

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

COMMISSION ADVISORY AND COMPLIANCE DIVISION
Telecommunications Branch

RESOLUTION NO. T-13044
January 27, 1989

R E S O L U T I O N

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING METROMEDIA TELECOMMUNICATIONS INC. (U-2078-C) A RATE INCREASE OF \$1.00 PER PAGING CALL FOR ALL PAGING CALLS IN EXCESS OF ONE THOUSAND PAGING CALLS PER UNIT PER MONTH FOR TONE ONLY OR NUMERIC DISPLAY PAGING SERVICE.

SUMMARY

By Advice Letter No. 8, filed on October 11, 1988, Metromedia Telecommunications Inc. (MTI) desires to charge \$1.00 per paging call in excess of one thousand (1000) paging calls per unit per month for tone only or numeric display paging service. This is a rate increase, since subscribers of these services previously had no limit on the number of calls received per month.

An exception will be made, however, for those paging units used in connection with public emergencies, public health or public safety, and the medical profession. It is unlikely that this increase will add significantly to the gross revenue of MTI in any such event, the increase would be minimal. The basic purpose of this additional charge is not revenue production, but additional deterrent on use of a paging unit for drug traffic. MTI has notified its customers of this rate increase request and no protests have been received. We find the request to be reasonable and therefore, authorize a charge of \$1.00 per paging call in excess of one thousand paging calls per unit per month, for tone only or numeric display paging service.

BACKGROUND

MTI has expressed concern that there has been a growing use of pagers by drug dealers for illegal pursuits. The ease of use of pagers in general, and the ability to send coded messages with display pagers in particular, have unfortunately proved very valuable to those involved in drugs and drug trafficking.

MTI is obviously very concerned about this misuse of its service. Any potential connection between MTI and the devastating effects of drugs in our community is dismaying on a business and personal level to everyone associated with MTI.

From MTI's past experience, it has been determined that those involved with drug activity are excessive system users, sometimes generating 5000 or more pages for one pager in a single month. MTI does not expect to derive extra revenue from this charge due to the fact that the overall charge will discourage the use of MTI's paging services for drug related purposes.

Since 1000 pages would represent the receipt of 45 pages each business day of the month, it is clear that such use would be highly unlikely under normal circumstances. That being the case, MTI does not expect that this proposed rate increase will create problems for the vast majority of its customers.

DISCUSSION

This filing in effect represents a rate increase since some subscribers who previously did not pay for certain paging calls (in excess of 1,000) will now be required to pay \$1.00 a piece for such calls. Staff has investigated the current average number of paging calls per subscriber per month and found that number to be less than 350. This figure is well below the proposed cap of 1,000 per month. Since the overwhelming majority of MTI's customers will not be affected by this rate increase, and since all medical and public safety officials are exempted (these pagers will continue to receive an unlimited amount of calls), we will therefore allow the utility to charge a rate of \$1.00 per paging call for all paging calls in excess of one thousand paging calls per unit per month for tone only or numeric display paging service.

MTI has notified its subscribers of this filing as required under our General Order 96-A, Section 6. No protests have been received.

FINDINGS

The Commission finds that the rates, charges and conditions authorized in this resolution are just and reasonable and present rates, charges, and conditions, as they differ from the rates, charges, and conditions authorized in this resolution are for the future unjust and unreasonable; and good cause appearing,

IT IS ORDERED that:

- (1) Authority is granted to make the above revisions effective on January 27, 1989.
- (2) MTI shall specifically identify in its tariffs those public or private professionals who are exempt from this limit.
- (3) Revised Cal. PUC sheets nos. 76-T, 77-T of Metromedia's tariff shall be marked to show that such sheets were authorized by resolution of the PUC of the State of California, Resolution No. T-13044.

The effective date of this Resolution is today.

I certify that this Resolution was adopted by the Public Utilities Commission at its regular meeting on January 27, 1989. The following Commissioners approved it:

G. MITCHELL WILK
President
FREDERICK R. DUDA
STANLEY W. HULETT
JOHN B. CHANLAN
Commissioners


Executive Director

