INFORMATION SERVICE NOTES

August 1950

1. GENERAL

The purpose of these notes is to discuss basic features of Information service and to outline specific arrangements and procedures that have proved effective.

In considering Information service results, the primary and fundamental objective of this service is to furnish new telephone numbers and others that do not appear in the telephone directories normally distributed. As a secondary measure, for service or public relations reasons, other numbers are also furnished either with or without some form of an informative or a restrictive practice.

In general, however, Information service does not contemplate an unlimited search when a customer does not know whom he wishes to reach. The Information facilities, therefore, cannot be a complete substitute for a directory in the hands of a customer, permitting him to search as far as he wishes for local numbers regardless of how indefinite the details may be. More extensive searches are made, of course, in the case of emergency calls or calls received from Long Distance operators.

The economy of giving Information service depends upon the promptness with which the search is completed, and the accuracy with which the force is assigned to meet the requirements of the traffic.

2. INFORMATION FORCE

An experienced and stable force is desirable for speedy and accurate Information service. This insures an extensive knowledge of the records and the frequently called numbers, together with an appreciation of the operating practices governing the extent and scope of search.

In any case where other classes of operating besides Information are under the supervision of the same chief operator, it is desirable that service assistants, and in larger offices an assistant chief operator, be specifically assigned definite responsibility for Information work. Also, it is important that operators not be rotated too frequently between Information and other services. To do this would have the effect of limiting the degree of each operator's experience with Information operating, with consequent longer overall speed of service and general unfamiliarity with the fundamental procedures of search.

An effective plan is to have a nucleus of regular Information operators, and to use as replacements designated members of another operating

force. It is necessary that these replacement operators be thoroughly trained Information operators and be used often enough to insure that their speed and experience remain at satisfactory levels. Generally, these assignments would be considered on a basis of weeks instead of daily or hourly.

3. OPERATORS' PERSONAL KNOWLEDGE

As an Information operator becomes experienced, she naturally acquires a large store of personal knowledge about the arrangement of listings, typical wording of customers' requests, geographical locations, landmarks in the area, and many other things pertinent to Information work.

Exercise of this personal knowledge is valuable and results in faster and more efficient service to the customer. Time spent in searching for details of a listing as given by the customer, when the operator knows that the desired number is listed in some other way, is time lost and does not constitute good service. Furthermore, a "no telephone" report based on this type of search, leads a customer to offer alternate forms of listing in his desire to obtain the number and these subsequent searches consume much operating time. Any concept of Information operating which is based on the premise that "since all operators do not have the same personal knowledge, no operator may exercise her personal knowledge," is inefficient and has the effect of making certain searches unproductive.

4. OPERATORS' MEMORANDUMS

Information operators' training is based on retaining in mind the details of an order rather than relying on a memorandum because writing delays the start of search. Frequently, a listing can be found in the same length of time that it takes to make a note of the details.

Although extensive memorandum writing is discouraged, pencil and paper are always available at each position. Whenever a memorandum is written, it remains in full view during the search so that it can be seen at a glance without interrupting the search or changing the position of the record being consulted. After a memorandum has served its purpose, it is crossed out or otherwise canceled so that it will not be confused with any notation of details on subsequent calls.

In some offices, operators who sometimes have to obtain a detail a second time are encouraged to write certain details on all or most of their calls. As such occasional requests are not serious, better results are achieved

by encouraging the operator to concentrate on the order as it is being received. Memorandum writing is not a remedy for an operating weakness, but rather an aid under certain conditions; for example, difficult spellings, unusual names, or complicated address designations.

5. MEMORY CALLS

It is the consensus of Information chief operators that the practice of giving telephone numbers from memory should be encouraged in the interest of faster service to the customer because it eliminates a search in the records.

Operators find it an annoyance and wasteful of time to search for well known numbers and frequently take it upon themselves to give numbers from memory even where this is not the regular practice. The possibility of an occasional error due to faulty memory is recognized, but this risk is not too great and seems a small factor in relation to the advantages.

At offices where the practice of giving numbers from memory is encouraged and properly administered, the accuracy performance compares favorably with that of other offices and the average speed of service is usually better.

The encouragement of memory calls is best handled on an individual basis. Each operator is approached separately, and every effort made to ascertain that she realizes her responsibility for accuracy when quoting a number from memory is just as definite as when she reads a number from the records.

Operators are not required to memorize a given list of numbers and no memory drills are contemplated, but each operator gives from memory certain numbers that she knows well enough. All operators do not, of course, memorize the same telephone numbers nor the same volume of numbers. Usually, the less experienced operators furnish fewer numbers from memory, but, as their experience increases, they build up a store of memory calls and thus become better Information operators.

In any case, when an operator is doubtful of a telephone number, regardless of how many times she may have given it from memory, a search is required. Thus, no operator feels any hesitation at searching for a well known number since this action will not be questioned but merely regarded as necessary to the proper handling of the call.

Where memory calls are encouraged, any number changes of well known establishments are called to the operators' attention. Another means of checking whether a listing may have been changed is to train operators to make a

search on the first call of the day for any number which is usually given from memory.

A frequently called number list of the bulletin type is helpful in committing numbers to memory, since the numbers are memorized with no direct effort but merely through frequent use of the bulletin.

