

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

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

- and -

In the matter of
complaints regarding
discrimination in the
provision of telephone
services by the Guyana
Telephone and Telegraph
Company Limited.

PAMADATH J. MENON, A.A.	-	CHAIRMAN
HUGH GEORGE	-	MEMBER
JOHN WILLEMS, A.A.	-	MEMBER
ERROL HANOMAN	-	MEMBER
A.M.B. SANKIES	-	MEMBER

REPRESENTATION -

The Guyana Telephone and Telegraph Company Limited	-	By Mr Joseph Sanders, Attorney-at-Law
Complainants	-	In person.
The Guyana Consumers' Association	-	Ms L. Ferdinand, Attorney-at-Law
Consumers' Advisory Bureau of Guyana	-	Mrs Eva Rawana-Scott, Attorney-at-Law

D E C I S I O N

Under section 26(1) of the Public Utilities Commission Act 1990 (No. 26 of 1990) the service provided by a public utility, in the present case the Guyana Telephone and Telegraph Company Limited ("GT&T"), has to be non-discriminatory.

2. There were repeated complaints that the GT&T has been giving preferential treatment to certain persons who applied for telephone connections, that some new applicants some how got telephone connections while those who had applied for telephone connections years earlier would still be waiting to be provided with telephone service. In some of the complaints received by the Commission there were allegations of corruption among some officers of the GT&T.

3. Paragraphs 16 and 17 of the Decision of this Commission dated 26th January, 1996, (Docket No. 113) reads as follows -

"Though it was stated that telephone connections were provided on the basis of the priority of applications made, there were general complaints that this principle was often ignored. Some of the complainants made allegations of corruption by some of the staff members of GT&T.

Mr Raymond Roopnauth, Director of Technical Operations in GT&T, giving evidence on behalf of that company at the public hearing on 27th July, 1995, said that the Policy of GT&T in the matter of allotment of telephones is "first come, first served". He, however, added that GT&T may jump the queue because the Company may receive Government appeals, and

appeals at different levels which may be classified as "executive appeals". The Chairman of PUC then directed that GT&T should establish some criteria for the allotment of telephones, because even if GT&T accepted a policy of "first come, first served", in practical terms it may not always be possible. There will have to be priorities. The Chairman directed -

"I would like you to establish some criteria and apply that criteria uniformly, and I would like the Commission to be informed what the criteria you have established is."

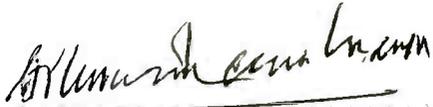
4. Pursuant to the direction of this Commission, the GT&T submitted a list of persons who were entitled to priority allotment of telephones along with letter dated 7th May, 1996. This matter was discussed at the public hearing of the Commission on 13th May, 1996. In the light of these discussions and a further suggestion received from GT&T the priority list was revised. The final priority list is attached herewith as Annexure I.

O R D E R

5. It is hereby ordered that with effect from the date of this decision, telephone and other telecommunications service will be provided by the GT&T out of turn only to the categories of persons mentioned in the list at Annexure I. As among the categories of persons mentioned in that list, a category mentioned earlier would have precedence over the categories that follow it. In the case of applications for telephone or other telecommunications services, not covered by the priority list at Annexure I, the principle of first come first served should be strictly followed. However, the above is without prejudice to the power of the Commission to direct GT&T to reserve certain facilities for the purposes mentioned in section 36 of the Public Utilities Commission Act 1990 (No. 26 of 1990).

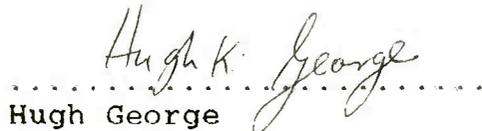
6. At the public hearing of this Commission on 13th May, 1996, the new General Manager of GT&T, Mr Thomas Minnich, promised that he will investigate allegations of corruption in the allotment of telephones. But allegations still keep on coming. The General Manager of GT&T is hereby directed to investigate this matter expeditiously and if there is any truth in the allegations to root out the corruption in the operations of GT&T. A report as regards the result of the above investigation and the steps taken to root out corruption, if any, should be submitted by GT&T to this Commission within three months from the date of this Order.

Dated at Georgetown, Guyana
this 5th day of August, 1996.



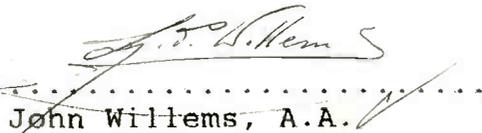
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Pamadath J. Menon, A.A.

- Chairman



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Hugh George

- Member



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John Willems, A.A.

- Member



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Errol Hanoman

- Member



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A.M. B. Sankies

- Member