

## DIVISION OF COMMUNICATIONS

The Division of Communications assists the Commission in carrying out its duties as prescribed by the Code of Virginia. The Division monitors, enforces and makes recommendations on certain rates, tariffs, and operating procedures of investor-owned telecommunications utilities. The Division enforces service standards, assures compliance with tariff regulations, coordinates extended area service studies, enforces pay telephone regulations, assists in carrying out provisions of the 1996 Telecommunications Act, and prescribes depreciation rates. The staff testifies in rate, service, and generic hearings, and meets with the general public on communications issues and problems. The Division maintains territorial maps, performs special studies, monitors construction programs, and investigates and resolves consumer inquiries and complaints. The staff also monitors developments at the federal level, and prepares Commission responses where appropriate.

At the end of 2000, there were under the supervision of the Division:

|     |   |
|-----|---|
| 14  | Incumbent Investor-owned Local Exchange Telephone Companies |
| 6   | Cooperative Local Exchange Telephone Companies              |
| 154 | Competitive Local Exchange Telephone Companies              |
| 104 | Long Distance Telephone Companies                           |
| 521 | Private Pay Telephone Providers                             |

### SUMMARY OF 2000 ACTIVITIES

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| Consumer complaints and protests investigated                  | 4,642     |
| Telephone inquiries received                                   | 13,392    |
| Tariff revisions received:                                     |           |
| Incumbent Local Exchange Companies                             | 130       |
| Competitive Local Exchange Companies                           | 157       |
| Interexchange Companies  | 110       |
| Tariff sheets filed:   |           |
| Incumbent Local Exchange Companies                             | 2,919     |
| Competitive Local Exchange Companies                           | 7,040     |
| Interexchange Companies  | 1,143     |
| Cases in which staff members prepared testimony or reports     | 101       |
| Certificates of Convenience and Necessity granted or amended:  |           |
| Competitive Local Exchange Companies                           | 58        |
| Interexchange Companies  | 48        |
| Interconnection Agreements/Amendments Approved                 | 150       |
| FCC comments filed   | 1         |
| Extended Area Service studies completed or underway            | 15        |
| Service Surveillance and Results Analysis Provided Monthly on: |           |
| Access Lines   | 5,036,603 |
| Switching Offices  | 429       |
| Business Offices   | 37        |
| Repair Centers   | 15        |
| Pay Telephone Registration and Rules Enforcement provided on:  |           |
| Private pay telephone providers                                | 521       |
| Private pay telephones   | 15,831    |
| Local Exchange Company pay telephones                          | 35,695    |
| Pay telephone audits   | 218       |
| Complaints Investigated  | 15        |
| Visits to:   |           |
| Customer premises to resolve customer complaints               | 15        |
| Company premises to resolve customer complaints                | 8         |
| Company premises to review service performance                 | 33        |
| Company premises to inspect network reliability                | 23        |
| Company premises to investigate collocation exemption requests | 24        |
| Construction Program reviews                                   | 1         |

### OTHER:

Negotiated settlements with the four largest local exchange companies to significantly reduce the level of intrastate access charges.

Participated in settlement negotiations on Verizon South's Annual Informational Filing proceedings which resulted in \$200 million in refunds to customers.

Established an industry Collaborative Committee to facilitate the adoption of market opening measures in the local exchange market.

Assisted the Project Manager in Operations Support Testing proceeding.

Assisted the Commission in continued implementation of the Telecommunications Act of 1996.

Assisted Commission counsel with respect to formal rate, service or generic matters.

Pursued various activities related to the Commission's alternative plans for regulating telephone companies, including the following:

- Evaluated filings for one addition to existing competitive services
- Reviewed proposed service classifications for new services, and reclassifications for existing services
- Evaluated Individual Case Basis (ICB) and Special Assembly price filings

- Assisted in gathering monitoring data

Participated in matters affecting communications policy with federal agencies.

Prepared a report on Inmate Calling for the Speaker of the House.

Assisted with reports to the legislature and with developing telecommunications legislation.

Made presentations to trade and citizens groups, associations, and telephone companies.

Participated in matters affecting emergency 911 communications procedures with local government agencies and the Virginia Telecommunications Industry Association.

Provided guidance to the Atlantic Payphone Association.

Assisted payphone service providers in resolving operations issues with local exchange companies.

Enhanced the Division of Communications' web site to enable consumers to file complaints and post inquiries electronically.

Responded to questionnaires from the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners ("NARUC") and others with respect to telecommunications matters.

Reviewed construction budget of Verizon.

Met with local governing bodies and citizens groups with respect to local calling areas and service problems.

Worked with the Virginia Department for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing on monitoring Telecommunications Relay Service in Virginia.

Staff member serves on the NARUC Staff Subcommittee on Depreciation.

Staff member serves on the NARUC Staff Subcommittee on Communications.

Staff member serves on the NARUC Staff Subcommittee on Service Quality.