

BEFORE

THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF OHIO

In the Matter of the Commission Ordered )  
Investigation of Ameritech Ohio Relative to )  
Its Compliance with Certain Provisions of ) Case No. 99-938-TP-COI  
the Minimum Telephone Service Standards )  
Set Forth in Chapter 4901:1-5, Ohio Admini- )  
strative Code. )

ENTRY

The Commission finds:

- (1) The Commission's staff, as part of its overall responsibility to monitor industry compliance with Commission directives, including the minimum telephone service standards (MTSS), has been informally monitoring telecommunications utilities including the larger local exchange carriers (LECs) in Ohio. Of the large LECs, the staff has monitored the practices of Ameritech Ohio (Ameritech), GTE North Incorporated, Cincinnati Bell Telephone Company, and United Telephone Company of Ohio dba Sprint. A high-level matrix setting forth the results of the staff's investigations with the aforementioned large LECs is attached as appendix A. Initial observations reflect that Ameritech's policies deviate substantially from those policies of the other large LECs.
- (2) Pursuant to specific directives of the Commission, the staff has been involved in ongoing investigations into Ameritech's compliance with the provisions of the MTSS set forth in Chapter 4901:1-5, Ohio Administrative Code (O.A.C.). These previous investigations resulted in stipulations under which the company paid forfeitures and agreed upon specific performance benchmarks. See, Case No. 95-711-TP-COI (*In the Matter of the Investigation Into Ameritech Ohio's Compliance with Several Subsections of Chapter 4901:1-5, Ohio Administrative Code, Concerning the Minimum Local Exchange Company Telephone Service Standards*) and Case No. 98-181-TP-COI (*In the Matter of the Commission's Investigation of Ameritech Ohio Relative to Its Compliance with Certain Portions of the Minimum Telephone Service Standards Contained in Chapter 4901:1-5, of the Ohio Administrative Code*).

More recently, the Commission has directed our Consumer Services Department staff to follow up on the issue of missed installation appointments to verify that Ameritech is, in fact, tracking the number of missed installation appointments and, in such circumstances, crediting the customers appropriately. See, Case No. 98-1082-TP-AMT (*In the Matter of the Joint Application of SBC Communications Inc. SBC Delaware, Inc., Ameritech Corporation, and Ameritech Ohio for Consent and Approval of a Change of Control*).

- (3) Ameritech is a telephone company within the meaning of Section 4905.03(A)(2), Revised Code, and is a public utility subject to the ongoing jurisdiction and supervision of the Commission pursuant to Sections 4905.02, 4905.04, 4905.05, and 4905.06, Revised Code. Accordingly, Ameritech is required to comply with Section 4905.231, Revised Code, and Chapter 4901:1-5, O.A.C., which establish the minimum telephone service standards for the furnishing of adequate telephone service.
- (4) Based on these ongoing investigations, as further delineated in Finding (1), and the company's own documentation, as set forth in more detail in the attached appendix, the Commission's staff has identified certain areas of noncompliance with the current MTSS. In general, the staff believes that Ameritech:
  - (a) has continued to engage in the improper use of exceptions;
  - (b) has failed to fully adjust or credit customers' accounts for missed installation appointments;
  - (c) has failed to fully adjust or credit customer accounts for out-of-service conditions;
  - (d) has failed to fully adjust or credit customers' accounts for missed repair appointments;
  - (e) has failed to comply with the Commission's business office and repair center answer time intervals; and

- (f) has engaged in questionable marketing practices.
- (5) The attached report (Appendix B) of the staff details the findings and the bases for the staff's recommendations in much greater detail. The staff is concerned with Ameritech's MTSS reporting and underlying policies and practices and believes that Ameritech's compliance should be determined and appropriate actions taken by the Commission to resolve these matters.
- (6) The Commission believes that, based upon the foregoing and the attached report, further investigation of the issues cited by the staff is warranted. Accordingly, Ameritech shall have until September 1, 1999, to respond to the staff's issues and to file a report in this docket, explaining in detail why it should not be found to be in noncompliance with the MTSS and why it should not be required to make appropriate modifications as other large LECs have generally done. As part of this report, Ameritech must also set forth a detailed plan to remedy any areas of noncompliance.
- (7) In addition to the written report set forth above, the Commission finds that a hearing should be scheduled in this matter. The aforementioned hearing shall commence on September 21, 1999, at 1:30 p.m. at the offices of the Commission. A subsequent attorney examiner's entry will establish other relevant procedural time frames.

It is, therefore,

ORDERED, That, in accordance with Finding (6), Ameritech shall file a report in this docket on or before September 1, 1999. It is, further,

ORDERED, That a hearing be scheduled as set forth in Finding (7). It is, further,

ORDERED, That a copy of this entry be served upon Ameritech by certified mail.

THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF OHIO

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Alan R. Schriber, Chairman

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Ronda Hartman Fergus

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Craig A. Glazer

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Judith A. Jones

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Donald L. Mason

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