6. FREQUENTLY CALLED NUMBER LIST

A list of frequently called numbers is essential to giving the most efficient and satisfactory Information service since it improves the speed of service on calls for these numbers. This is true even in offices where informative or restrictive practices are used because it is frequently necessary to furnish the telephone number.

A bulletin type list is preferable and, if there is no suitable place for mounting a bulletin, consider effecting minor changes locally to permit this. Wherever such changes are not feasible, the list may be a page in the main record or, at rotary files, a separate card placed on the position. Where a visible bulletin is not provided, however, there is some loss in speed and in the amount of memory calls.

It is important that this list be not too large, so that operators can easily remember whether or not a given listing is shown. A list of up to 225 to 250 listings appears to be reasonable in size.

The list is prepared specifically for the office where it is to be used, and quite different types of lists frequently are needed for different Information offices in the same city. Numbers to be placed on the list are selected on the basis of an operator's record of calls, supplemented by local knowledge, suggestions from operators and service assistants, and calls on service observation sheets. When a study is made from an operator's record of calls, it is desirable that they ticket all calls for business listings for a seven-day period. In summarizing the results, the calls may be separated into 6 A.M. to 6 P.M., and 6 P.M. to 6 A.M., for each day of the week. This breakdown will indicate any need for an additional night or weekend list. Certain emergency numbers, of course, are shown on the bulletin without regard for the frequency with which they are used.

At Information desks which are dialed direct by originating toll operators instead of being reached through an inward board, the list includes numbers that would normally be shown on the inward switchboard bulletin. In addition, coin series numbers and associated TX number or numbers are shown if there is space, if not, they are shown on a page in book records, or on strips in a rotary file.

AIR LINES

AMERICAN	TR7-3706
EASTERN	UN4-6716
UNITED	PL3-2799

DEP'T STORES

ALTMAN'S	GR5-8447
BAMBERGER	FO4-0592
SEARS, ROEBUCK	BO9-5069

GOVERNMENT

CITY HALL	MU4-4708
COURT HOUSE	DI4-1634
STATE UNEMPLOYMENT	RE7-3219
VETERAN'S ADMIN.	PL7-5933

HOSPITALS

CITY HOSPITAL	LO5-7481
MEDICAL CENTER	TE8-6627
MERCY HOSPITAL	WA4-2737

HOTELS

EARLE	PL9-8413
PLAZA	TR6-0561
STATLER	SP7-5781

NEWSPAPERS

STAR	HA2-5985
CLASSIFIED ADS	HA2-5990
TIMES	HA2-6220

RAILROADS

*B.& O.	-TRAIN & TKT. INF.	LA4-4965
*N.Y. CENTRAL	" " "	OR3-2257
*PENNSYLVANIA	" " "	ST4-4091

TAXICABS

ARROW CABS	OR7-0186
YELLOW TAXI	WA7-0919

THEATRES

ASTOR	WA5-1089
COLONIAL	GR3-4437
PLAYHOUSE	SA2-9188
SHUBERT	LU2-4280

UTILITIES

*ELECTRIC CO.	TR3-0493
*GAS CO.	GR3-4310

GENERAL

DOUBLEDAY & CO.	SA2-6754
*MUTUAL INSURANCE CO.	CO5-1570
*REPUBLIC AVIATION CORP.	LE2-8141
RUST CRAFT INC.	CH3-6174
WHITE BROS.	WA7-3956

EMERGENCY

AMBULANCE	TR3-1200
FIRE	OL2-1000
POLICE	TR3-1200

* SEE DIRECTORY FOR OTHER LISTINGS.

Note: The classifications commonly used include: air lines, bus terminals, banks, colleges, companies, department stores, emergency, firms, government, hospitals, hotels, newspapers, railroads, radio stations, theatres, taxicabs, and utilities. The headings for "general" and "emergency" listings are not included in their regular alphabetical order but are usually set off to the side.

7. SEPARATE SPECIAL FILES OR LISTS

Separate lists, in addition to the regular Information records, are sometimes maintained at Information desks, but appear to be unnecessary. These lists include, for example, apartment houses, nonlisted numbers, mobile service numbers, clubs and other organizations. Such records usually involve double references by the operators and require additional clerical time to maintain. Therefore, it appears that no such separate record of numbers is required, except in the case of listings that warrant inclusion on a frequently called number bulletin.

8. NONPUBLISHED TELEPHONE NUMBERS

In the Information records at some places there is indication of customers who have nonpublished telephone service - without the telephone number, of course - while in other places there are no such indications. Also, in some instances it is necessary to refer to a supplementary record before giving a report on these calls.

Whenever a "nonpublished" report is given, it involves an explanation which takes time and is often unacceptable to the calling party. Frequently, these calls reach the service assistant and even the chief operator before they can be disposed of.

It appears that much time is saved where no indication of nonpublished numbers is shown in the Information records, and merely a regular "no telephone" report is given unless the customer indicates that the desired number is a nonpublished number. The actual nonpublished numbers are, of course, always available to the chief operator in case of emergencies. Suitable arrangements are necessary to insure that this file of telephone numbers is kept up to date.

