

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

**In the matter of the Public Utilities
Commission Act 1990 (No.26 of 1990)**

-and-

**In the matter of the complaint by
R.Sookraj and Sons against the Guyana
Electricity Corporation**

PAMADATH J. MENON, A.A.	-	Chairman
HUGH GEORGE	-	Member
JOHN WILLEMS, A.A.	-	Member
BADRIE PERSAUD	-	Member

REPRESENTATION-

The Guyana Electricity Corporation	-	Mr. Chatterpaul, Attorney-at-Law.
	-	Ms. Maxine Alexander Nestor, Company Secretary.
R. Sookraj and Sons	-	Mr. Alston Sookraj

This matter was heard on the 23rd June, and 21st July, 1998.

DECISION

This complaint is by the firm R. Sookraj and Sons claiming compensation from the Guyana Electricity Corporation (GEC) for damage caused to equipment on 10th December, 1996. According to the complaint filed by the firm with the Claims Department of the Guyana Electricity Corporation, on the day of the incident there was "a loud and fiery explosion with some large electrical wires and transformer that occurred on

Regent St. between Camp and Wellington St.” as a consequence of which the following equipment belonging to the complainant were damaged completely or partially -

- (i) One large Panasonic stereo set complete with a compact disc recorder, tape recorder, radio amplifier and a record player;
- (ii) Two voltage stabilizers;
- (iii) One large ceiling fan;
- (iv) One set of fairy lights.

The above equipment were located at the business place of R. Sookraj & Sons, namely, 108 Regent Street, Lacytown.

2. According to the claim form dated 18th February, 1997, submitted by the complainant to GEC, the estimated cost of repairs, of damaged equipment that could be repaired, was \$11,400 and the estimated cost of replacement of other damaged equipment was \$111,625. Two receipts, both dated 31st December, 1996, for the cost of repairs were submitted to GEC. The total amount of the two receipts are \$11,400. The repairs effected were the following -

(i) Rewinding of surge protector	-	\$6,000
(ii) Rewinding of two transformers and assembling equipment	-	\$5,400

3. The claim form dated 18th February 1997, gave details of the cost of replacement of equipment that could not be repaired as follows -

(i) Panasonic/Compact Disc Player-purchased in 1996	-	\$50,750
(ii) One voltage stabiliser - purchased in 1995	-	\$10,875
(iii) One Symphonic TV- purchased in 1995	-	\$50,000
Total	-	\$111,625

4. The Technical Investigation Report submitted by Mr. Perry of GEC, after investigation of the claim on 18th February, 1997, stated that the following equipment were damaged -

- (i) One Television - Symphonic-Fly Back TX burnt. It was 2 years old.

(ii) One Panasonic compact Disc Player. It was one year old.

(iii) One voltage stabiliser. It was one year old.

5. Mr. Perry also reported that the Service Connection and the Internal Circuitry in the premises were in good order and that Bills were paid in the name of the complainant.

6. The report of the Technical Section of the Commercial Department of the GEC, dated 23rd June, 1998, after investigating the fault complaint, stated as follows -

“Crew attended and found transformer feeding area was defective. Same was taken down to repair - 96-12-10”.

7. We are of the view that the above mentioned fact corroborates the complainant's contention that the fiery explosion was due to a defective transformer which was the responsibility of GEC. We therefore hold that GEC is liable to pay the complainant compensation for the damage caused by the explosion.

8. Of the three items mentioned in paragraph 3 above, the letter written by the complainant to GEC on 10th December, 1996, the date on which the explosion of the transformer took place, did not mention the Television set.

9. When Mr. Alston Sookraj, a partner of R. Sookraj & Sons was examined on 23rd June, 1998, he stated that the letter to GEC on 10th December, 1996, the day of the explosion, was based on the record he received from the electrical section of the business. He also said that he came to know that the Television set was damaged on 18th February, 1997, when Mr. Perry from GEC went to the business premises to inspect the damaged equipment. That was also the day on which the claim form (Exhibit B1) was submitted to GEC by the complainant.

10. Having regard to all the circumstances we are not satisfied that the Television set was damaged as a result of the explosion on 10th December, 1996.

11. We uphold the claim of the complainant for compensation against GEC for damage caused by unsafe supply of electricity by GEC -

(i) Repairs to damaged equipment, evidenced by receipts Exhibits B-2 and B-3	-	\$11,400.00
(ii) Compensation for one Panasonic/ Compact Disc Player	-	\$50,750.00
(iii) Compensation for one voltage stabiliser	-	\$10,875.00
Total		\$73,025.00

12. GEC has not produced any evidence in respect of the cost of repair or replacement of the damaged equipment.

ORDER

13. In the light of the above discussions we hereby make the following orders, namely

- (i) GEC shall within 30 days from the date of this decision pay to the complainant \$73,025.00 as compensation for damage to equipment on account of unsafe supply of electricity by GEC; and
- (ii) GEC shall, in addition, pay to the complainant, within 30 days from the date of this decision \$2000.00 as costs of these proceedings.

Dated this 16th day of November, 1998



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PAMADATH J. MENON, A.A.

- Chairman



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HUGH GEORGE

- Member



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JOHN WILLEMS, A.A.

- Member

(OUT OF TOWN)

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CHANDRABALLI BISHESWAR

- Member



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BADRIE PERSAUD

- Member