

Decision 91-11-038 November 20, 1991

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BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

James H. Rueff,)
)
 Complainant,)
)
 vs.)
)
 Pacific Bell (U 1001 C), and GTE)
 California, Inc. (U 1002 C),)
)
 Defendant.)

ORIGINAL

Case 91-07-036
(filed July 29, 1991)

OPINION

Complainant alleges that telephone exchange rate centers for urban exchanges that do not coincide with the geographic center of the exchange result, in some cases, in inequitable zone and toll calling areas. Complainant asks that defendants adjust rate centers to coincide with geographic centers in fully developed exchanges.

Pacific Bell (Pacific) and GTE California answered and moved to dismiss. They stated that an exchange is a specific geographic area which is served by a central office or several central offices. A rate center is the point within an exchange from which distance is measured from one exchange to another exchange to determine mileage, and ultimately, what a customer will pay for phone service within the serving area.

Rates for local and toll calls are based on the mileage between rate centers. A Zone 1 or Zone 2 call (rate center to rate center) is between 0 and 12 miles. Generally, Zone 1 and Zone 2 calls are local calls and therefore, there is no charge for these calls for flat service. Zone 3 calls are between 12 and 16 miles from rate center to rate center and there is a charge associated

with these calls. Calls in excess of 16 miles (from rate center to rate center) are generally toll calls.

To grant complainant the relief he seeks would be extremely difficult due to the various geographic configurations of 400-plus California exchanges. Attempting to do so would necessitate a significant overhaul of all local exchange carriers' billing and accounting systems and result in significant administrative costs. In addition, while some customers would experience a reduction in telephone costs, other customers would have their zone and toll call charges increased. A restructure of the calling areas as suggested by complainant might detrimentally affect rates between exchanges that have a community of interest.

To adopt complainant's request will result in rate changes for zone and toll calls. Depending on the reconfiguration of rate centers, rates for calls between some locations would increase and others decrease. The Public Utilities (PU) Code § 1702 reads in pertinent part as follows:

" . . . No complaint shall be entertained by the Commission, except upon its own motion, as to the reasonableness of any rates or charges of . . . [any] telephone corporation, unless it is signed . . . by not less than 25 actual or prospective consumer or purchasers of such . . . telephone service."

The complainant has not appended to his complaint the required number of signatures, and therefore, the complaint should be dismissed.

Findings of Fact

1. The relief requested by complainant would require a change in rates.
2. The complaint is not signed by at least 25 actual or prospective customers of telephone service.

Conclusion of Law

The complaint should be dismissed for failure to comply with PU Code § 1702.

ORDER

IT IS ORDERED that the complaint is dismissed.

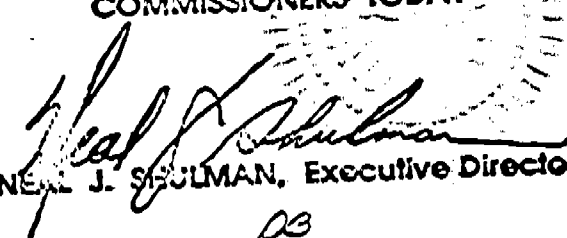
This order is effective today.

Dated November 20, 1991, at San Francisco, California.

PATRICIA M. ECKERT
President
DANIEL Wm. FESSLER
NORMAN D. SHUMWAY
Commissioners

Commissioner John B. Ohanian,
being necessarily absent, did
not participate.

I CERTIFY THAT THIS DECISION
WAS APPROVED BY THE ABOVE
COMMISSIONERS TODAY


NEAL J. SPULMAN, Executive Director
PB