

ORIGINAL

Decision No. 86082

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Investigation of the Commission's)
 own motion into the adoption of a)
 directory assistance charge)
 plan by any or all of the)
 telephone corporations in)
 California, listed in Appendix A)
 attached hereto.)

Case No. 10085

INTERIM ORDER

Our Order Instituting Investigation in this case explained that events have convinced us that any directory assistance charge plan (DACP) is more properly explored in a separate investigation rather than as a part of an application for a rate increase.

Our order did not, however, specify how we wish this subject to be explored. We have reviewed our priorities for the use of our staff, and concluded that the scope of the investigation of directory assistance charge plans should be limited to any areas of extreme abuse of the current system of no-charge directory assistance. We do not regard ordinary residential or business use of directory assistance to fall within that category, particularly in view of the high turnover of telephone subscriptions, the large percentage of unlisted numbers, and the multiplicity of telephone directories within single area codes. 1/

1/ There would appear to be a high degree of transiency among both residential and business telephone customers in California metropolitan areas. Exhibit 1 in Application No. 55492, presented by a public witness, is a yellow page from the North San Diego County 1975 Directory featuring an advertisement for yellow page business. It is entitled "Southern California Customers Move Frequently - Make It Easy For Them to Find You Fast" and points out:
 (fn. cont'd on pg. 2)

We feel that the use of directory assistance to obtain up-to-date, accurate listings for subscribers who may not have a current listing in the directory is fully legitimate and should continue to be available without charge. We do not feel that it would serve the public interest to investigate in full detail proposals which would impose a charge on such legitimate use or which would require an elaborate and expensive administrative mechanism to identify users who do not have available a current telephone directory (e.g., in many instances, callers from pay telephones) or who may not be able to read the small type in the directory. Accordingly, we will limit the scope of this investigation to any proposals for Directory Assistance Charge Plans which relate only to systematic abuse of free service by customers using directory assistance for purposes unrelated to the legitimate uses described herein.

This Order Instituting Investigation will, therefore, be limited to such abusive practices as routine use of directory assistance for credit investigation rather than for the purpose of placing a telephone call, or persistent use of directory assistance service in extreme disproportion to a customer's legitimate needs. To the extent that proposed Directory Assistance Charge Plans do not conform to the criteria set forth herein, they are dismissed.

(fn. 1 cont'd)


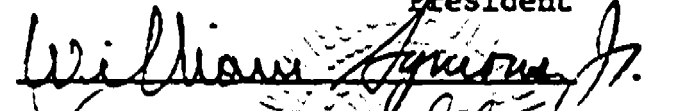

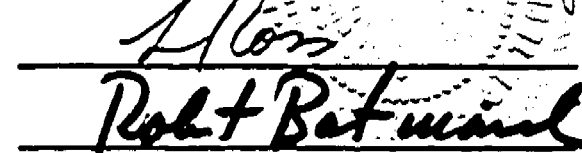
"Your market is constantly changing. The mass movement of people within the State of California was never more dramatically illustrated than seeing what takes place on a single page of the alphabetical directory.

"On one page (selected at random) there were 93 new listings, 36 listing changes, 50 completely removed, 179 total changes."

The population of the directory area was listed in the advertisement as an estimated 332,635 for 1975, and there are 314 white pages in the directory. Assuming the page that was selected for the advertisement is typical, then this area alone (which is by no means the largest or most transient area in the state) experienced over 56,000 telephone number changes in one year, in an area much smaller in population than California's large urban areas.

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

Dated at San Francisco, California, this 7th day of JULY, 1976.


President


Henry L. Livingston
Attorney

Robert Bateman
Commissioners