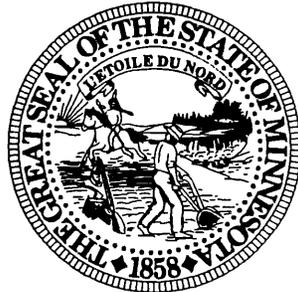


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TACIP

Telecommunications Access for Communication-Impaired Persons

State of Minnesota



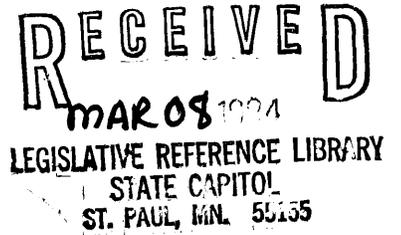
Seventh Annual Report to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission

January 31, 1994

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Minnesota Legislature and the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) had the foresight to address the telecommunication needs of communication-impaired persons long before most other states established similar programs and before telephone access was mandated by the federal government through Public Law 101-336, signed into law July 26, 1990.

Created by statute in 1987, the Telecommunications Access for Communication-Impaired Persons (TACIP) Board continues to fulfill its mission of making the telephone network in Minnesota fully accessible to communication-impaired persons. The Board accomplishes this goal through two programs, the Equipment Distribution Program and the Minnesota Relay Service. In brief, the distribution program provides specialized telecommunications equipment to eligible hearing, speech and mobility-impaired persons enabling them to access the telephone network. The relay service allows a person using a telecommunications device for the deaf (TTY/TDD) to communicate with any other telephone user. Since the inception of the two programs, over 14,500 telecommunication devices have been distributed without charge to more than 9,700 individuals and over 4,200,000 calls have been placed through the relay service from or to communication-impaired callers.

By statute, the TACIP Board has twelve members who are appointed by the Governor. The Board reports annually to the Public Utilities Commission (PUC); this is its seventh report. TACIP's programs are funded by a seventeen-cent monthly surcharge on each telephone customer access line in Minnesota.

A major development during 1993 was the passage of new legislation during the 1993 Legislative Session. The legislation made the TACIP Board and its programs permanent, expanded the distribution program to include mobility-impaired persons, and provided additional funds to enable the relay service to meet federal standards and increasing demand for service. To prepare for its legislative initiative, the TACIP Board conducted a series of public meetings around Minnesota to receive comments from the users of the two programs and included representatives from two major consumer organizations on its Legislative Committee. The Board submitted its recommendations for new legislation to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission.

Another significant accomplishment of the Board in 1993 was the certification of the Minnesota Relay Service by the Federal Communications Commission. The FCC found that the Minnesota Relay Service "meets or exceeds all operational, technical, and functional minimum standards (of the Commission)". This certification remains in effect for a five year period beginning July 26, 1993 and ending July 25, 1998.

On November 8, many of the Communications Assistants, members of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) union, went on strike against D.E.A.F., the organization operating the relay service under contract with the TACIP Board. The strike had an adverse affect on the quality of relay service. AFSCME and D.E.A.F. reached a settlement after four days and the striking employees returned to work.

This report presents information on the major activities of the TACIP Board and its committees in 1993 and details of the operations of the two programs. The report also provides financial and statistical data. The Appendices provide detail on the current organizational structure of TACIP and its service providers, board and program policies and procedures, consumer satisfaction surveys, and board and program reports.

1.000 INTRODUCTION

The mission of the TACIP Board is to provide access to the telecommunications network for people with hearing, speech or mobility impairments residing in Minnesota. The TACIP Board accomplishes this goal through the Equipment Distribution Program (EDP) and the Minnesota Relay Service (MRS). The EDP distributes a variety of specialized telecommunication devices to eligible communication-impaired persons throughout the state. The MRS provides a statewide telecommunications relay service that offers a means of communication between the users of TTY/TDDs and all other telephone users.

1.100 TACIP Board

The Board was created by statute in 1987 (Minnesota Statutes Chapter 237, Telephone and Telegraph Companies, Division 237.50-237.56). This statute can be found in Appendix A of this report.

The purpose of the TACIP Board is to make the telephone network in Minnesota accessible to persons with communication impairments. The two programs that were established to accomplish this purpose, the Equipment Distribution Program (EDP) and the Minnesota Relay Service (MRS), are funded by a seventeen-cent surcharge on each telephone customer access line in Minnesota. The Board is responsible for the setting of policy, development of services and the execution of contracts for the provision of services. The TACIP Organization Chart can be found in Appendix B of this report.