9. NONLISTED TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Frequently, telephone numbers appear in the Information records which are not listed in the telephone directory. Such numbers include certain types of coin telephones and other telephone numbers which, at the customer's request, are not listed in the directory. These numbers are designated or otherwise indicated to be "nonlisted" and, unlike "nonpublished" numbers, are generally given out without question.

10. CALLS REFERRED TO THE SERVICE ASSISTANT

A fundamental principle of Information service is that, in so far as possible, a call is disposed of by the operator who answers it. Calls referred to the service assistant are kept to a minimum.

Usually, the calls referred to the service assistant include indistinct orders, customer not understanding a report, a call which is beyond the operator's authority to handle, or a call which an individual operator lacks the experience to handle.

In general, the service assistant does not duplicate or verify an operator's search, or extend the limits of search on regular calls. Instead, she determines whether a proper search has been made, supplements the operator's knowledge of where or how to search, assists the operator in obtaining an order or giving a report, or directs the operator's efforts.

An operator becomes more expert, and readily learns to handle an unfamiliar call, if she completes the call under the direction of the service assistant rather than if the service assistant disposes of the call.

Generally, when an operator signals the service assistant, the latter goes to the operator's position. Upon learning the reason for being called, the service assistant determines whether or not to deal directly with the calling party. At first glance, it might seem to be a natural procedure for the service assistant to take over the call and allow the operator to answer another call. When this is done as a regular practice without regard to the particular condition, however, it results in numerous cases where a service assistant is occupied in operators' work and, therefore, is not free to answer other calls from operators. In addition, the individual operator who requires assistance does not have the benefit of working through to final disposition of the call and extending her knowledge. Thus, it is important that the service assistants refrain from taking over any calls which could be disposed of by an operator.

11. OPERATING WHILE STANDING

Standing relief, or standing to call attention when relief is due, is not encouraged at Information desks because of the inconvenience of handling calls while standing. Of course, individual operators are permitted occasional standing relief if they particularly desire it.

The height of the record shelf, as well as the position and location of the records, and the reading distance are all based on the operators' working while seated. When standing, the approved technique of turning pages and searching cannot be readily applied. Thus, the practice of operating while standing becomes a cause of inaccuracy and loss of speed.

Whenever it is necessary to call additional people to the Information board to operate for a short period, such as in the case of a sudden increase in traffic, it is preferable for them to wear headsets and to sit at positions, rather than to use telephone sets which are held in the hand or to operate while standing.

12. TRACER CARDS

When a listing has been located, the operator holds a tracer card directly beneath it while giving out the number, whether using book records or rotary files. Due to the contrasting dark color of the tracer against the record, the listings are easier to read. Also, the books and rotary strips remain cleaner and are more easily read than when listings are marked with a finger or a pencil.

The technique of using a tracer is important. It is desirable to train operators to use the tracer card to mark a listing after locating it, rather than to hold the tracer on the record and move it down a column looking for a listing or group of listings. Before giving out a number, the operator notes whether or not there are any indented or duplicate listings to be considered. Therefore, the tracer is moved at least one line below the desired listing before being brought back into position immediately beneath the listing.

A standard tracer card (E-3619) may be ordered on regular requisition.

13. ARRANGEMENT OF RECORDS

The arrangement of records is an important factor at Information desks. The records used most frequently are in position for the easiest reference. Other records are placed in the next most convenient location in the order of their frequency of use.

Where book records are used, it is desirable if possible to have all main records together in a binder at a fixed location on the keyshelf. Only the very infrequently used records are located in separate binders or book racks.

Records that are used rather infrequently present a twofold problem for consideration: first, whether it is for the best interest of service to continue to maintain them; secondly, whether such records need be available to each operator or may be placed at special positions and have the operators trunk for the information. In general, the objective is to provide as few records as practicable at the individual operator's position.

Books in racks, and also the racks need to be accurately and clearly marked. In addition, some definite mark is helpful at one end of a binder so that, as it is removed from the rack, it can be noted whether it is right side up.

The number of records placed in one binder is limited so that binders do not become too heavy. Binders are more readily handled when they do not exceed a thickness of 1-1/2 inches.

The dividers in the book rack are adjusted, whenever necessary, to accommodate books that are somewhat larger than others.

An adequate number of records eliminates waiting for and passing books. In general, no more than two operators share one record. In the case of the main record and the daily addendum, each operator requires a separate copy.

14. DAILY ADDENDUM

Where frequent reprints are provided, an alphabetical addendum is usually received daily from Tuesday to Saturday, inclusive. This addendum usually includes the majority, if not all, of the changes and new connects of the preceding business day.

Delivery schedules are checked periodically to ascertain that the addendum is received as early in the day as possible.

Every effort is made to avoid printing arrangements requiring two separate addendums to be used simultaneously for a period prior to the receipt of a new reprint.

It is preferable that no advance listings be included in the addendum except in conjunction with a major change of telephone numbers, such as occurs with a cutover.

Copies of the addendum are furnished on the basis of one per position.

Each group of surnames that starts with a different letter of the alphabet is preceded by the proper initial letter to facilitate search.

15. ALPHABETICAL RECORDS

The present practice provides for making no search on indefinite or incomplete details when more than fifty listings would have to be searched.

