

## EIA-816/806 Monthly/Weekly Natural Gas Liquids Report

### Cognitive Testing Protocol

November 2017

*(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 assess EIA-816 respondents' ability to report information related to their gas processing and condensate stabilization activities, particularly detailed input and output ("Y-grade mix" NGLs, lease condensate, etc.) information about these activities
- To determine if respondents are able to report their fractionation output production information to EIA on a weekly basis and evaluate the level of detail respondents can provide about their output production
- To estimate any changes in reporting burden associated with collecting this information and obtain feedback on appropriateness of current reporting burden

#### Purpose of Interview:

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

- Introduce self and observers
- The questions are about potential changes to Form EIA-816 Monthly Natural Gas Liquids Report.

#### Part A - Introduction

- Before we start, could you please share with us a little more about yourself and your company?
- Do you fill out Form EIA-816?
- How long have you been completing this form?
- Do you complete any other EIA surveys for your company?
- Are you familiar with the instructions for Form EIA-816? How often do you refer to the instructions? How long do you spend reading the instructions?

#### Part B- Overview

EIA is considering modifying Form EIA-816 to collect detailed information on natural gas processing and condensate stabilization activities. EIA is interested in collecting information on the input volumes and output products resulting from gas processing, fractionating, and stabilization activities performed at natural gas processing facilities.

#### Part C - Terminology

EIA is interested in ensuring that the language and terminology in its survey is understood and reflective of the industry it is surveying?

- What is your understanding of the term “Y grade output”?
- What is your understanding of the term “residue gas”?
- Is it your understanding that “Y grade gas” and “residue gas” are synonyms? If not, how do they differ?
- Are you familiar with the terms “denatured” and “undenatured”?
  - (If yes) Are these terms common terminology in the industry?
- How do you refer to products out into the processing system? (inputs, inlets, other?)
- Are there any terms that EIA uses on Form EIA-816 that are confusing to you? do not use or are there any new terms used in the industry?

#### Part D – Stabilizing

- Does your facility use a condensate stabilizer?
  - Do you own, lease, or operated by a third party?
- Let’s discuss your stabilizer activity?
  - Input Capacity?
  - Input streams? (Wet Gas? Crude oil? Both?)
  - How does your company track the input volumes (Crude oil? Wet gas?)?
    - Internal reports?
      - How frequently do you get these reports?
        - Daily? Weekly?
        - How do you track this information on this basis?
        - [If needed] Do you all take title of the inputs? Or is it a custodial basis?
      - What is the lag time on these reports?
      - Where in the company do these reports come from? Certain office? Sales database?
    - Metering devices?
    - Invoices?
    - Other?
- What happens to the outputs from the stabilizer?
  - Where does the stabilized crude oil go?
    - Storage (Onsite or offsite? Aboveground or belowground?)
    - Pipeline?
      - (If Pipeline) How far in advance do you need to nominate a pipeline injection?
- What happens to the Y grade mix when it comes out of the stabilizer?
  - Direct Sales?
  - Fractionator?
  - Do you measure your Y grade mix components when it leaves the stabilizer?
    - How often are you measuring the stabilizer output?

- How do you measure this information?
  - Metering device?
  - Production report?
    - Ethane?
    - Propane?
    - Normal Butane?
    - Isobutane?
    - Condensate?
      - What do you do with the plant condensate?
    - Natural gas (dry)?
    - Total Natural Gas Plant Liquids?

## Part E – Fractionation

- Let's discuss your fractionator activity
- Does your facility have a fractionator?
  - Do you own, lease, or operated by a third party?
  - How many input streams?
  - Input stream capacity?
  - Does any Y grade mix output from the stabilizer go directly to your fractionator?
  