1.110 Board Membership

The TACIP Board has twelve members by statute:

- the Commissioner of the Department of Administration or the Commissioner's designee;
- seven communication-impaired persons appointed by the Governor, at least three of whom reside outside a metropolitan county at the time of appointment, at least four of whom are deaf, one of whom is speech-impaired, one of whom is mobility-impaired, and one of whom is hard-of-hearing;
- one person appointed by the Governor who is a professional in the area of communications disabilities;
- one person appointed by the Governor to represent the telephone company providing local exchange service to the largest number of persons;

- one member of the Minnesota Telephone Association appointed by the Governor to represent other affected telephone companies; and
- one person appointed by the Governor to represent companies providing inter-LATA interexchange telephone service.

At the conclusion of 1993, TACIP Board membership consisted of:

James Beutelspacher,
representing the Department of Administration;

Daniel Chellin,
a consumer residing outside a metropolitan county;

Anyes deHorst Eames,
a consumer residing in the Twin Cities area;

David Johnson,
a professional in the field of communication impairment;

Sandra Morgan,
a consumer residing in the Twin Cities area;

Douglas Morton,
representing the Minnesota Telephone Association;

Jeremy Nyquist,
a consumer outside a metropolitan county;

Linda Sadler,
representing the telephone company providing local exchange service to the largest number of people in the state;

Ruby Vine,
a consumer residing in the Twin Cities area;

Linda Wasilowski,
a consumer residing outside a metropolitan county; and

Randall Young,
representing the interLATA exchange companies.

(There is currently one vacancy for a consumer representative.)

Members who left the Board in 1993 were:

Mary Hartnett, representing the organization operating the relay service;

Krisele Hass, consumer;

Luanne Kowalski, consumer; and

Dwight Maxa, representing the Department of Human Services.

1.200 Purpose of Report and Role of Public Utilities Commission (PUC)

By statute, the TACIP Board must prepare a report for presentation to the PUC by January 31 of each year. Each report must review the accessibility of the telephone system to communication-impaired persons, review the ability of non-communication-impaired persons to communicate with communication-impaired persons via the telephone system, describe services provided, account for money received and disbursed annually for each aspect of the program to date and include predicted future operations.

The Board must annually submit its budget for the following year to the PUC. The Commission reviews the Board's budget for reasonableness and may modify the budget to the extent it is unreasonable. The PUC annually determines the funding mechanism to be used within 60 days of receipt of the recommendation of the TACIP Board's Program Administrator. The Commission then orders the imposition of surcharges effective on the earliest practicable date.

During 1993, TACIP presented the following reports to the PUC:

February 1	Report and Recommendations to the 1993 Minnesota State Legislature regarding the Provision and Maintenance of the Minnesota Telecommunications Relay Service and the Equipment Distribution Program Provided by the Telecommunications Access for Communication-Impaired Persons (TACIP) Board;
March 31	First Quarter Report to the Commission, Docket No. P-3008 / CI-92-1261;
May 24	TACIP Board Financial Plan: Request for an increase in the TACIP Surcharge;
July 19	Second Quarter Report to the Commission, Docket No. P-3008 / CI-92-1261;
September 30	Third Quarter Report to the Commission, Docket No. P-3008/ CI-92-1261
December 29	Fourth Quarter Report to the Commission, Docket No. P-3008/ CI-92-1261

2.000 TACIP OPERATIONS

The TACIP Board meets quarterly or more often if necessary to review program operations and respond to the need for executive oversight. The Board also develops program policies and administrative rules for the TACIP programs. During calendar year 1993, the Board met eight times.

2.100 TACIP Board and Committees

The Board's officers consist of a Chair and a Vice Chair. During 1993, the Chair was James Beutelspacher; Sandra Morgan was Vice Chair. Between Board meetings, TACIP committees meet to consider and recommend actions on various issues and to make reports to the Board for action. These committees met a total of 36 times during calendar year 1993.

2.110 Executive Committee

The Executive Committee provides oversight of the day-to-day operations for the TACIP Board. The Committee is composed of the TACIP Chair and Vice Chair and three other members elected by the Board. The Committee members at the end of end 1993 were Jim Beutelspacher, Sandra Morgan, Douglas Morton, Linda Sadler and Linda Wasilowski.