To assist operators in readily determining when there are more than fifty listings in a given group, it is helpful, where practicable arrangements to do so can be made, to indicate in the record those names for which there are

normally more than fifty listings. Ways of doing this generally can best be worked out locally, giving consideration to such possibilities as having a heavy line in book records just ahead of the first listing, or a blank colored strip in rotary files.

Business service is indicated in listings either by the type of business or by the letter "b." Latest directory practice generally is to omit showing the letter "r" to indicate residence service. Where no indication appears, it is understood to be residence service.

Each page of a book record requires tell-tales in the upper outside corner. Reference to these tell-tales and to the surnames at the top of each column provides the clue as to the names included on the page and within the columns.

16. SPELLING CROSS-REFERENCES

Cross-references to other forms of spelling are helpful to Information operators as well as to the public. Information records, therefore, contain at least the same cross-references that appear in the telephone directory.

These references are intended to call attention to different ways of spelling a name that is pronounced the same, rather than to variations of a name. For example, "Segal, Segall, Segel, and Seigel," are considered as different ways of spelling the same name, while "Smith, Schmidt, and Schmitz," are considered to be different names - different in pronunciation as well as in spelling. This is based on the premise that, if the customer is unable to furnish a spelling, the operator merely accepts the name as spoken by the customer and searches accordingly.

To be fully effective, a cross-reference appears with the listings for each variation in the spelling of the name involved. Usually, a locally specified minimum number of listings of a particular form of spelling warrants a cross-reference. A minimum of 4 to 6 listings is generally used.

17. ADDRESS RECORDS

Whether or not address records are provided is determined individually for each city on the basis of local considerations. There are some cities in all size classes which have address records and some which do not. In general, the quality of service as regards speed, accuracy, and the percentage of "no telephone" reports is equally good whether or not address records are used. There are, of course, certain types of calls on which Information service can

only be given if address records are provided. Studies indicate that most of the calls of these types are made by a very small per cent. of the telephone users.

The cost of providing Information service in all size groups and for all types of records is higher where address records are provided. Many cities which have previously had address records have discontinued them, particularly among the smaller cities.

When address records are discontinued, the usual practice is to locate these records at a particular position for a limited time. All operators attempt to obtain and work with alphabetical details on all calls. When only address details can be obtained, the explanation is made that the address records are not immediately available but that a search will be made and the customer called with a report. The memorandum is passed to the "address position" where the search is made and a report given to the calling party. These memorandums are tabulated by calling numbers and, where numerous calls are made from the same number and it seems desirable, a visit is made usually by a Commercial representative and the situation explained to the customer.

Partial address records have been maintained in some places, but since these records usually serve such a small proportion of calls and are expensive to maintain, they appear to be undesirable.

Use of commercially available street guides or city directories in lieu of address records has an adverse effect on the speed of service, because such guides are neither up to date nor complete and additional reference must be made to current Information records.

It is desirable that listings in address records be arranged alphabetically at each address rather than by floor, room, or apartment number. If this latter information is desired in the listing, it may follow the customer's name. The street name need not be repeated in each individual listing. Cross street designations are more prominent when they appear in bold-faced type and with additional space above and below the name of the cross street.

Wherever address records are maintained, it is desirable if practicable to have the address record printed concurrently with the main alphabetical record.

Where address records are printed by the directory department for leasing to customers but are not used as Information records, it may be helpful to maintain one copy of this record to which service assistants have access for use on emergency calls.

18. INDEX TABS

Index tabs help the Information operators to locate at a glance the desired portion of a record and to open it to the proper place. These tabs are also very helpful in the initial training of Information operators.

In the case of a book record which is regularly kept on the shelf of the position, the index tabs are always in full view. Any protective covering of the record is not permitted to cover the index tabs.

Some printing arrangements call for the insertion of the index pages by the printer. This can be done with both the loose-leaf type and the bound reprints. In some cases, index pages are inserted in loose-leaf reprints after the records are received at the Information desk.

On rotary files, it is important that, as strips are moved, corresponding moves be made of any index tabs involved. Good printed index tabs are available from all manufacturers of rotary file equipment and are preferable to typewritten or longhand characters on these tabs. Also, one tab is not permitted to overlap another.

When any index tabs become torn, broken, or blurred, they need to be replaced promptly.

19. CLASSIFIED DIRECTORIES

The classified directory is prepared primarily for the use of the public. At some Information desks, however, this directory has been made available to the operators and many have come to regard it as a basic record.

Since the classified directory is not up to date or complete, it is not intended to be used as a basic record or to be consulted with any great frequency.

Search in the classified directory is usually begun on the basis of scant or indefinite details and, therefore, is very time consuming. Also, the results of a search in this record generally need to be verified in the current main record.

For these reasons, at many Information desks the classified directory is not available to operators but service assistants have access to it in connection with emergency calls. This arrangement has improved the speed of service by curtailing the extensive and often unnecessary use of the classified directory by operators. Furthermore, it assures a uniform and complete search in up to date records on all calls.

