

TOLL TESTROOM RESPONSIBILITIES HANDLING CUSTOMER CONTACTS

1. GENERAL

1.01 This section describes the general procedures for toll testroom personnel to follow when handling telephone contacts with customers. These contacts are commonly associated with customer trouble reports.

1.02 In these cases, the testboard person is the Company's interface and representative with the customer and it is very important that these contacts be handled courteously, promptly, and efficiently. Usually when a customer calls the testboard to report service troubles, that customer is disturbed because of deterioration of service. During this contact, the degree of customer irritation can be either intensified or alleviated and a relationship precedent established.

1.03 The manner in which contacts are handled by testroom personnel with other Telephone Company employees, e.g., business office, installation & repair, etc., can greatly influence the service provided to our customers. The basic elements of intradepartmental coordination and cooperation must be observed to complete this effort.

1.04 This section also discusses various testroom telephone arrangements for receiving and originating calls.

2. TESTROOM TELEPHONE ARRANGEMENTS

2.01 Designated telephone number(s) are provided for the special service customers and Telephone Company employees to report service troubles. For special services, this telephone number is posted at the customer's premises, usually on the appropriate Telephone Company-owned equipment. It is very important that the report receiving telephone be kept readily available for trouble reports to be received. For this reason, these design-

ated telephones should not be used for any other purpose. When the calling volume warrants the need, the testroom telephone numbers should be placed in rotary.

2.02 Other testroom telephones should be assigned for handling testroom business, i.e., outgoing calls, calls to and from other employees, etc. When these types of calls are received on the trouble reporting telephone, the caller should be immediately directed to call on the proper telephone to allow the customer's telephone to release.

2.03 In some cases it may be advantageous to centralize the customer reporting function in a place that is remote from the normal testroom activities and where trouble reports are received by delegated personnel. These instructions apply to all methods of handling contacts with our customers.

3. ELEMENTS OF GOOD CUSTOMER CONTACTS

3.01 Customer reaction to contacts made with our telephone people will be determined by:

- (a) The promptness with which the call is answered.
- (b) The courtesy extended by our employees and the proper use and tone of speech.
- (c) Obtaining and providing pertinent information relevant to the trouble report. Superfluous conversation should be avoided.
- (d) The promptness the customer's service is restored.

3.02 Twenty (20) seconds is the objective for testroom personnel to answer customer trouble calls. See Part 4 for discussion.

4. ANSWERING CUSTOMER CALLS

4.01 The responsible testroom supervisor shall establish acceptable phrases to be used when answering customer calls, e.g., "(location) Special Service Testboard," (location) Telegraph Testboard," etc. The employee will give his name following the answering phrase.

4.02 All customer calls will be answered within 20 seconds of when the first indicator (bell, lamp, etc.) is received at the testroom.

4.03 When a customer call is received while talking with another customer, it will be necessary for the employee to excuse him/herself momentarily from the first customer and acknowledge the incoming call from the second customer. The second customer will be advised that his/her call is being placed on "hold" for a brief period. In situations in which the second customer may be required to wait for an extended period of time, it may be appropriate to call the customer back. In the case of callbacks, the customer's identity and telephone number must be obtained. Specific circumstances will dictate how these situations should be appropriately handled locally.

4.04 All incoming calls will be acknowledged and will in no case be extinguished without answering.

4.05 Customer trouble report telephones will not be made busy intentionally for the purpose of blocking customer contact with the testroom forces.

4.07 When it is necessary to momentarily suspend conversation with the customer to make circuit tests, obtain assistance or information, etc., the telephone employee will advise the customer that he/she is leaving briefly and will explain the reason for doing so. During this suspension of conversation, it is advisable not to allow the customer to hear side conversation and other testroom noise. Disable the talk battery, place the customer on "hold", etc. Conversation suspension should not exceed one minute.

4.08 If a call is received from a customer while the testboard person is in conversation with a telephone employee, the employee will be requested to wait until the conversation with the customer has been completed.

4.09 In all cases and without exception, the appropriate trouble ticket will be initiated and completed for each customer trouble report. All pertinent details relative to the reported trouble will be included in the ticket or log. When appropriate, the related records, i.e., circuit layout records, line cards, history cards, etc., should be verified for correctness. In the case of service troubles caused by customer-provided equipment, refer to the appropriate section which describes the procedures for the administration of the "Maintenance of Service Charge — CPE."

5. HANDLING CUSTOMER CONTACTS

5.01 To ensure successful handling of customer contacts, it is essential for the customer to feel his trouble is the primary point of interest to the person receiving the trouble report and that prompt action will be taken to correct the trouble. In most cases, the customer is not necessarily interested in our responsibility or difficulty in clearing the trouble.

5.02 If a customer asks to speak to a supervisor, the supervisor on duty will be called to the telephone immediately. If the supervisor is not available, the customer will be advised that the supervisor will call him as soon as possible.

5.03 Customer calls requesting information or assistance which is not the direct responsibility of the office contacted shall be handled by the employee receiving the calls. The customer shall be informed he/she has not reached the person normally handling the request, but that the call will be (1) transferred or (2) referred to the proper Company representative. In the case where the call is referred, the customer's name, telephone number, and pertinent details shall be obtained to ensure proper disposition of the customer's report. The employee receiving the call will then refer the information to the responsible force group.

5.04 When route failures occur, causing many special service interruptions (cable damage, fires, storms, equipment failures, etc.), employees answering customer trouble calls should be provided with pertinent details of these failures with estimated prospects for service restoral so that customers reporting service difficulty may be informed of the situation. If this information has not yet been made available, the customer shall be so ad-

vised and reassured that service will be restored as soon as possible. When a customer indicates that an emergency exists, the call will be immediately referred to the supervisor on duty.

5.05 When required, the special service circuit control office will forward a report of service interruptions through proper channels. Refer to sections covering these procedures.