

September 16, 1999

*Stakeholders and CPUC Staff,*

*This 1999 - 2000 California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) Business Plan describes the Commission's direction and priorities for fiscal year 1999 - 2000, and suggests industry and regulatory trends we see as the new millennium approaches. Several Commissioners also have taken this opportunity to explain their individual interest areas and focus.*

*Throughout this Business Plan you will see how we intend to streamline processes and/or regulations to achieve timely, effective policy and decision-making in the interests of stakeholders, the public, and ultimately, the State.*

*We will build on collaborative relationships developed with stakeholders, agencies with which we share responsibilities, the Legislature, Governor's Office, and oversight agencies. We sought your input into the development of this Business Plan as you articulated your priorities, sought your comments on the Draft of this Plan in August, and hope that this Plan has addressed them and melded them with Commission initiatives and proceedings now ongoing.*

*You will find here goals, project and program priorities, major objectives and the strategies for achieving them, staff allocated to achieve them, and dates by which we expect to accomplish objectives. You will also find good government initiatives that we have begun implementing. Inspired by the Governor's Office of Innovation in Government, we are reaching out to consumers, employees, and industries for ideas to improve our organization, processes and workplace.*

*Commissioners and Management use the business planning process to plan and adjust workload and allocation of resources. We track our progress in achieving the goals and objectives outlined here, and measure achievement through key performance indicators, both as individual divisions and as an agency. We report our progress to the Commission and to the public at Commission decision-making meetings, and in our agency's annual report.*

*This Plan should enable stakeholders, staff, legislators, and oversight agencies to see their role in helping to shape and implement the Commission's regulatory agenda. As part of our business planning process, Division Directors periodically invite industry stakeholders to informal meetings to discuss the matters they intend to bring to the Commission for decision in future months. We respect their need for timely resolution of the issues they bring, and strive to be responsive while balancing them with the priorities set forth in this plan.*

*Internal initiatives, or external factors such as unanticipated stakeholder filings or new legislation may pose new challenges to this planned workload for*

1999 - 2000. The Commission may also desire to shift priorities. If addressing new legislation or any new matter requires a shift in Commission priorities due to resource constraints, delaying other proceedings, the affected Division Directors will identify resource and time needs for Commissioners. The Commission then may invite interested stakeholders, including legislators, to discuss with us, informally or formally, the ramifications and/or the desirability of priority shifts. Commissioners will make the final determination about whether to shift priorities or not, and will advise stakeholders of major CPUC Business Plan priority changes at any of the scheduled bi-monthly public Commission meetings.

In last year's CPUC Business Plan, we identified the goals below as our overarching agency goals. They continue to be as relevant today... and for the first years of the new millennium. And in keeping with the new beginnings the millennium will bring, we add a goal to make this Commission a more responsive and innovative agency.

- ◆ *Protecting consumers through regulatory frameworks that promote fair competition, and safe, reliable service. Adding complaint and dispute resolution methods to resolve customer/service provider disputes. Taking prompt action to address illegal or abusive business practices or services. Educating consumers about changing utility markets and how changes will affect them. Expanding our ongoing outreach efforts to communities throughout California.*
- ◆ *Introducing and facilitating competition between former monopoly utilities and viable new market participants to lead to customer choice of providers and new or improved services and products.*
- ◆ *Assuring universal service – access by all Californians to at least basic, essential, safe, reliable services. Services considered “essential” are likely to change over time as technology and societal values change.*
- ◆ *Overseeing remaining monopoly services.*
- ◆ *Introducing innovations to ensure that the way the Commission conducts business is fully aligned with the public's needs and expectations.*

*Richard A. Bilas, President*

*Wesley M. Franklin, Executive Director*