

Decision No. 89911 JAN 30 1979

ORIGINAL

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

City of Arvin, a municipal corporation of the State of California,

Complainant,

vs.

Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company,

Defendant.

Case No. 10329
(Filed May 10, 1977)

Ray Yinger, Attorney at Law, for City of Arvin, complainant.
J. N. Howarth, Attorney at Law, for The Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company, defendant.
Chester O. Newman, for the Commission staff.

O P I N I O N

Hearing on this complaint was held before Administrative Law Judge C. T. Coffey in Arvin on March 8 and June 15, 1978. It was submitted upon receipt of the transcript.

The city of Arvin (Arvin), alleges that for approximately three years the telephone service in Arvin has been inadequate and that Arvin and individual citizens residing in Arvin have made numerous complaints to The Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company (Pacific) without service improvement. The service is alleged to be inadequate in that it is difficult to get calls "through", that it is difficult to get dial tone on picking up the receiver, and that often the connection is lost before dialing is completed.

Of the 75 subscribers who attended the hearing on March 8, 1978, 13 testified repeatedly to telephone service problems beginning with the advent of community dial service.

A representative of Pacific testified regarding service improvements made by Pacific in response to the complaints. However, after listening to the complaints voiced by subscribers at the hearing,

defendant indicated that it wished to take further corrective action. Therefore, the matter was taken off calendar.

Hearing was resumed on June 15, 1978. Pacific reported that it had on March 14, 1978 formed a special Arvin task force which formulated and immediately implemented plans for service improvements identified in the record of the March 8 hearing. Exhibit No. 4 sets forth the corrective action taken. No members of the public appeared to complain further regarding service deficiencies.

One of the troublesome causes of line outages appears to result from some subscribers leaving the receiver off the hook to prevent being disturbed by incoming calls. Pacific has identified and talked with the subscribers who frequently silenced the telephone bell in this manner. It is suggested that defendant consider modifying its tariffs to require the installation of jacks for subscribers who repeat this practice.

Portable service observing equipment is now an integral part of the Arvin installation. A permanent installation will be made hopefully not later than the early part of 1979.

It appears that reliance upon statistical indicators may have led Pacific to believe the Arvin service met prescribed standards. However, the hearing process and listening to complaints voiced at the hearing motivated Pacific to conduct comprehensive trunk, central office switching, outside plant, coin station, and service inspection and rehabilitation. Defendant's efforts have resulted in a decline in customer trouble reports. During March, April, and May 1978, customer trouble reports totaled 317, 251, and 196, respectively, for an average of 255 reports per month. This compares to an average of 380 trouble reports that were received during the preceding five months of October 1977 through February 1978. With about 3,400 stations working in Arvin, 200 customer trouble reports represent 5.9 reports per 100 stations.

Although service in the Arvin area is improved, and the city of Arvin is satisfied with the efforts Pacific is taking to improve service, we believe that Pacific's service in the Arvin area should be closely monitored. Accordingly, we will direct that certain General Order No. 133 standard service measurements for the Arvin area be filed monthly for six months or until the measurements meet General Order No. 133 standard levels for three months, whichever occurs first. Pacific should file three copies of the ordered reports, one as a compliance filing for inclusion in the formal file, one with the Communications Division, and serve one on the complainant. The city of Arvin is satisfied with this resolution of its complaint, which was discussed at the June 15, 1978 hearing.

We find that Pacific has substantially improved telephone service in the Arvin area, but that its service in the Arvin area should be monitored. The Commission concludes that, except as granted herein, the relief requested by the city of Arvin should be denied, without prejudice, but Pacific's service achievement should be monitored through the filing of service reports as ordered herein.

Pacific should be commended upon its successful solution of the troublesome and complicated customer service complaints raised in this proceeding.

O R D E R

IT IS ORDERED that:

1. The Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company (Pacific) shall report in writing for each of the six months following the effective date of this order or until such further time that indexes for items a, b, and c meet General Order No. 133 standard levels for three consecutive months ~~the following~~ for the Arvin area: ✓ 9⁰/₂

- a. Customer Trouble Reports Index and Customer Trouble Reports Summary,
- b. Service Index or alternately raw data used to determine index (Dial Service Index),
- c. Dial tone speed, and

d. Number of observations made with service observing equipment.

2. The results of Pacific's Arvin to Bakersfield trunking study shall be filed within thirty days of the effective date of this order, indicating specific relief dates where necessary.

3. Except to the extent of the relief granted herein, the complaint is denied, without prejudice.

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

Dated at San Francisco, California, this 30th day of JANUARY, 1979.

Richard D. Gwalt
President
Norman L. Sturgeon
Clair T. DeLoach

Commissioners

Commissioner John E. Bryson
Present but not participating.

Commissioner Leonard M. Grimes, Jr.
Present but not participating.