20. DIRECTORIES FOR OTHER CITIES

The speed of service is usually somewhat higher where reference is made to directories for cities which are not served by the Information bureau. The Information operator has less familiarity with local conditions in other cities, such as names of prominent concerns, distinctive local surnames, names of streets, and community designations. Since addendum information usually is not available, the desired listing frequently is not found or is incorrect, and the calling party may need to be referred to Long Distance after considerable time has been consumed on the call.

In general, it is necessary that Information service be given to any point to which address-name calls are not accepted. This service may be either on the basis of records maintained at the Information desk or calls made to the distant Information center. Whenever the directory provided at the Information desk is simply a copy of the telephone directory, it involves calling the distant Information center before giving a "no telephone" report.

The use of directories for any other points generally is not economical or desirable from the standpoint of good service. Where they are provided, studies are made with a view to eliminating them where possible.

21. DIRECTORY LISTING SUGGESTIONS

Forms for reporting suggestions for improving directory listings are used in a number of areas. These forms provide a very satisfactory method of calling attention to listings for a variety of reasons. While originally intended for reporting prospects for additional listings, they are equally useful for reporting listings that require clarification or amplification and, also, nonlisted and nonpublished numbers for which calls are received. Any clarification of difficult or unusual directory listings resulting from the use of these forms is helpful to the public as well as to Information operators. The reason for reporting nonlisted and nonpublished numbers for which calls are received is that changes may be desirable in the status of some of these numbers.

Due to the operating and clerical time involved in preparing these forms and also to avoid unnecessary work in the Commercial Department, it is important that operators know what constitutes appropriate cases and that only such cases are reported. Before forwarding the listing suggestions, it is desirable that they be examined by an assistant chief operator, central office clerk, or other qualified person, so as to make sure that those which are sent to the Commercial Department are ones of which use can be made. Arrangements

made locally with the Commercial Department include plans for their reporting back to Traffic the disposition of each case forwarded to them from the Information desk.

Following are examples from current directories of the kinds of listings that may be reported by means of these forms:

a. Listing called for in a different way from that in which it is listed.

Requested: Scott's Dime Store
Listed: Scott-Burr Stores Corp

b. Nonlisted and nonpublished numbers for which calls are received.

c. Listings which might be adjusted to carry a "main office" indication.

Hela Mfg Corp 124 W 100   University 4-8353
     147 W 42   Wisconsin 7-1859

d. Customer's difficulty in finding a listing is evidently due to the listing arrangement.

Requested: Preston Jones
Listed: Jones, A. Preston

e. Main listings apparently for the same party but with different addresses and telephone numbers.

Donray Togs Inc 42 W Bway   Cortlandt 7-8247
Donray Togs Inc 1350 Bway   Lackawanna 4-6769

f. Main listings apparently for the same party but with different telephone numbers.

Doric Pharmacy Inc 2312 Seventh Ave   Adirondack 4-9722
Doric Pharmacy Inc 2312 Seventh Ave   Foundation 8-3493

g. More than one listing, apparently for different parties, but with identical names.

Kaufmann Fritz b 34 E 30   Murray Hill 6-6634
    Residence 42 Brettn Rd   Scarsdale   3-3078
Kaufmann Fritz 333 Cent Pk W   Academy   2-0939
Kaufmann Fritz 342 W 89   Trafalgar   4-5338

h. Listings beginning with the word "The," when that is the only way the telephone is listed.

The Terra Co 166 W 22   Watkins 9-8591

i. Listings which raise a doubt as to how they are to be interpreted or the conditions under which they apply.

Ontario Automobile Co Ltd
    All depts 1001 Bay   Kingsdale 6161
    Parts Day and Night   Randolph 1167
  Service and Sales
    Passenger Cars   Kingsdale 6161
    Trucks 21 Scollard   Kingsdale 6161
  Nights and Holidays
    Parts   Randolph 1167
  Service
    Passenger Cars   Kingsdale 7589
    Trucks 21 Scollard   Kingsdale 0506
  Sales
    Trucks 21 Scollard   Kingsdale 0506

j. "If no answer," night listings, etc., when it is difficult to determine to which of several listings it applies.

Haberman Saml P fire adj 116 John	Beekman 3-4452
Residence 295 Cent Pk W	Schuyler 4-3755
If no answer call	Main 5-3005

k. Sublistings that do not suitably indicate the department or the type of business transacted.

Model Auto Driving Schl main ofc 145 W 14	Chelsea 2-7547
229 E 14	Gramercy 7-1644
Branch 145 W 14	Chelsea 2-9553

l. Listings that do not include all the information required for a complete report. (Two "Washingtons" nearby but in other states - one in same state much more distant.)

Gorham Ethel advtg 505 Fifth Ave	Murray Hill 2-1048
Residence 303 E 37	Lexington 2-4151
If no answer (Dial operator)	Washington 983

m. Main listing includes a telephone number, but a sublisting is designated "main office."

