

SW/ks

ORIGINAL

Decision No. 90545 JUL 17 1979

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

PAUL T. EYE,

Complainant,

vs.

GENERAL TELEPHONE COMPANY OF
CALIFORNIA, a corporation,

Defendant.

Case No. 10700
(Filed December 11, 1978)

Paul T. Eye, for himself,
complainant.

Dale W. Johnson and Susan E.
Amerson, Attorneys at Law,
for defendant.

O P I N I O N

Complainant, Paul T. Eye, seeks an order requiring defendant, General Telephone Company of California, to immediately provide adequate telephone service in the Ontario, Upland, and Rancho Cucamonga area.

Public hearing was held before Administrative Law Judge N. R. Johnson in Los Angeles on March 19, 1979 and the matter was submitted. Testimony was presented on behalf of complainant by himself, by one of defendant's subscribers, and by one of defendant's employees, Mr. Nation, appearing as an adverse witness under the provisions of Section 776 of the Evidence Code. Testimony was presented on behalf of defendant by Mr. Nation and by Mr. Shultz, the General Traffic Facilities Manager.

Complainant's Position

Testimony presented on behalf of complaint indicated that:

1. In the city of Upland it is almost impossible to complete a telephone call on Monday and Friday afternoons even within the exchange. This condition has prevailed for at least seven months.

2. To complete a call in Area Code 213 it is necessary to dial a number several times.

3. When calls cannot be completed due to inadequate facilities and it is necessary to contact an operator for assistance, the subscriber is charged for an operator-assisted call.

4. Old outdated equipment being replaced in the Ontario office with electronic switching equipment is installed in other central offices including Upland.

5. Defendant was unable to move its engineering personnel into a new office in Upland because of inadequate telephone service.

6. Telephone problems have existed for more than one year and are getting worse rather than better.

7. Complainant has had to work Monday and Friday evenings on numerous occasions because he was unable to use the telephone during the day.

Defendant's Position

Testimony presented on behalf of defendant indicated that:

1. Complainant established telephone service for a one-party residence line on July 29, 1976 and superseded to a one-party business line on February 28, 1979.

7/12/79²

2. During the most recent 12 months complainant registered three trouble reports with defendant's repair center. Two of these were "can't call out" calls which were found upon testing to be satisfactory. The third trouble report was a no dial tone condition which defendant states was due to a central office overload condition.

3. In addition to his residence telephone complainant also has a business telephone at the same address. Complainant's business service superseded a like service in the name of Mr. William G. Gurich.

4. During the past 12 months, nine trouble reports were made for this latter business service. These nine trouble reports consisted of five "can't call out" calls, one intercom bell inoperative, one "can't be called", one long distance cut-off, and one miscellaneous. According to the record, the circuits tested satisfactory in all instances, except two "can't call out" calls which were traced to overload conditions in the Upland central office.

5. Because of the reported trouble a special inspection was made of complainant's residence telephone facilities. An outside inspection of utility plant was completed to complainant's residence, but defendant's personnel were denied access to the premises so an inspection of the telephone instrument could not be made. ✓

6. If a calling customer informs the operator he is having trouble in dialing, he is not billed for an operator-assisted call.

7. The rate of growth of the Upland central office area varied between 5½ and 7 percent during the 1970-1975 period and was 8.9 percent for 1976, 8.0 percent for 1977, and 8.9 percent for 1978.

8. The total calls originating in the Upland central office grew at a rate of approximately 9 percent per year for the period 1971 through 1976, 14.8 percent for 1977, and 15 percent for 1978.

9. The total originating toll calls grew 24.2 percent in 1977 and 25.3 percent in 1978.

10. Additional equipment has a lead time of approximately 20 months. During 1978 the Upland central office station grew 23 percent faster than anticipated, the toll traffic grew 20 percent faster than anticipated, the operator-handled toll calls grew 5 percent more than anticipated, and the operator assistance calls grew 12 percent more than anticipated. Such abnormally high growth was impossible for defendant's engineers to predict.

11. To catch up with this abnormally rapid growth equipment installation people were concentrated in the Upland central office, working around the clock seven days per week.

12. Between July 1978 and April 1979 defendant will have increased call directors by 45 percent, translator capacity by 50 percent, the number of toll trunks by 41 percent, and inter-office trunking facilities by 21 percent. In addition, 1,500 additional selectors are being installed, additional switchboard positions are being installed in the Ontario office, and 18 operators and one supervisor are being added to the staff.

