

## DIVISION OF COMMUNICATIONS

The Division of Communications assists the Commission in carrying out its duties as prescribed by the Code of Virginia. It oversees the continued implementation of competition in telecommunications markets with the goal of achieving an effective regulatory environment that balances the advancement of competitive markets with the protection of consumers. The Division assists the Commission in developing, implementing, and enforcing alternatives to traditional forms of regulation as competitive markets evolve. It monitors, enforces and makes interpretations 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, and assists in carrying out provisions of the federal Telecommunications Act of 1996. The Staff testifies in rate, service, and generic hearings, and meets with the 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 2003, there were under the supervision of the Division:

14	Incumbent Investor-owned Local Exchange Telephone Companies
191	Competitive Local Exchange Telephone Companies
141	Long Distance Telephone Companies
382	Payphone Service Providers

### SUMMARY OF 2003 ACTIVITIES

Consumer complaints and protests investigated	6,105
Telephone inquiries received	9,720
Tariff revisions received:	
Incumbent Local Exchange Companies	108
Competitive Local Exchange Companies	187
Interexchange Companies	132
Tariff sheets filed:	
Incumbent Local Exchange Companies	755
Competitive Local Exchange Companies	4,538
Interexchange Companies	1,548
Promotional Filings	
Incumbent Local Exchange Companies	61
Competitive Local Exchange Companies	144
Interexchange Companies	111
Cases in which staff members prepared testimony or reports	34
Certificates of Convenience and Necessity granted, Amended, or Canceled:	
Competitive Local Exchange Companies	39
Interexchange Companies	25
Interconnection Agreements/Amendments Approved or Dismissed	88
Extended Area Service studies completed or underway	6
Service Surveillance and Results Analysis Provided Monthly on:	
Telephone Companies	15
Access Lines	5,039,876
Payphone Registration and Rules Enforcement provided on:	
Local Exchange Company payphone service providers	14
Local Exchange Company payphones	26,833
Private payphone service providers	368
Private payphones	12,927
Payphone audits (2 Auditors)	842
Complaints Investigated	26
Court Cases	4
Visits to:	
Customer premises to resolve customer complaints	22
Company premises to resolve customer complaints	0
Company premises to review service performance	9
Construction Program reviews	3

#### OTHER:

Assisted the Commission in the continued implementation and operation of the federal Telecommunications Act of 1996.

Continued the Collaborative Committee on local competition market-opening measures:

- Reached consensus on performance standards and performance assurance plan for Verizon South.

Monitored Verizon Virginia's Performance Assurance Plan:

- Replicating monthly results
- Monitoring ongoing audit

Implemented new rules for localities to be certificated as local exchange companies.

Drafted proposed revised rules for interconnection agreements.

Proposed rules for retail service quality and 911 service.

Participated in state-wide public meetings regarding Hurricane Isabel.

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

*ANNUAL REPORT OF THE STATE CORPORATION COMMISSION*

Participated in matters affecting communications policy with federal agencies.

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

- 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

Continued outreach activities by making presentations to trade and citizens groups, associations, telephone companies, and a legislative committee.

Implemented database of payphone lines.

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

Conducted operational reviews with Verizon, Sprint, Cox, Comcast, Ntelos, and Shentel.

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

Managed Virginia's telephone number utilization program.

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

Staff member serves on the NARUC Staff Subcommittee on Communications.

Staff member serves on the NARUC Staff Subcommittee on Depreciation and Technology.

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

Staff member serves on the Advisory Council for the Virginia Department for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing.

Staff member serves on Homeland Security Infrastructure Committee.

Staff member served on Selection Committee for Telecommunications Relay Service.