Altro Wk Shops Inc 71 W 47	Plaza 7-5400
Main ofc W Frms Rd & Jennings	Dayton 7-9550

Following is a typical example of a form that may be used. The reverse side of the form may be used for the Commercial Department's report.

```
+-------------------------------------------------------------+
|                Directory Listing Report                     |
|                                                             |
| Date _____     Tel. No. _____     |
|                                                             |
| Listing Requested _____     |
|                                                             |
| _____     |
|                                                             |
| Listing Found _____     |
|                                                             |
| _____     |
|                                                             |
|                      Suggestion                             |
|                                                             |
| Add'l Listing _____   Res. to Bus. _____    |
|                                                             |
| Clarify Main Listing _____  Nonlist to List. _____    |
|                                                             |
| Clarify Sublisting _____  List In _____ Dir.        |
|                                                             |
| Misc. _____  Oper. No. _____       |
+-------------------------------------------------------------+
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22. EQUIPMENT, RECORDS, AND MAINTENANCE

For efficient operation it is necessary that switchboards, records, and other equipment be of the proper type, adequate, and maintained in good

working order. The various types of Information equipment are described in Traffic Engineering Practices.

Any trouble with equipment, or any undesirable conditions that affect operating are reported promptly and the report followed up to ascertain that the condition is cleared.

In some cases, there may be a tendency to "make the best of" certain unfavorable conditions when a practicable solution would remedy the situation. Following are typical examples of such conditions that have been encountered in various places:

Daily addendum	- Not on board before morning busy hour. Printing schedules inconvenient. One shared by two operators.
Trunk signals	- Signal not restored by key operation alone, necessary to plug into multiple jack momentarily.
Rotary file	- Excessive waiting time where there is available space for additional files. Strips soiled - hard to read. Wrong indentation on individual strips.
Printed records	- Type worn or broken.
Tie lines	- Slow answers. Inadequate provision of tie lines.
Records	- Insufficient number necessitating waiting and passing books. Improperly maintained. Inefficient arrangement.
Combination of work	- Inefficient arrangements for combination of other auxiliary work with Information.
Index tabs	- Not provided. Improperly maintained. Written in pencil in rotary files - not distinctive - hard to read.
Book racks	- Incorrectly marked. No marking. Marking illegible. Wrong size - binders do not fit easily into spaces.
Binders	- Too many records in one binder where the binder has to be handled.
Frequently called number bulletin	- Ineffective location. List ineffectively arranged. Excessive corrections or illegible.
Lighting	- Ineffective.

23. APPLICATION OF OPERATING PRACTICE

A high quality of Information service requires that it be both prompt and accurate. To attain this objective, full advantage must be taken of the various basic operating practices which directly affect accuracy and speed of service. Following are some of the fundamental practices which need to be properly understood and applied for best results.

Example: Call for "John R. Doe, 125 Main Street."

Search in only one main record and an alphabetical addendum, where one is provided. (Sec. 2, 1b).

Look first for the details precisely as given. (Sec. 2, 1d). If, however, it is recognized that the desired number is listed in some other way, look for it the way it is known to be listed rather than as requested. (Sec. 2, 1d second paragraph).

In using alphabetical records:

Look first for "John R. Doe." If not found, extend the search to "John Doe," "J. R. Doe," and "J. Doe." (Sec. 3, 1a(1).

If not found, it is not intended that a search be made through any of the "Doe's" having other first names or initials, looking for one at the address specified. If, however, during the course of a search, a listing for a "Doe" other than "John R." is seen at the same or a very similar address, it would, of course, be suggested.

In using address records:

Look only at the address specified. (Sec. 4, 1a).

If the listing requested is not found, but one is found that is so similar that there is considerable probability that it is the one desired, suggest it before continuing the search. (Sec. 2, 1d).

When certain that the desired listing has been found, give the number. When offering a suggestion, however, wait for the calling party's acceptance before giving the number. (Sec. 6, 1).

Offer suggestions during the search. (Sec. 2, 1d; Sec. 6, 3 & 4).

Call attention to any significant differences in the details of a listing which seems likely to be the one desired. (Sec. 6, 4).

After completing the specified search and not finding the desired listing, if the calling party insists that a number should be available, consult any other record available, or, take the calling party's number and offer to have a further search made. (Sec. 2 1e; Sec. 7, 6).

When complete and definite details are given, as in this example, the fifty-listing limitation on search does not apply. (Sec. 2, 2).

Example: Call for "Doe, 125 Main Street." First name or initials unknown.

In using alphabetical records:

Look through all listings of the name for the one having the address specified as long as no more than fifty listings would have to be searched. (Sec. 2, 2; Sec. 3, 1a(2)).

If it is known that there are more than fifty "Doe's" listed, do not start a search, or, if this becomes evident during the search, discontinue searching. In either case, report "I'm sorry, but without the first name or the initials, I cannot find the listing." (Sec. 6, 5b).

In using address records:

Look only at the address specified. (Sec. 4, 1a).

Example: Call for "a telephone near 125 Main Street."

In general, no search for "near-by" telephones is intended. The report is given: "I'm sorry, we do not give out the numbers of telephones near-by." (Sec. 4, 5).

An exception is made in the case of emergency calls and calls from Long Distance whenever it is possible to furnish such information from the records provided. (Sec. 7, 10 and 12).

Example: Call for a "lawyer at 125 Main Street." Name unknown.

In using address records:

Look only at the address specified for any listing shown as a "lawyer," "attorney," or any related business, as long as there are no more than fifty listings to be searched. (Sec. 2, 2; Sec. 4, 1a).