13. The cost of the above-described equipment will exceed \$2,500,000.

14. It is anticipated that when the above equipment is completely installed, the Upland central office service conditions will be within or exceed defendant's normally high standards.

Discussion

It is apparent from the record that the telephone service provided by defendant in the Upland central office left much to be desired. According to the record these deficiencies in the quality of telephone service are directly attributable to defendant's failure to anticipate and provide for the unusually rapid growth rate experienced in the Upland exchange.

It is clear that defendant has expended considerable time, effort, and money in an attempt to bring the Upland exchange service up to a satisfactory level. According to defendant, the service in the Upland area should meet or exceed defendant's standards by May 1, 1979. It is hoped that such will be the case. We would, however, be remiss in our obligation to the general public if we do not provide for verification of these expectations. The order that follows will so provide.

It should be noted that complainant objects strenuously to defendant's replacing allegedly outdated obsolete equipment in its Ontario central office and installing such equipment in the Upland central office. It is clear from the record that the step equipment in the Ontario office was replaced by electronic switching equipment. Such step equipment is still in use in a considerable portion of defendant's service area, including the Upland office, and performing its functions adequately within the load parameters encompassed in its design. To provide much needed additional capacity at the Upland office by installing the replaced step equipment from the Ontario office at the Upland office would appear to be a practical method of increasing the Upland office capacity at a minimum cost. Such equipment is obviously usable and functional or it would not be installed.

Findings of Fact

1. The rate of growth of defendant's Upland central office area varied between 5½ and 7 percent during the 1970-1975 period and was 8.9 percent for 1976, 8.0 percent for 1977, and 8.9 percent for 1978.

2. The total calls originating in defendant's Upland central office grew at a rate of approximately 9 percent per year for the period 1971 through 1976, 14.8 percent for 1977, and 15 percent for 1978. The total originating toll calls grew 24.2 percent in 1977 and 25.3 percent in 1978.

3. The lead time for defendant to add additional equipment is approximately 20 months. During 1978 defendant's Upland central office station grew 23 percent faster than anticipated, the toll traffic grew 20 percent faster than anticipated, the operator-handled toll calls grew 5 percent more than anticipated, and the operator assistance calls grew 12 percent more than anticipated.

4. The telephone service rendered complainant by defendant was inadequate at the time the complaint was filed.

5. The inadequate telephone service was caused by defendant's inaccurate assessment of future growth in the Upland exchange and its inability to obtain substantially increased capacity for central office equipment and trunking within a relatively short period of time.

6. In the 10-month period from July 1978 through April 1979 defendant will have installed in excess of \$2,500,000 of plant in an effort to upgrade the telephone service in the Upland exchange.

7. Defendant should report on Upland service indices until these indices meet the General Order No. 133 standard levels for three consecutive months.

Conclusion of Law

The relief requested should be granted to the extent set forth in the ensuing order.

O R D E R

IT IS ORDERED that:

1. General Telephone Company of California (General) shall perform a study of the quality of service being rendered in the Upland exchange subsequent to May 1, 1979. Such a study is to include demand/capacity analysis and physical inspection of all central office equipment, intraoffice and interoffice trunking, and outside plant facilities.

2. Within sixty days after the effective date of this order, General shall submit a summary of the results of the study required by Ordering Paragraph 1, together with the plans, cost estimates, and construction schedule for implementing improvements, if any, required to conform its standard of service to the uniform standards prescribed by General Order No. 133.

3. General shall report in writing within thirty days after the effective date of this order the latest monthly service indices for customer trouble reports per 100 stations, dial tone speed, dial service, and toll operator answering time and monthly thereafter until such time that these indices meet the General Order No. 133 standard levels for three consecutive months for the Upland area; and for any of these indices which do not meet the standard levels, an explanation as to why it did not and a statement of action being taken to improve the service level and the estimated date of completion of the improvements.

4. Complainant is entitled to no other relief in this proceeding.

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

Dated at San Francisco, California, this 17th day of JULY, 1979.

John E. Byrne
President
Veronica L. Sturgeon
Richard D. Howell
Clair J. DeLoach
Donald W. ...
Commissioners