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Chapter PSC 165

STANDARDS FOR TELEPHONE SERVICE

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**PSC 165.01 Equipment.** Equipment and lines shall be so constructed as to eliminate cross-talk and noise which interfere with the satisfactory transmission of messages. Each utility shall maintain in proper condition the lines, instruments, and other equipment used on its system. A program of periodical inspections, in addition to regular trouble and maintenance work, shall be put into operation, which will insure proper maintenance for all lines and equipment.

*Explanation of section PSC 165.01.* Present industry construction standards are designed to provide circuits having adequate transmission and which are free of objectionable cross-talk, interference, and other undesirable characteristics. All new construction should follow such standards. All central office, outside plant, and station equipment and facilities should be maintained in good operating condition. Rural lines and equipment should be inspected annually. A definite program of routine maintenance and cleaning should be scheduled for all unattended dial offices. Appropriate records of preventive maintenance procedures should be kept.

**PSC 165.02 Number of subscribers.** The number of subscribers on any one circuit shall not be greater than that consistent with adequate service.

*Explanation of section PSC 165.02.* The fill of all circuits should be consistent with the grades of service available. The fill of rural circuits should in no case exceed 10 subscribers. In rural rate areas, service of a higher grade should be rendered to subscribers on demand where reasonably possible but on a compensatory basis.

**PSC 165.03 Service between exchanges.** When facilities for communication are furnished by one or more utilities between exchanges, the circuits connecting such exchanges shall be full metallic when traffic and service conditions make it necessary and no subscribers' instruments shall be regularly connected thereto. A utility may be required to furnish through service between exchanges alone or jointly with other utilities. In special cases, public or semipublic pay stations may be connected to through circuits until such time as the traffic warrants additional circuits.

**PSC 165.04 Traffic studies; emergency service.** Each exchange shall have sufficient switchboard capacity, a sufficient operating force, or sufficient automatic equipment, to handle the traffic at all times with reasonable facility. Traffic studies shall be made and recorded, of such extent and frequency, as to demonstrate to the commission that sufficient equipment is in use and that an adequate operating force is employed. Every utility operating an exchange shall provide uninterrupted emergency service if, at certain periods during the 24 hours, regular service is not available.

*Explanation of section PSC 165.04.* At manual exchanges, traffic studies should be made at least quarterly to assure adequate switchboard capacity and operator coverage thereof. At dial exchanges, traffic studies should be scheduled to the extent necessary to assure that important trunk and equipment groups are of adequate capacity.

**PSC 165.05 Exchanges, service.** At exchanges serving 500 or more subscribers, 94 percent of the calls should be answered within 10 seconds. At all other regular exchanges, 90 percent of the calls should be answered within 10 seconds. At small exchanges operated in connection with other work, slower service may be adequate. Calls should be carefully supervised and disconnection made promptly after conversations are completed.

**PSC 165.06 Preventing service interruption.** In order to prevent interruption to or impairment of service, arrangements shall be made for another source of lighting, fire protection, reserve operators, operators' headsets, ringing facilities, and for power and other reserve equipment where the same can be provided.

**PSC 165.065 Protection of utility facilities.** A public utility upon receipt of written notice as required by section 66.047 (2), Wis. Stats., from the property owner or from a contractor of work which may affect its utilities used for serving the public:

(1) Shall investigate and decide what action, if any, must reasonably be taken to protect or alter utility facilities, in order to protect service to the public and to avoid unnecessary damage, such as identifying in a suitable manner the location of any underground utility facilities which may be affected by the work.

(2) The utility shall take such action as is reasonably and legally necessary to protect, remove, alter, or reconstruct its facilities, and shall perform such work with reasonable dispatch taking into account the conditions to be met, provided that nothing in this rule shall be deemed to affect any right which the utility may have to require advance payment or adequate assurance of payment of the reasonable cost thereof to the utility by the property owner or contractor.

(3) The utility may, in order to protect its interests, require that the owner or contractor perform certain work upon that part of the service piping or wiring on or being removed from the property upon which the excavating, building, or wrecking operations are being performed.

(4) This rule is not intended to affect the responsibility of the contractor or owner, or the liability or legal rights of any party.

**History:** Cr. Register, June, 1962, No. 78, eff. 7-1-62.

**PSC 165.07 Rules for operators.** Suitable rules and instructions shall be adopted by the utility and followed by the operators covering the phraseology and methods to be employed by the operators handling regular, special and toll calls.

*Explanation of section PSC 165.07.* Operators should be instructed that under no circumstances should they repeat or divulge the nature of any local or long distance call. Care must be taken to avoid diverting business from a subscriber to his competitors or discriminating between subscribers in the attention given their calls.

**PSC 165.08 Directories.** (1) Exchange alphabetical telephone directories shall be made available to customers without charge for each local main station and extension. The listings of customers in foreign exchanges to which extended-area service is provided shall also be made available to all local customers. Where such listings are not actually furnished all customers, the utility shall at least annually notify its customers of the availability of such listings by bill inserts or other appropriate means. Inclusion of all listings for the calling area within a single volume is recommended.

(2) Directories shall be revised at least annually. Exemptions from this requirement may be allowed in special cases, such as a dial conversion directory, when changed listings and new listings are not sufficient in number to cause serious inconvenience. A shorter directory interval may be necessary where the number of changed listings and new listings is abnormally large.

(3) The name of the utility, exchanges covered by the directory, month and year issued, and (in the case of automatic exchanges) the area code shall appear prominently on the front cover.

(4) Each directory shall contain the warning to party-line subscribers as required by section 941.35, Wis. Stats., a warning that placing nuisance calls is prohibited by law (section 947.01, Wis. Stats.), a list of common emergency numbers, a list of extended-area service points, and the repair service number, all prominently shown, and pertinent instructions concerning the use of local, extended-area, and toll service. The emergency numbers shall appear either on the inner or outer face of the front cover.

(5) A copy of each new directory shall be filed with the Public Service Commission.

**History:** 1-2-56; am. Register, March, 1964, No. 99, eff. 4-1-64.

**PSC 165.09 Interruptions, records.** Reasonable efforts shall be made to eliminate interruptions and acute irregularities in service, and to correct them promptly when they occur. Records shall be kept of all complaints, interruptions, or acute irregularities in the service, showing the date and time at which the same occurred or is reported, the nature of the trouble, the date and time cleared, final disposition and identification of employee making final disposition.

**PSC 165.10 Central office records.** All telephone utilities operating central offices shall have at their principal office adequate records or maps showing location, type, use and ownership of all rural and connecting lines as well as records or maps showing location and ownership of local exchange lines, cables and conduits.

**PSC 165.11 Toll service, suggestions.** No specific rules with regard to the adequacy of toll service are prescribed at this time but the following suggestions are offered. Toll service should be properly routed so as to be most efficient and to secure justice to the telephone utilities, where more than one utility is involved. In general, each utility should test all toll circuits early each morning and after storms in order that trouble may be promptly eliminated. On joint lines or when one utility uses the lines of another utility, trouble on circuits should be promptly reported to the utility responsible for the maintenance of the line. Accurate and convenient timing devices should be installed in order that toll charges may be correctly computed. The tone of voice used by operators is very important, particularly for toll service. They should cultivate not only a distinct articulation but low tones and pleasing voice. This would aid materially in giving satisfactory service at highest efficiency. A record of the condition of long distance circuits entering each exchange should be kept for the convenience of the utilities in properly maintaining their lines, and for the commission's information.