

TO: EII Task Force, Concerned GISB Task Forces and Sub-Committees

FROM: M. E. Novak, National Fuel Gas Distribution Corporation

DATE: September 3, 1998

RE: GISB FF/EDM (Flat File) Requirements

As discussed during the August 21, 1998 EII meeting, there are no requirements as yet for flat files. I offer these as a starting point for discussion:

*Flat Files should be ASCII comma delimited files*

*The content and usage of flat files should reasonably correspond to the GISB datasets used for GISB EDI/EDM. This should not necessarily prohibit the design and specification of a flat file that corresponds to EBB/EDM.*

*Provisions to provide 'comment' rows within the file should be made. These rows would be ignored for processing purposes.*

*The default order of elements within the flat file should be that identified within the standards.*

*The first row of the flat file should be reserved for the Business Names of the data elements in the file. This row could be considered a comment row or if a provider supported a non-default ordering, instructions to that effect.*

*Flat files could be exchanged via the same designated sites as GISB EDI/EDM files.*

*Flat files would be exchanged via interactive means in the manner as follows:*

- *The user would click a button indicating a desired upload or download.*
- *The system would prompt the user for a filename.*
- *The system would acknowledge the status of the exchange.*
- *The system could display the results on the screen as if the user had entered all data interactively.*

Please keep in mind that the focus is simplicity and not efficiency. The flat files are for service requesters who do not have enough transactions to justify EDI/EDM but need some efficiencies over EBB/EDM. Please also consider that a service requestor could use all three modes but for different data purposes.