Pursuant to Section 2.02 of the Open Meetings Act, a Pre-Bench Meeting of the Commerce Commission was convened by Chairman Box at 1:34 p.m. on September 11, 2007 in the Chicago Office of the Commission. Present in Chicago were: Commissioners Ford, Lieberman, O’Connell-Diaz, and Chairman Box.

Topics of discussion included: Chairman Box stated the purpose of this meeting was to summarize the August 23rd storms and ComEd’s restoration efforts.

Frank Clark, Chairman and CEO of Commonwealth Edison Company, stated this was one of the worst storms he has ever seen; the storm included wind pockets of 80-100 mph, and more than 80,000 area lightning strikes were reported; by contrast, a typical storm in ComEd’s service area averages 12,000 lightning strikes; eight counties were declared disaster areas, and 630,000 customers were affected; within 24 hours, 74% were restored; within 48 hours, 90% were restored; he felt ComEd had a strong performance under extreme circumstances.

Barry Mitchell, President and COO, gave an overview of ComEd’s restoration efforts; he put this storm in context by comparing it to a typical storm; more than 4,400 interruptions were reported; the average number of a typical storm is 800-900 interruptions; the estimated cost for restoration is $35-40 million, while the average cost is $2 million; Commissioner O’Connell-Diaz recognized that ComEd has continued trimming cycles as directed by the Commission, and noted restoration is easier when the vegetation management cycle is maintained.

Terry Donnelly, Senior VP, Technical Services, reported ComEd was struggling with two storms proceeding this one; on August 22, 90,000 customers were affected by a medium sized storm in the morning, then hit with a smaller storm affecting 60,000 on the morning of August 23; the large storm hit mid-afternoon on August 23, peaking at over 300,000 customers affected the evening of August 23; substation systems performed very well, and there were no widespread transmission issues; restoration work began as soon as the storms hit, with crews in the field as soon as conditions were safe; Chairman Box asked how the Company informed citizens not affected by the storm that their power would be taken out for repair; Mr. Donnelly said that, in emergency situations, such as downed power lines or tree limbs contacting live wires, there is no time to notify customers; storm preparations included using a professional weather forecast service, eight dedicated storm response teams on a rotating schedule, mobilized command centers and a computerized outage system that tracked calls.
from call centers back to where an outage is located; ComEd had pre-existing mutual assistance arrangements with outside contractors; extra construction, restoration and tree crews were flown in from Tennessee, Texas and Pennsylvania.

George Williams, Senior VP, ComEd Operations, reported that there were challenges in restoration efforts; service could not be restored immediately due to the severity of the storm; once the storm system cleared out, 60,000-70,000 customers were restored almost immediately; flooding, traffic and fallen trees presented problems, and slowed the process of assessing damaged areas during the first two days; many roads were inaccessible; there were more than 5,000 downed trees as compared to the average 300 trees for a typical storm; prioritization of customer restoration included hospitals first, then police, fire and water companies; after that, senior centers and high rises, and finally outages affecting the largest number of customers.

Commissioner O’Connell-Diaz asked about the communication between ComEd and municipalities in removing limbs and clearing streets; Fidel Marquez, VP External Affairs & Large Customer Service, said the Company activated its mutual assistance program to get additional crews on the ground to help with response; many municipalities stated ComEd’s e-outage system was also very helpful; municipal status calls were held daily regarding storm restoration and primary needs to be addressed; there were demands for estimated times for restorations, but it was impossible to predict with a storm of this size; since restoration, ComEd has held several meetings with various boards of municipalities to get input on how the Company could improve communication and collaboration; the municipalities are willing and able to help be an information conduit with customers.

Phyllis Batson, VP Customer Care, reported on customer call centers as well as readiness and response; the call center operation received 419,000 calls during duration of storm; 202,000 calls were routed through automated self service so the Company could aggregate as much information as possible to assess and prioritize the outages, then deploy teams; at the height of the storms, 5,000–6,000 calls were received per ½ hour interval; during a normal storm, a couple hundred calls are usually received.

In closing, Mr. Mitchell stated ComEd is still assessing the storm, and what improvements can be implemented to enhance restoration efforts in the future.

The meeting was adjourned.