2.120 Equipment Distribution Program Committee

The Equipment Distribution Program Committee studies specific issues related to the distribution program as administered by the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services Division of the Department of Human Services. This committee is chaired by Anyes deHorst Eames; other members are David Johnson, Sandra Morgan and Linda Wasilowski. As EDP Coordinator, Lauren Hruska provides technical assistance to the committee.

2.130 Legislative Committee

The Legislative Committee was especially busy during the first four months of 1993 as it developed recommendations to the Board for the new legislation necessary to continue the TACIP programs after the June 30, 1993 sunset date. Representatives from two consumer organizations, the Minnesota Association of Deaf Citizens (MADC) and the Self Help for Hard of Hearing People (SHHH) Minnesota Chapter, attended committee meetings and added useful insights to the work of the committee. Current board members on the committee are James Beutelspacher, Anyes deHorst Eames, Sandra Morgan, Doug Morton, Linda Sadler and Linda Wasilowski. Linda Wasilowski was elected Chair of the Committee.

2.140 Minnesota Relay Service Committee

The Minnesota Relay Service Committee has eight voting members: James Beutelspacher, Anyes deHorst Eames, Sandra Morgan, Jeremy Nyquist, Linda Sadler, Ruby Vine, Linda Wasilowski, Chair, and Randall Young. Olivia Walker,

MRS Manager, is also on the Committee as a non-voting member. The Committee spent much of its time in 1993 preparing for FCC certification, developing and recommending revised procedures for relay operations and reviewing the performance and efficiency of the MRS operation.

2.200 Major Activities of the TACIP Board in 1993

The year 1993 was very productive for the Board. Legislation needed for the continuation of the Board and its programs was passed, MRS expansion and upgrading was completed, FCC certification was obtained, and significant steps towards the implementation of a long distance billing system were taken.

2.210 TACIP Legislative Initiative

The statute that established the TACIP Board and its programs had an expiration or "sunset" date of June 30, 1993. It was the Minnesota Legislature's intention to review the work of the Board and its programs during the final year of operation and determine how to proceed in a manner that would insure the continued accessibility of the telephone network to communication-impaired persons. In its 1992 Annual Report to the Commission, the Board made recommendations for the funding and service level necessary for the continuation of services in addition to other changes the Board felt were necessary to improve services.

The TACIP Board Legislative Committee began meeting in February 1992 to develop program recommendations required to be submitted to the Public Utilities Commission by December 31, 1992. Representatives from the Minnesota Association of Deaf Citizens (MADC) and the Self Help for Hard of Hearing Persons-Minnesota Chapter (SHHH) were also invited to participate in the meetings and provided assistance in the formation of TACIP proposals.

The Board also conducted a series of public meetings around Minnesota to receive comments from the users of the Minnesota Relay Service (MRS) and the Equipment Distribution Program(EDP), services administered by TACIP through its contracts with the Deafness Education and Advocacy Foundation, Inc. (D.E.A.F.) and the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS). Additionally, nationwide surveys of state telecommunications relay services (TRS) and equipment distribution programs were conducted to determine how Minnesota programs compared to services available in other states and ascertain which TRS features would best serve the needs of Minnesotans. The information gathered through its constituent and technical research was reviewed by the Board as it determined legislative needs for 1993.

The proposals developed by the Board were submitted to the PUC in December, 1992. In February of 1993 the Commission reported its findings to the Legislature.

In February and March of 1993 bills were introduced in the Senate and House to address the needed changes in TACIP law. A bill sponsored by Senator John Marty and Representatives Theresa Lynch and Karen Clark proposed changes to the make up of the TACIP Board, removed the sunset provision, changed the funding mechanism and clarified reporting relationships and contractual responsibilities. A bill sponsored by Representative Loren Jennings and Senator Janet Johnson addressed the need for funding changes through an increase in the surcharge cap and proposed limited changes in Board composition.

After receiving numerous hearings in the Senate, the Jennings/Johnson bill was referred to a conference committee. The essential features of the original two bills, including many of the proposals crafted by the TACIP Board and endorsed by the communities it serves and represents, were incorporated in to one bill, House File 584. The revised bill passed both the House and the Senate by overwhelming majorities.

The bill was signed into law by Governor Carlson on May 19, 1993.

A summary of the changes in the TACIP statute is included in this report as Appendix C.

