

COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY
BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

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In the Matter of:

THE COMPLAINTS OF GRACE C. HURT,))
HAZARD, KENTUCKY, AND OTHERS))
AGAINST THE LESLIE COUNTY))
TELEPHONE COMPANY)) CASE NO. 8398

O R D E R

On November 23, 1981, the Commission received a letter from Grace C. Hurt, Hazard, Kentucky, and an accompanying petition from subscribers of the Leslie County Telephone Company ("Petitioners") concerning service complaints. The letter requested a hearing to consider those complaints.

A hearing was held on January 7, 1982, in the offices of the Public Service Commission at Frankfort, Kentucky. All parties of interest were allowed to be heard. The Division of Consumer Protection in the Department of Law intervened on behalf of consumers.

Discussion

Petitioners testified to several problems which they are presently experiencing. These include noise, crosstalk, direct-distance dialing ("DDD") problems, other parties on private lines, calls not going through and having to be redialed, no dial tone, inability to hear other party and lines disconnecting or going dead in the middle of a conversation.

Leslie County Telephone Company ("Leslie Tel. Co.") testified that the majority of the problems were caused by the failure of an auxiliary battery charger in the Dwarf Central Office, a condition that existed from the early part of November, 1981, until the first part of December, 1981. Additionally, Leslie Tel. Co. testified concerning the adequacy of toll-free or extended area service ("EAS") trunks between Dwarf and the General Telephone Company ("General") exchange in Hazard, problems with operator assistance supplied by General out of Lexington, Kentucky, and problems with toll switching and trunking services supplied by General.

The Commission does not criticize Leslie Tel. Co. for the failure of the auxiliary battery charger. This charger only operates when the main charger cannot adequately keep the central office batteries charged. Therefore, routine central office maintenance would not normally detect this problem until telephone service had seriously deteriorated. In this respect, Leslie Tel. Co. must depend on service complaints to indicate deterioration of service. The evidence presented does not show a record of such complaints prior to this petition.

However, the record is clear that other service problems existed both before and after the failure and repair of the auxiliary battery charger. It is these problems, and continuing problems with services provided by General, to which this Order is addressed.

Findings and Order

The Commission, having considered the record in this matter, and being advised, is of the opinion and finds that:

1) Leslie Tel. Co. should undertake the following investigations and report its findings to the Commission:

- a) A determination of the current operating condition of the Dwarf Central Office;
- b) A determination of the current adequacy of the routine maintenance program applicable to the Dwarf Central Office equipment;
- c) A determination of the current adequacy and condition of outside-plant facilities associated with the Dwarf Central Office;
- d) A determination of existing problem areas both in central office equipment and outside-plant facilities in the Dwarf exchange; and
- e) A review of repair service procedures not only to insure that the service objective relating to repair service (807 KAR 5:061E, Section 28-4) is being met, but also that repair service commitments to subscribers are kept on a timely basis.

2) Leslie Tel. Co. and General should jointly undertake the following investigations and report their findings to the Commission:

- a) A determination of the current adequacy of operator assistance services supplied by General to Leslie Tel. Co.;
- b) A determination of the current adequacy of EAS trunks and associated central office equipment between the Dwarf and Hazard exchanges; and
- c) A determination of the current adequacy of toll switching and trunking services supplied by General to Leslie Tel. Co.

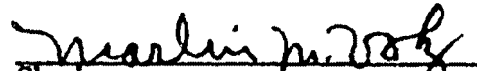
3) Leslie Tel. Co. and General should, following completion of this investigation, develop and implement corrective actions to alleviate any problem areas which are found as a result of the investigations conducted in accordance with Findings (1) and (2).

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that Leslie Tel. Co. shall make an investigation of its Dwarf exchange in accordance with Findings (1) and (3) of this Order, and shall file its results with the Commission within 60 days of the date of this Order.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that Leslie Tel. Co. and General shall investigate jointly-provided telephone services in accordance with findings (2) and (3) of this Order, and shall file their results with the Commission within 60 days of the date of this Order.

Done at Frankfort, Kentucky, this 9th day of March, 1982.

PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION


Chairman


Vice Chairman


Commissioner

ATTEST:

Secretary