Where address records are not provided, report: "I'm sorry, but without the name, I cannot find the listing." (Sec. 6, 5b).

Example: Call for a name having different recognized or probable spellings.

Ask for the spelling. (Sec. 1, 3; Sec. 3, 1a(6)). This practice is interpreted as follows:

Ask how the name is spelled unless one spelling of the name predominates, in which case search under that spelling. If not found, give a report, either first obtaining the spelling, or, indicating in the report the spelling searched.

Whenever a definite spelling is obtained, look only under that spelling. (Sec. 3, 1a(6)).

If no spelling can be obtained or the customer is doubtful, search all prescribed spellings. (Sec. 3, 1a(6)).

If the details are indefinite, the fifty-listing limitation on extent of search applies. (Sec. 2, 2).

Example: Call for a difficult or unusual name:

Ask for the spelling. If no spelling can be obtained and,

    a. The name is understood well enough to attempt a search, try to locate the listing under the probable spelling, and if not found, give a report indicating the spelling searched.

    b. The name is not understood well enough to attempt a search, explain that it would be necessary to have the spelling in order to find the listing. (Sec. 1, 3, second paragraph). If it seems desirable, seek the aid of the service assistant in obtaining the spelling. (Sec. 8, 24).

Example: Call for a listing which includes a "main office" number or a number that is the one most frequently called.

Give the "main office" or most frequently called number without questioning, but indicate the listing of the number given. (Sec. 6, 2b(1)).

Example: Request for address only.

Address information is furnished only in connection with a request for a telephone number. (Sec. 8, 1b).

Example: In connection with obtaining a telephone number, the calling party requests the address, initials, type of business, or anything else that is shown as a part of the listing.

Give any information requested that is shown as a part of the listing. (Sec. 6, 10).

Example: "No telephone" report.

"No telephone" reports are given in a definite and final manner when search reveals that the listing requested is not in the records and no acceptable alternate is found. (Sec. 6, 5). Preliminary reports are not used.

When giving a "no telephone" report, if the spelling has not already been obtained, either request the spelling before giving the report or indicate in the report the spelling searched.

Example: Extent of search on "indefinite or incomplete" details - fifty listings.

It may be considered that details are definite or complete if they include any of the following:

    A specific firm name.

    A specific last name, with either a first name or initial.

    A specific last name, without a first name or initial but with a specific street address, where address records are provided.

In all other cases, the fifty-listing limitation applies if the details of a call are so indefinite or incomplete that the desired listing cannot be found or identified in the records provided without searching more than fifty listings. (Sec. 2, 2).

Example: Call for a business at a corner address. Name unknown.

Search about three house numbers on both streets in each
direction from the cross street as long as no more than
fifty listings would have to be searched. (Sec. 4, 1b(2)).

In all training and development work with operators, specific
attention is given to the technique of search. This includes:

Selection of record.

Use of index tabs.

Turning pages, or frames on rotary file.

Use of telltales in locating proper page.

Noting the first listing in each column in order to select the proper
column.

Use of tracer card.

Marking listing until report has been given and accepted.

Phonetic spelling.

Alphabetical arrangement of listings.

24. PROVISION OF DIRECTORIES TO CUSTOMERS

The Commercial Departments generally have procedures for determining
the directory requirements of P.B.X. users and of customers who have extensions
or more than one telephone. The objective is to provide directories at all
telephones where there is need for them, although avoiding a uniform distribu-
tion of a directory per telephone, and thereby effect a savings in telephone
expenses without adversely affecting the volume of Information calls. There
are, of course, certain extensions where directories are not provided with each
telephone, such as in the case of a P.B.X. with a large number of extensions.

It is desirable that Traffic people be familiar with these procedures
and the underlying objective, so that they may be prepared to discuss the situa-
tion with the Commercial Department whenever the need is indicated in relation
to any possible effect on the volume of Information calls or on Information
service.

25. INFORMATIVE OR RESTRICTIVE PRACTICES

Maintaining the volume of Information calls at economical levels in
the light of service needs and good public relations is dependent on customers
having telephone number information available in a form most suitable to their
needs.

Some of the arrangements that are frequently suggested to customers
include the use of a card list, number booklet, or index of frequently called

26. "MISCELLANEOUS" INFORMATION DESK CALLS

Certain types of calls are classed as "miscellaneous" on service observations and are not included in overall results. Periodic studies made of these calls from the standpoint of accuracy and speed will provide opportunities for training and development of operators and will insure good service to the customer.

Following are some examples of these calls:

Request to check class of service.

Request that should be referred to the business office, repair service, or other department.

Dialing instructions.

Rate or charge information.

Other requests that do not involve furnishing a telephone number.

27. SERVICE PROGRAMS

Service programs directed to the entire operating force will stimulate group enthusiasm and can be most effective in building up a knowledge of search techniques and operating practices. Program features are best limited to one specific item at each presentation, but over a period of time may cover the whole field of practices and techniques. The program features generally are supplemented by appropriate bulletin board material.

Success of the programs will depend upon the care with which the material is prepared, the thoroughness of presentation, and an adequate follow-up by management people. Suggestions from the operating force are very useful to chief operators in preparing service programs. Data on service observation sheets also are a good source of material for training and development because they consist of actual requests received from customers. Many suitable examples can be found for developing the operators' judgment as well as the ability to recognize certain conditions and to take appropriate action with a minimum of time and effort.