- What kinds of information on inputs for fractionation are kept in your records?
  - Does your company's records track input volumes coming into your fractionator?
  - How does your company track the input volumes?
    - Internal reports?
      - How frequently do you get these reports?
      - What is the lag time on these reports?
      - Where in the company do these reports come from? Certain office? Sales database?
    - Metering devices?
    - Invoices?
    - Other?
- Does your company keep records on its fractionation?
- What NGL products do you track as output from your fractionator?
  - Ethane
  - Propane
  - Normal Butane
  - Isobutane
  - Condensate
    - What do you do with the plant condensate?
  - Natural gas (dry)
  - Total Natural Gas Plant Liquids
  - (If needed) What kinds of information about your company's fractionation are kept in your records?

- How frequently do you measure this production? (If needed) Can you estimate the percentage breakout of the NGLs from your Y grade mix output if you do not have separate production for each NGL?
- Do you track total NGPL production separately in addition to all of the NGL products?
- Do you track your total NGPLs production as a validation of the production of the separate NGL products? “Does the sum equal the parts?”
  - (if not) Why doesn’t the sum equal the parts?
  - How does your company track and differentiate between the output products?
    - Internal reports?
      - How frequently do you get these reports?
      - What is the lag time on these reports?
    - Metering devices?
    - Invoices?
    - Other?
- (EIA has five other weekly petroleum surveys that have a Friday Monday reporting cycle) Can you report your separated fractionated output weekly, by the 5 p.m. Eastern Time on the Monday following the end of the report period? (e.g., the report covering the week ending Friday, January 5, 2018 must be received by 5 p.m. Eastern Time Monday, January 8, 2018)?
  - (If difficult) Could you describe for me the process you would go through?
    - What level of detail can you report on the component of your NGLs?
    - How much time do you estimate it would take you to gather and report this information by Monday of each week?

## Part F – Gas Processing

- Let’s discuss your gas processing activity?
  - What happens to the dry gas produced from the gas processing plant?
    - Does it go to the pipeline? (reinjection)
    - Does it go to storage? (reinjection)
      - Is the storage onsite or offsite?
      - Underground or aboveground storage?
    - Sales? (Broker?)
- **[For those without fractionator or stabilizer]** What do you do with your Y grade mix output?
  - Whats the unit of measurement of your Y grade mix?
  - How frequently do you get the production reports for Y grade mix?
  - What happens with the Y grade mix?
  - How frequently do you measure this production (Y grade mix production)?
  - (If needed) Can you estimate the percentage breakout of the NGLs from your Y grade mix output if you do not have separate production for each NGL?

- If EIA asked you to report the input volumes of natural gas (wet) and crude oil and condensate used in your company's gas processing activities separately, can you describe for me the process you would go through to obtain this information?
- How much time do you estimate it would take you to gather and report input information to EIA?
  - Can you report this information to EIA 20 days after the end of the reporting month? For example, data reported about June 2018 activity must be submitted no later than July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2018.
    - (If no) Why would you not be able to report this information in the specified timeframe?
    - (If no) What would be a reasonable time frame for you to gather this information and report your input information to EIA?

### Part G - Burden Estimate

Now we will discuss how much time and effort it takes for you to complete this form.

- What is your process for filling out Form 816?
  - [Follow up] Ask about how much time each step takes:
- Did you fill out Form EIA-816 last month?
  - How long did it take you the first time you filled it out?
  - Did you get any help filing out the form?
- How much time does it take you to gather the information for this survey form?
  - Are you able to directly access the data needed from company records, or do you work with others to gather this data?
- Once you have gathered the information needed, how long does it take you to fill out the survey and submit you data to EIA?
- Adding the time it takes you to gather the information and the time it takes for you to report, what is the total amount of time it take you to file your report for this survey? [NOTE: Burden for this form is 1 hours, if respondent indicates that it takes < 15 minutes or > 4 hours ask how they are able to report so quickly or why it takes so long.]
- In the past, is this the usual time that it takes your company to report this information?
- We talked about some changes to this form if it takes approximately x hours to file Form EIA-816 how much more time would it take you to file your report? (Include both the time it would take to gather the information, record it on the form and report it to EIA)
  - [If a lot more] Probe why it takes a lot more time

### Part H - Wrapping Up

- Do you have any problems when completing Form EIA-816?
- Do you have any suggestions on how to improve this survey?

**Thank you for your time!**