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Decision 82 09 025 SEP 8 1982

ORIGINAL

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

In the Matter of the Application of THE PACIFIC TELEPHONE AND TELEGRAPH COMPANY, a corporation, for authority to establish charges for Directory Assistance Service.	Application 58918 (Filed June 9, 1979)

ORDER EXTENDING TIME

Summary

This decision grants The Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company (Pacific) a six-month time extension to expand its Directory Assistance Charge Plan (DACP) to all its serving areas.

Background

In a July 12, 1982 letter to the Commission, Pacific requested a one-year extension from the December 31, 1982 deadline for implementing directory assistance charging throughout its serving areas. The deadline was established in Ordering Paragraph 1 of Decision (D.) 92108, issued August 19, 1980.

Pacific requested the extension of time to allow it the opportunity to carefully evaluate the impact of the charge plan on the call volumes in San Diego and Imperial Counties before implementing the plan statewide. Pacific expressed concern that when the charge plan was implemented and the directory assistance recording removed, a surge in directory call volumes would result causing severe service problems.

Pacific's concern about a possible surge in volumes was based on the results of a DACP implemented by the Chesapeake and Potomac Telephone Company in Washington, D.C. When that operating company removed the recording and implemented its charge plan, which

allows only 6 free calls compared to Pacific's 20 free calls, directory assistance call volumes rose unexpectedly.

Pacific has already converted San Diego and Imperial Counties to DACP. It began a sample billing on April 1, 1982 with no charges, to give its customers an opportunity to change their call habits before charging started. On June 1, 1982, Pacific removed the directory assistance recording and began charging. Preliminary information on the first month's volumes has indicated no significant change in calling volumes.

Discussion

The Commission agrees with Pacific that it is prudent to evaluate the experience gained in San Diego and Imperial Counties before converting the rest of the state. This experience would aid in the transition to DACP for the rest of the state and lessen the risk of any service problems.

It also agrees the one or two months of existing data would not suffice for determining future cutover volumes because it requires several months for the customers to react to their bills and establish a predictable calling volume level.

A one-year extension, however, unnecessarily prolongs the transition to DACP. The Commission believes that a six-month time extension is sufficient to evaluate the results in San Diego and Imperial Counties and that those results will help provide a smooth cutover for Pacific's remaining service areas. Pacific's revised schedule, anticipating an extension of time to evaluate San Diego and Imperial Counties, shows full implementation of DACP by April 1, 1983, with a sample billing period starting February 1, 1983.

The six-month time extension granted by this order should not be construed to apply to Ordering Paragraph 4 of D.92108. Pacific is still required to file a report on the effects of its directory assistance charge plan by January 1, 1983, based on the best information available. This is because Assembly Bill 43 requires the Commission to provide, prior to April 1, 1983, a determination and order concerning the telephone corporation directory assistance programs.

Findings of Fact

1. A one-year extension to comply with Ordering Paragraph 1 of D.92108 is not warranted.

2. A six-month extension of time to comply with Ordering Paragraph 1 is reasonable.

IT IS ORDERED that The Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company is granted a six-month time extension to June 30, 1983 to comply with Ordering Paragraph 1 of D.92108.

This order becomes effective 30 days from today.

Dated SEP 8 1982, at San Francisco, California.

JOHN E. BRYSON
President
RICHARD D. GRAVELLE
LEONARD M. GRIMES, JR.
VICTOR CALVO
PRISCILLA C. GREW
Commissioners

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

Joseph E. Bodovitz, Executive Director

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