Material for service programs always includes the fundamental practices of looking up numbers. In addition, certain trends in operating that may tend toward errors or irregularities can be featured and the indicated training supplied before such operating becomes a habit. Following are some of the more important principles of the practice that may be covered systematically in the service programs to make certain of a clear understanding by the operating force:

Start the search as soon as sufficient details have been obtained.

Make the search in the record in which the number can be found most readily.

When definite details have been furnished, look first for the listing precisely as given. If not found, extend the search as necessary to first names having the initial given; to initial same as first letter of first name; or to surnames with type of business indicated.

When details are indefinite, or when a desired listing does not appear, offer suitable suggestions promptly.

Give a prompt report when details are too indefinite or too incomplete to permit a search.

Give "no telephone" reports promptly when the prescribed search has been completed.

Always dispose completely of one call before answering another.

Avoid habit of written notes even though an occasional detail has to be requested again.

Develop familiarity with listings on the frequently called number bulletin.

Give numbers from memory whenever possible.

Whenever the limitations on extent of search apply, do not start a search.

If area consists of one large city and others considerably smaller, assume listing desired is in the larger city unless customer specifies otherwise or there is reason to believe that the desired listing may be in one of the smaller communities.

Extend the search beyond normally prescribed limits if the customer insists, and in all cases of toll or emergency calls.

Whenever verification of details is required, overlap this with the start of search.

Obtain the spelling immediately wherever a name is recognized as having more than one spelling unless one form of spelling predominates.

Whenever giving a "no telephone" report, if the spelling has not previously been obtained, either request it or indicate in the report the spelling under which search was made.

28. ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

In order to take effective corrective action, it is necessary to know the sources of unsatisfactory results and the extent to which operating failures, lack of training, ineffective supervision, improper arrangement of records, lighting, or other facilities are responsible. This requires adequate supervision of the force and the overall results by the chief operator and the district man. Some of the important factors are:

Review board layout, trunk appearances, dim or burned out lamp caps, to insure these conditions will not contribute to slow answers.

Observe manner in which operating forces use records other than main record, to insure best arrangement for ease in operating.

Review criticisms and cases referred to service assistants for training leads and proper corrective action.

Analysis of records and reports. Discontinue special studies as soon as they have served their purpose.

Determine whether difficulties occur more frequently during certain periods of the day or on Saturdays, Sundays or holidays.

Determine whether a proper relationship exists between speed of answer on calls from local customers and from toll boards.

Analyze service observing detail sheets for types of errors - examine carefully the narratives on unusually long searches to determine reasons. Note whether long searches are on local or toll calls, or whether too much time has elapsed before giving "no telephone" reports. Analyze handling of "Miscellaneous" calls which are not included in overall results.

Analyze the speed of service on individual calls from the standpoint of maintaining a satisfactory proportion of calls with short search times, indicating use of memory and of frequently called number bulletins.

Supplement analyses by extensive personal observation of factors bearing on the length of search, alertness and attention of force. Always have definite objective in mind to avoid ineffective observing.

Supplement personal observations by discussions with supervisory people.

Review and revise the speed of service objective periodically. Make sure that it is suitable and attainable.

Post the speed of service results as well as the results on the other service items.

Determine the efficiency of each operator in handling calls in relation to the average performance of the force and in relation to a reasonable objective. This can be done by stop-watch observations made from the chief operator's desk or other location; also, by noting the hourly peg count readings for individual operators.

Arrange for adequate and proper training of the central office supervisory force which has definite responsibility for Information service.

Particularly important to watch trends and to take action quickly when a trend is unfavorable as well as to take action on existing weakspots.

Determine whether the operators are properly applying the operating practices so as to carry out the intent of management in regard to the type and quality of the service thus rendered.

Analyze training observations to determine the operators and service assistants who may be contributing to office difficulty.

As a result of the observations made, take any necessary corrective action to build up the efficiency of all operators to a specified minimum which has been determined for the office.

29. TONE OF SERVICE

In all types of telephone work, the spirit and interest displayed by operators is of great importance in contributing to good public relations.

This is particularly true in the field of Information service, because the special nature of the calls handled offers unusual opportunities for displaying the qualities of friendly, personal interest, initiative, and consideration that are characteristic of good telephone service. It is essential that operators realize the necessity of giving service in a pleasing and satisfactory manner - also, that when circumstances warrant it, the exercise of personal knowledge and use of initiative within the scope of the operating practices are ways of improving the tone of service. This applies particularly where special practices are in effect, since the customer's judgment of the operator and of the Company is more than ever dependent upon giving the impression through tone and manner of a desire to be helpful and a willingness to serve.

Best results are obtained when specific tone of service plans are an integral part of central office activities. These plans always include four basic objectives: (1) Creating and maintaining interest; (2) developing skill in being able to recognize opportunities for personalizing the service; (3) developing the ability to apply sound judgment in determining suitable action to meet the customer's individual needs; and (4) obtaining the active participation of all members of the Information operating force in planning and carrying out the tone of service program.