

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Commission Advisory & Compliance Division
Telecommunications Branch

RESOLUTION T-14686
November 6, 1991

R E S O L U T I O N

RESOLUTION T-14686. REQUEST FOR AUGMENTATION OF THE ANNUAL BUDGET FOR THE YEAR 1991 TO PROVIDE FOR DEAF AND DISABLED TELECOMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT AND SERVICE PROGRAMS (PU CODE SECTION 2881 AND FOLLOWING) PURSUANT TO DECISION 89-05-060.

BY LETTER FROM THE DEAF AND DISABLED TELECOMMUNICATIONS PROGRAM ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE DATED SEPTEMBER 18, 1991, PER DECISION 89-05-060 (INVESTIGATION 87-11-031).

SUMMARY

By this Resolution, the Commission approves an augmentation of \$766,815 to the Deaf and Disabled Telecommunications Program Administrative Committee's (DDTPAC) annual budget for the year 1991 to provide for deaf and disabled telecommunications equipment and service programs, pursuant to Section 2881 and following of the Public Utilities Code.

The DDTPAC requested the budget augmentation in a letter dated September 18, 1991 to the Commission's Executive Director. No comments or protests were received.

BACKGROUND

Decision (D.) 89-05-060, issued on May 26, 1989 as the result of Investigation (I.) 87-11-031, established the Commission review process for the proposed annual budget submitted by DDTPAC. The DDTPAC submitted its 1991 proposed budget to the Commission on November 1, 1990; copies were served to all interested parties in I.87-11-031 on the same date. Comments were received from various interested parties, and the Commission decided to reduce the budget as submitted by the DDTPAC from \$32,865,006 to \$31,857,150. The 1991 budget was approved by the Commission in Resolution T-14283 on February 21, 1991.

On September 18, 1991 the DDTPAC submitted a letter to the Commission's Executive Director requesting additional funds for the 1991 budget. The DDTPAC indicated that the \$766,815 in additional funds was necessary due to an unanticipated increase in call volumes at both the California Relay Service (CRS) and

at Operator Services for the deaf (OSD). In line with the budget process mandated in D.89-05-060, the DDTPAC's request for a budget augmentation was served to all interested parties in I.87-11-031 on September 30, 1991, accompanied by a letter from the Commission's Executive Director. The letter established a 15-day comment period, then 15 days for reply comments. No comments were received.

Through state legislation, the Commission has implemented three main telecommunications programs to meet the needs of deaf, severely hearing-impaired and disabled California residents:

- o Telecommunications Devices for the Deaf (TDD) distribution initiated by Senate Bill 597 (Chapter 1142, 1979);
- o A Dual Party Relay system to connect deaf or severely hearing-impaired persons with persons of normal hearing initiated by Senate Bill 244 (Chapter 741, 1983);
- o Supplemental Telecommunications Equipment for the disabled initiated by Senate Bill 60 (Chapter 585, 1985).

Those programs are all funded out of the DDTPAC's annual budget.

DISCUSSION

The DDTPAC has indicated that the requested budget augmentation is necessary due to an unexpected increase in call volumes at both CRS and OSD. We are aware that one element of the budget process is to make necessary projections on call volumes. However, the estimates prepared for 1991 were too low.

It was the intent of the legislature in Senate Bill 244 to facilitate telephone communications between deaf or hearing-impaired individuals with hearing persons. The increase in call volumes can be viewed as a measure of the success of the program.

One possible solution is that CRS and OSD services should be curtailed for the remainder of the calendar year in order to stay within the DDTPAC's budget for the current year. However, this Commission believes that curtailment of services is not in the best interests of CRS/OSD users, nor is this Commission inclined to order a diminution in these essential services. Our Commission Advisory and Compliance Division has examined DDTPAC's proposed augmentation and has determined that it is needed to continue the current level of service through the end of 1991.

However, we are concerned that the estimates for 1991 were low, which necessitated a budget augmentation.

November 6, 1991

FINDINGS

1. The California Relay Services and Operator Services for the Deaf provide an essential service to Californians, which must be continued at the current levels, with no curtailment in service to users.
2. The proposed augmentation of \$766,815 in the 1991 budget for the Deaf and Disabled Telecommunications Program Administrative Committee is necessary to allow the program to continue without curtailment of service to users.
3. The DDTPAC should take care in its projections of call volumes for its proposed 1992 budget so that future mid-year augmentations will not be necessary.

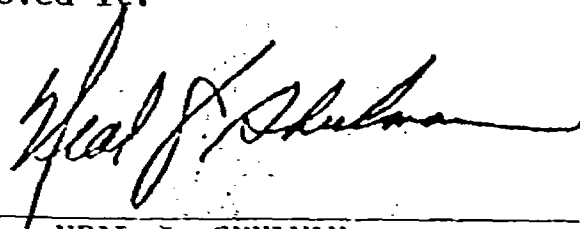
THEREFORE, IT IS ORDERED that:

1. The 1991 Deaf and Disabled Telecommunications Programs' annual budget of \$31,857,150 is augmented by \$766,815 to \$32,623,965.
2. The Executive Director shall provide a copy of this Resolution to the interested parties in I.87-11-031.

The effective date of this Resolution is today.

I hereby certify that this Resolution was adopted by the Public Utilities Commission at its regular meeting on November 6, 1991. The following Commissioners approved it:

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



NEAL J. SHULMAN
Executive Director