your records?
- (If needed) Would you have access to this information on your own or would you need to ask someone else? If someone else, who would you ask?

Next, please look at **Item 2.2**. Can you tell me in your own words what this question means to you with respect to the following terms:

- What does the phrase “intake of natural gas” mean to you in the context of this question?
- (If needed) Does your plant use the term “intake of natural gas?” If not, what term does your plant use?
- How is intake of natural gas tracked in your records? How is this identified by source ownership, location, origin, etc?
- In your records do you use State, Federal, or other standard pressures and temperatures? What about in other reports?
- What unit do you use? (Mcf, MMcf, Barrels, gallons, cubic meters, tons, etc)

**Item 2.2a** asks about natural gas volumes from operators, natural gas gatherers, and pipelines that are produced within the same state as your plant.

- Does this question apply to this plant? Why or why not?
- (If yes) Do you keep track of this level of detail in your records? What is the source of this information and where is this point located in the natural gas process?
- (If no) What is tracked in your records?
- (If no) How many hours do you believe would be expended to translate what’s in your records to what EIA is asking on this form?

Can natural gas volumes from operators, natural gas gatherers, and pipelines that are produced in another state be reported? (**Item 2.2b**)

- (If unsure) Is there someone at your company, or at the plant, that would know this information? (If yes) What is their title? (**Item 2.2b**)
- (If needed) What steps would you have to take to find this information? (**Item 2.2b**)
- Can these items be reported by state/country? (**Item 2.2b**)
- Can these items be reported for federal off shore areas? (**Item 2.2c**)
- (If no) How would you get this information?
- (If no) Whom at your company, or outside your company, would you ask?
- (If no) What related information is tracked in your records?

- (If no) How many hours do you believe would be expended to translate what's in your records to what EIA is asking on this form?

**Item 2.2d** asks about volume of natural gas received from other processing plants.

- Do you know if your plant receives natural gas from other processing plants?
- (Observe if the respondent uses the excel spreadsheet for **2.2d**) Do you know the name of the other processing plant? Plant IDs?
- How would you select the appropriate State, Plant name, and Plant ID?
- (If no) How would you find out if your plant is receiving natural gas from other processing plants?
- (If no) Is there someone at your company, or at the plant, that would know this information? (If yes) What is their title?
- (If no) What related information is tracked in your records?
- (If no) How many hours do you believe would be expended to translate what's in your records to what EIA is asking on this form?

Would you report anything in **Item 2.2e**?

- (If yes) What kind of gas would you include in this question?
- (If yes) How is this kept in your records?
- (If yes) Is that a sizeable amount of gas?
- What would you call this volume?

Can you read **Item 2.3** and tell me in your own words what this item means to you?

- Is there any way we could make this clearer to you?

Finally, did you notice the math used throughout Part 2? (If yes) In your own words, can you explain the math used throughout Part 2?

### **Part 3: Disposition of Natural Gas Processing**

Please take a few minutes to look over Part 3 of the EIA-915

Looking at the graphic at the top of the page, can you tell me in your own words what this graphic is showing? What do you think is the purpose of this graphic?

Please read **Item 3.1**. Can you tell me in your own words what this question means to you?

- Does your plant use the terms 'plant outlet,' 'tailgate', 'residue' or something else?
- What do those terms mean to you?
- How is this kept in your records?

Next, can you read **Item 3.2** and tell me in your words what that item is asking?

- Do these components or products make sense to you?
- Are there any products missing from this list?
- Do these products match up with what is in your records?
- What about the conversion factors? Do they make sense to you?
- Why or why not?

**Item 3.3: Nonhydrocarbon Gasses**

- Do you have this information in your records?
- What kind of gases are you including as a 'nonhydrocarbons gas?'
- Is this information measured or estimated?
- What are you excluding?
- (If no) What is tracked in your records?

**Item 3.4: Hydrocarbon Gasses used as plant fuel**

- Do you have this information in your records?
- What kind of gases are you including as a hydrocarbon gas?
- Is this information measured or estimated?
- What are you excluding?
- (If no) What is tracked in your records?

**Item 3.5: Vented or Flared Hydrocarbon Gasses**

- Do have vented or flared hydrocarbons at this plant?
- (If yes) Do you track them in your records?
- Measured or estimated?
- What hydrocarbon gasses does this include?
- What hydrocarbon gasses does this exclude?
- Is that information measured or estimated?
- (If needed) What does the term 'vented' mean to you?
- (If needed) What does the term 'flared' mean to you?

**Item 3.6:**

Would you report anything in **Item 3.6**?

