

DIVISION OF COMMUNICATIONS

The Division of Communications assists the Commission in carrying out its duties as prescribed by the Code of Virginia. It oversees and monitors the continued implementation of competition in jurisdictional landline telecommunications markets with the goal of achieving an effective regulatory environment that balances the advancement of competition with the protection of consumers. The Division assists the Commission in developing, implementing, and enforcing alternatives to traditional forms of regulation as competition evolves. It monitors, enforces, and makes interpretations on certain rates, tariffs, and operating procedures of investor-owned telecommunications utilities. With a major focus on public health and safety, the Division enforces service standards and investigates and resolves consumer inquiries and complaints. It assures compliance with tariff regulations, maintains territorial maps, coordinates extended area service studies, enforces pay telephone regulations, and performs special studies. The Staff testifies in rate, service, and generic hearings, and meets with the public on communications issues and problems. The Staff also assists in carrying out provisions of the Federal Telecommunications Act of 1996, monitors developments at the federal level, and prepares Commission responses where appropriate.

At the end of 2013, there were subject to the regulatory oversight of the Division:

14	Incumbent Investor-Owned Local Exchange Telephone Companies
152	Competitive Local Exchange Telephone Companies
101	Long Distance Telephone Companies
49	Payphone Service Providers
10	Operator Service Providers for Payphones

SUMMARY OF 2013 ACTIVITIES

Consumer Complaints Investigated:	2,709
Wireline Complaints	2,415
Wireless Complaints	294
Total Consumer Credit Adjustments:	\$137,459
Wireline Credit Adjustments	\$125,258
Wireless Credit Adjustments	\$12,201
Service Quality Oversight:	
Network Access Lines (reported as of June 30, 2013)	2,922,208
Tariff revisions received:	
Incumbent Local Exchange Companies	87
Competitive Local Exchange Companies	81
Interexchange Companies	10
Tariff sheets filed:	
Incumbent Local Exchange Companies	644
Competitive Local Exchange Companies	519
Interexchange Companies	27
Promotional Filings:	
Incumbent Local Exchange Companies	9
Competitive Local Exchange Companies	51
Interexchange Companies	0
Cases in which staff members prepared testimony, reports, or comments	13
Certificates of Convenience and Necessity:	
Competitive Local Exchange Companies	
Granted	9
Amended	2
Canceled	8
Interexchange Companies	
Granted	8
Amended	1
Canceled	3
Interconnection Agreements or Amendments approved or dismissed	47
Payphone registration and rules enforcement provided on:	
Local Exchange Company payphone service providers	7
Local Exchange Company payphones	272
Private payphone service providers	39
Private payphones	2,878
Payphone audits	0
Field visits and investigations	30

OTHER:

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

Conducted follow up 911 inspections at Verizon's central offices and continued monitoring compliance with the SCC's 911 safety and reliability requirements pursuant to Case No. PUC-2012-00042.

Conducted 911 audits in 12 central offices or remotes for seven companies.

Pursued various activities relating to the Commission's alternative plans for regulating telephone companies.

Represented the Commission during the General Assembly session on matters relating to telecommunications legislation.

Continued to permit companies to offer services on a non-tariffed basis as allowed by legislation passed in 2011. In 2013, 10 companies notified the division they will be offering some services without tariffs. Since the legislation became effective, 29 companies are offering some or all retail services on a non-tariffed basis.

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

Participated in matters affecting communications policy with federal agencies.

Submitted comments to the FCC concerning 911 resiliency and reliability.

Managed Virginia's telephone number utilization program.

Monitored Virginia Universal Service Plan (Lifeline) participation, reviewed and implemented revised FCC requirements, and participated in a multi-state Universal Service/Eligible Telecommunications Carrier group.

Monitored Verizon Virginia's Performance Assurance Plan.

Monitored and maintained Local Exchange Company bonds, received biannual reporting and monitoring information, and conducted required Gross Domestic Product Price Index calculations.

Participated in the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments 911 Telecommunications Network Steering Group.

Staff member serves on the NARUC Staff Subcommittee on Communications.

Continued outreach activities by making presentations to trade and citizen groups, associations, and telephone companies.