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Decision No. 78948

ORIGINAL

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

In the Matter of the Application
of CALIFORNIA-PACIFIC UTILITIES
COMPANY, a California corporation,
for authority to increase its
rates for telephone service.

} Application No. 50791
(Filed January 2, 1969;
Petition for Modification
filed February 22, 1971)

Orrick, Herrington, Rowley & Sutcliffe, by
James F. Crafts, Jr., Attorney at Law,
for petitioner.
Ermet J. Macario, for the Commission staff.

ORDER MODIFYING DECISION NO. 76199

By Decision No. 76199, issued September 23, 1969, California-Pacific Utilities Company was authorized to increase its telephone rates in California. That decision, among other things, directed the company to install automatic number identification for all of its exchange subscribers and to convert its post-pay coin telephones to pre-pay telephones by not later than October 13, 1971. By the instant petition and amendment to petition the company requests that it be relieved of these two requirements.

Public hearing on the petition was held before Examiner Emerson on May 17, 1971 at San Francisco. By oral request at said hearing, petitioner now seeks authority to place into effect the 10-cent coin-telephone charge which was to have become effective on conversion of the instruments from post-pay to pre-pay operation.

Since Decision No. 76199, applicant has worked diligently on the various service improvements ordered therein and, among other things, has upgraded party-line service from 10-party to 4-party service. Applicant's engineers and its equipment supplier, after

lengthy in-depth studies, have determined that automatic number identification for the latter is not technically practicable on applicant's existing system. Only by further upgrading service so as to have only one-party and two-party services could fully automatic number identification become possible. The evidence is clear that the costs involved for such a complete revamping of applicant's system would be prohibitive and would force an unreasonable burden on its ratepayers.

While the conversion of existing post-pay telephones presents no serious problem to applicant, this approach would eliminate the present emergency coin-free access capability. To convert to pre-pay coin with coin-free access would be excessively costly. Applicant's Lassen Division is surrounded by the exchanges of another telephone company which also uses post-pay coin instruments exclusively. As a result, telephone users in the area are accustomed to using such instruments over a rather large geographical area. Several users, including the Westwood Chamber of Commerce, the District Forester and the Chairman of the Board of Fire Commissioners, have asked that the post-pay phones remain as a matter of providing immediate emergency access to an operator without first having to deposit a coin. The evidence is clear that the public interest will be better served if the conversion is not undertaken at this time.

The Commission concludes that applicant's petition should be granted and that with removal of the requirement for pre-pay coin operation the charge for local calls should now be increased to the 10-cent charge heretofore found to be justified. Accordingly,

IT IS ORDERED that:

1. Ordering paragraph 3.b of Decision No. 76199 is hereby stricken and of no further force and effect.
2. Ordering paragraph 3.f of Decision No. 76199 is hereby amended to read:

"Established selective ringing for all of its exchange customers."

3. Applicant is authorized to file tariffs revised to the extent necessary to provide that coin-telephone local calls shall be ten cents on or after November 1, 1971.

The effective date of this order shall be twenty days after the date hereof.

Dated at San Francisco, California, this 27th day of JULY, 1971.

William J. ... Chairman
...
Vernon L. Sturgeon
Commissioners

Commissioner J. P. Vukasin, Jr., being necessarily absent, did not participate in the disposition of this proceeding.

Commissioner D. W. Holmes, being necessarily absent, did not participate in the disposition of this proceeding.