- (If yes) What kind of gas would you include in Item 6 here?
- (If yes) How is this kept in your records?
- (If yes) Is that a sizeable amount of gas?
- What would you call this volume?

**Item 3.7:**

Can you read **Item 3.7** and tell me in your own words what this question means to you?

- Is there any way we could make this clearer to you?

**Part 4: Disposition of the Plant Outlet Natural Gas**

Please take a few minutes to look over Part 4 of the EIA-915

Looking at the graphic at the top of the page, can you tell me in your own words what this graphic is showing? What do you think is the purpose of this graphic?

Please read **Items 4.1 and Items 4.2, 4.2a and 4.2b**... Can you tell me in your own words what these questions are asking?

- How would you answer this question?
- What does the phrase "send natural gas back to the field" mean to you?
- (If R can answer question) How is this information kept in your records?
- (If R cannot answer question) In your records, can you differentiate between gas sent back to the field for fuel-use and non-fuel use?
- (If needed) What are some examples of gas sent back to the field for fuel use? **(Item 4.2a)**
- (If needed) What are some examples of gas sent back to the field for non-fuel use? **(Item 4.2b)**
- (If needed) Would the data that you provide be estimates or measured?
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**Item 4.3 Offsite Fractionators**

- What about **Item 4.3**? Can you report **Item 4.3** information to EIA?
- What does the phrase 'delivered this month to off-site fractionators' mean to you?
- Do you keep track of this level of detail in your records?
- (If no) What is tracked in your records?
- (If no) How many hours do you believe would be expended to translate what's in your records to what EIA is asking on this form?

#### **Item 4.4 Downstream Plants**

- What about **Item 4.4**? Can you report **Item 4.4** information to EIA?
- Do you keep track of this level of detail in your records?
- How would you select the appropriate State, Plant name, and Plant ID?
- (If no) What is tracked in your records?
- (If no) How many hours do you believe would be expended to translate what's in your records to what EIA is asking on this form?

#### **Item 4.5**

- What about **Item 4.5**? What does **Item 4.5** mean to you?
- Can you report this information to us?
- What do you call this?
- Do you keep track of this level of detail in your records?
- (If no) What is tracked in your records?
- (If no) How many hours do you believe would be expended to translate what's in your records to what EIA is asking on this form?

#### **Item 4.6**

Would you report anything in **Item 4.6**?

- (If yes) What kind of gas would you include in **Item 4.6**?
- (If yes) How is this kept in your records?
- (If yes) Is that a sizeable amount of gas?
- What do you call this volume?

#### **Item 4.7**

Can you read **Item 4.7** and tell me in your own words what this question means to you?

- Is there any way EIA could make this clearer to you?

#### **Part 5: Natural Gas Liquids Activity**

(Note: Ask these questions if respondent has NOT completed the EIA-816 in the past)

Please take a few minutes to look over Part 5 of the EIA-915

Looking at the graphic at the top of the page, can you tell me in your own words what this graphic is showing? What do you think is the purpose of this graphic?

- Does Part 5 of this form look familiar?
- How easy or difficult has this section been to complete?
- Are you excluding or including transit by pipeline (stocks beginning of month and stocks end of month)

- Do you use these particular terms to describe your natural gas liquids activity?
  - o Stocks beginning of month
  - o Receipts during month
  - o Input during month
  - o Production during month
  - o Shipments during month
  - o Plant fuel use & losses during month
  - o Stocks end of month
- (If no) What terms are you using in your records?
- (If needed) Do you perform an isomerization process?
- In the past, have you reported only end stocks?
- What do you think about the grouping of Pentanes Plus, Iso-pentane, Natural Gasoline, and Plant Condensate? How does this grouping match your records?

### **Item 5.2**

- Can you read **Item 5.2** and tell me in your own words what this question means to you?
- Does this question apply to your plant? Why or why not?
- How do you know if a natural gas liquid is being comingled with crude oil?
- Is this kept in your records?
- Other than a crude oil pipeline and a crude oil storage terminal, where else may natural gas liquids be comingled with crude oil?

## **Part 1: Identification Information**

### **Item 1.2**

Can you read **Item 1.2** and tell me in your own words what this question means to you?

- Is this feasible? Why or why not?
- How do you track changes like this in your records?

### **Wrapping Up**

- EIA would like to receive this data from the plants on the 25<sup>th</sup> of each month. Is this a reasonable request? Why or why not?
- How long do you think it will take you to complete this survey?
- Do you think you will submit this information manually or automatically? Why or why not? Would you prefer to complete it in different manner?
- Overall, what do you think of the survey?
- Do you have any suggestions to improve the survey?



- What would be the easiest way for you to complete the survey?

**Thank you for your time today!**