

**DOCKET NO. 12897-U**

**ORDER APPROVING UNIVERSAL SERVICE FUND REFUND**

Pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 46-4-161(d), the Commission hereby approves a refund from the Universal Service Fund (USF) to firm residential customers in the amount of \$40 million. An additional refund of \$10 a month for bills rendered on or after January 1, 2001 through March 31, 2001 for low income/senior citizens is also approved, for a total additional refund of approximately \$909,000. Accordingly, the total refund amount to all customers is approximately \$40,909,000. O.C.G.A. § 46-4-161(d) provides that “[a]ny amounts remaining in [the] Fund at the end of a fiscal year shall be available for refund to retail customers in such manner as the Commission shall deem equitable.” Staff has estimated the amount remaining at the end of this fiscal year is approximately \$47 million. The Commission finds and concludes that the refund provided for herein is equitable.

The refund methodology to be utilized for the \$40 million divides the total refund by the number of firm residential customers. This approach provides the same refund amount to all customers, is easier to administer, less expensive to implement and less confusing to recipients. Eligible customers will be determined by a market share count on the 20<sup>th</sup> day of the preceding month. The refund shall be in the amount of \$14 per month for two months and the credit shall be made to all firm residential customers during the February and March 2001 billing cycles. The additional \$10 refund for low income/senior citizens shall be made during the January, February and March 2001 billing cycles.

All certificated marketers are responsible for providing the credits to all firm residential customers and eligible low income/senior citizens. Commission Rule 515-7-5-.06(5) states: “When a USF refund goes to a certificated marketer of natural gas, it shall be incumbent upon such marketer to pass through such refund to its retail customers as a condition of retaining its certificate of authority.” The marketers shall provide the refunds as separate line item credit on the customers’ bills, identified as “GA PSC Ordered Credit.” The Commission finds that marketers shall refund to eligible customers the entire amount of the credit (\$28 to all firm residential customers, with an additional

\$30 to all eligible low income/senior citizen customers (\$58)) and shall not retain any portion of the credit.

The Commission finds that the escrow agent shall wire transfer approximately \$303,000 to Atlanta Gas Light Company (AGLC) on December 21, 2000 and AGLC shall wire transfer to the certified marketers a proportionate amount based on the market share data calculation as of December 20, 2000 to refund to the low income/senior citizen customers during the January, 2001 billing cycle. AGLC is directed to transfer the funds to the certified marketers the next working day after the market share data is determined.

Likewise, the escrow agent shall wire transfer approximately \$20,303,000 to AGLC on January 22, 2001 and AGLC shall wire transfer to the certified marketers a proportionate amount based on the market share data calculation as of January 20, 2001 to refund all firm residential customers during the February, 2001 billing cycle. AGLC is directed to transfer the funds to the certified marketers the next working day after the market share data is determined.

Finally, the escrow agent shall wire transfer approximately \$20,303,000 to AGLC on February 21, 2001 and AGLC shall wire transfer to the certified marketers a proportionate amount based on the market share data calculation as of February 20, 2001 to refund all firm residential customers during the March, 2001 billing cycle. AGLC is directed to transfer the funds to the certified marketers the next working day after the market share data is determined.

Certified marketers are directed to promptly provide AGLC wiring instructions for the refund. Instructions should be sent to: Atlanta Gas Light Company, Attention: Connie McIntyre, P. O. Box 4569, Atlanta, Georgia 30302.

Any portion of the \$40,909,000 that has not been transferred to certified marketers shall be wire transferred back to the Universal Service Fund by AGLC by May 1, 2001.

AGLC is directed to provide the Commission a monthly disbursement report indicating, by certified marketer, the amount transferred to each.

**WHEREFORE IT IS ORDERED**, that all Findings, Conclusions and Decisions contained within are adopted as Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law and Decisions of this Commission.

**ORDERED FURTHER**, that the refund to all firm residential customers shall be provided by the marketers providing gas service to the customers. Marketers shall provide the refund as a separate line item credit on the customers' bills, identified as "GA PSC Ordered Credit".

**ORDERED FURTHER**, that marketers shall refund the entire amount of the refund and shall not retain any portion of the refund.

**ORDERED FURTHER**, that AGLC shall make the transfers set forth above and shall wire transfer back to the Universal Service Fund any portion of the \$40,909,000 refund not transferred to the marketers.

**ORDERED FURTHER**, that AGLC provide the Commission a monthly disbursement report indicating the amount transferred to each certified marketer.

**ORDERED FURTHER**, that jurisdiction over this proceeding is expressly retained for the purpose of entering such further order or orders as this Commission may deem proper.

**ORDERED FURTHER**, any motion for reconsideration, rehearing or oral argument shall not stay the effectiveness of this Order unless expressly ordered by the Commission.

The above by action of the Commission in Administrative Session on the 19<sup>th</sup> day of September, 2000.

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Helen O'Leary  
Executive Secretary

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Bob Durden  
Chairman

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DATE

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