

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

SAFETY AND ENFORCEMENT DIVISION RESOLUTION SU-35
UTILITIES SAFETY BRANCH Date: September 7, 1995

R E S O L U T I O N

RESOLUTION SU-35, ORDER AUTHORIZING A CHANGE TO GENERAL ORDER NO. 95, RULE 20.5-A(1). THE CHANGE WOULD ALLOW THE VOLTAGE THRESHOLD FOR CLASS C COMMUNICATION CIRCUITS TO BE INCREASED FROM 90 VOLTS TO 150 VOLTS WITH UNLIMITED SYSTEM CAPACITY.

SUMMARY

1. In a letter to the Utilities Safety Branch (USB) of July 17, 1995, Pacific Bell has requested the change to General Order (G.O.) No. 95, Rule 20.5-A(1). A committee comprised of almost all operators of overhead and underground electric and communications utilities has included the rule change in a suggested rule change package now under review by the Utilities Safety Branch for Resolution later this year. Pacific Bell has an urgency for the proposed rule change in order to implement its new broadband communications circuit. The rule previously allowed the 150 volt threshold prior to being changed by Resolution SU-25, dated January 19, 1994.
2. This Resolution approves Pacific Bell's request.

BACKGROUND

1. Until Resolution SU-25, January 19, 1994, Rule 20.5-A(1) allowed a Class C communication circuit to operate at less than 150 volts and have no capacity limits for the transmitted power.
2. In trying to align the rule with a similar rule in the National Electric Safety Code, the General Order Nos. 95/128 Rules Committee (Committee) submitted the change to the USB for consideration and subsequently the rule was changed by Resolution SU-25.
3. Pacific Bell requests the 150 volt threshold be granted expeditiously to meet a time table to implement their new broadband communications system.

DISCUSSION

1. Prior to Resolution SU-25, January 19, 1994, Rule 20.5-A(1) allowed Class C communication circuits not less than 150 volts to have unlimited system

capacity. Resolution SU-25 changed the voltage threshold from 150 volts to 90 volts upon recommendation from the Committee.

2. The Committee is comprised of representatives from most of the operators of the overhead and underground electric and communication lines, as well as the associated labor unions. The Committee reviewed the National Electric Safety Code (NESC) and suggested the change to G.O. 95 Rule 20.5-A to bring it into conformity with the NESC. The National Electric Safety Code is a national standard adopted by many states, similar to G.O. 95 and G.O. 128 for electric and communication line safety.

2. Pacific Bell was an active member of the Committee when the Committee initially proposed changing the threshold voltage from 150 volts to 90 volts. Pacific Bell did not foresee the need for the threshold to be greater than 90 volts. The power supply for Pacific Bell's new broadband circuit is designed to operate at voltages higher than 90 volts. In order for Pacific Bell to proceed with implementation of the broadband system, this resolution is necessary.

3. No safety problem was ever noted with the 150 volt threshold when it existed prior to Resolution SU-25. USB believes Pacific Bell's request is reasonable and should be extended to all operators of overhead communications circuits.

FINDINGS

1. No safety problems were noted when the 150 volt threshold existed.

2. The staff of the Utilities Safety Branch has reviewed Pacific Bell's request and finds it reasonable and that it should be extended to all operators of overhead electric and communication systems.

THEREFORE, IT IS ORDERED THAT:

1. G.O. 95, Rule 20.5-A(I) shall be changed from a 90 volt threshold to a 150 volt threshold and no limits to the system capacity. The revised rule shall read as follows:

20.5-A(1)

A. CLASS C COMMUNICATIONS PUBLIC AND PRIVATE CIRCUITS mean circuits which are used for public or private communication service and are divided as follows:

- (1) Current carrying circuits operating at potentials not exceeding 400 volts to ground or 750 volts between any, two points of the circuit and the transmitted power of which does not exceed 150 watts. When operated at less than 150 volts, no limit is placed on the capacity of the system. Any circuit which exceeds the above values used for information transport shall be treated as a supply circuit and must meet the supply requirements for the voltage involved.**

2. This Resolution is effective today.

I hereby certify that this Resolution was adopted by the Public Utilities Commission at its regular meeting on September 7, 1995. The following Commissioners approved it:

DANIEL Wm. FESSLER

President

P. GREGORY CONLON

JESSIE J. KNIGHT, JR.

HENRY M. DUQUE

Commissioners