2.220 Summary of Board Activities

The following is a brief description of the major activities of the TACIP Board during 1993.

- Prepared and submitted legislative recommendations to the Governor's Office, the PUC and the Legislature.
- Succeeded in getting TACIP legislation passed which enabled the Board and its programs to continue, provided additional funding to meet the FCC standards and growing demand for TACIP services, and other needed changes in the statute.
- Requested and received from the PUC an increase in the TACIP surcharge needed to fund the Board's growing programs.
- Expanded the Equipment Distribution Program to serve people with mobility impairments.
- Drafted administrative rule modifications to incorporate changes in EDP eligibility criteria.
- Reviewed and up-dated the policies and procedures for Board and MRS operation (Appendix D &F).

- Conducted consumer satisfaction surveys for both the EDP and the MRS programs.
- Issued two Request for Proposals (RFP), one for the provision of TRS in Minnesota (all inclusive) and one for the operation of the current Minnesota Relay Service (MRS) facility.
- Issued two RFPs for a intrastate long distance billing system for the MRS.
- Issued an RFP for a backup relay service.
- Negotiated contracts for the operation of the Minnesota Relay Service and the Equipment Distribution Program for FY 1994.
- Filed quarterly reports with the Public Utilities Commission on its progress in implementing a billing and collection system for intrastate and incoming interstate toll calls involving the MRS.
- Expanded the MRS telephone system to meet growing demand and upgraded the system technology to meet FCC standards for Telecommunications Relay Service (TRS).
- Developed a plan and secured an alternate provider to quickly handle MRS call traffic prior to the work stoppage by striking D.E.A.F. staff.
- Requested and received FCC certification for the MRS.
- Began work on the design and implementation of a long distance billing and collection system for the MRS.

More detailed information on the MRS expansion and upgrade, FCC certification, and the work towards the implementation of a long distance billing system can be found in Section 2.300, Minnesota Relay Service.

2.300 Minnesota Relay Service

The Minnesota Relay Service (MRS) allows a person using a telecommunications device for the deaf (TTY/TDD) to communicate with any other telephone user. The service also works in reverse, allowing a person without a TTY/TDD to call a TTY/TDD user. Specially trained communication assistants (CAs) are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to relay calls. There is no extra charge to the user of the relay service.

The TACIP-enabling legislation requires that the board contract with a local consumer organization that serves communication-impaired persons for operation of the telecommunication relay system. Legislation passed during the 1993 session

stated that the Board may contract with other than a local consumer organization if the Board finds, by at least a two-thirds majority vote, that no local consumer organization is available to enter into or perform a reasonable contract to operate a telecommunications relay system.

Since its inception, the MRS has been operated under contract with the Deafness Education and Advocacy Foundation Inc. (D.E.A.F.). The MRS is a PBX telephone system that distributes calls to operators who manage incoming and outgoing calls through the service center. Installation of the appropriate telephone system, telephone lines, modems and computers was completed on February 15, 1989. Full service commenced March 1 of that year. The relay system continues to be modified as needed. TACIP owns and maintains the relay equipment and updates it as necessary.

The organization chart for the Minnesota Relay Service is included in this report as Appendix E.

2.310 TACIP Relay Policy

The Board seeks to provide appropriate telecommunications relay services to the public without unduly compromising the communicative intent of its users. To assure the public of this intent, TACIP has adopted detailed and explicit policies which are amended by Board action as necessary. These policies and procedures appear as Appendix F in this report.

2.320 MRS Contract

As mentioned above, D.E.A.F. has served as the MRS contractor since winning the first bidding process, and is under contract until June 30, 1994. Since Minnesota rules provide that contracts must be rebid after five years, the Board issued two request for proposals (RFPs) during 1993. The first RFP, Alternative I, was for the operation of the MRS facility that currently exists. The second RFP, Alternative II was for the provision of the entire relay service including both the facility and its operation. Based on the proposals received, the Board determined that surcharge revenues available under the current legislation would only fund a contract for the operation of the existing MRS facility. A new contract has been negotiated with D.E.A.F. through June 30, 1994 and can be extended for a period of time not to exceed 5 years.

The contractor's main responsibility is to operate the MRS on a 24 hour, seven days a week basis. The contractor provides staff, an office location, an operations manual, local telephone lines, customer relations, and other duties it deems necessary in order to carry out the contract within budgetary constraints.

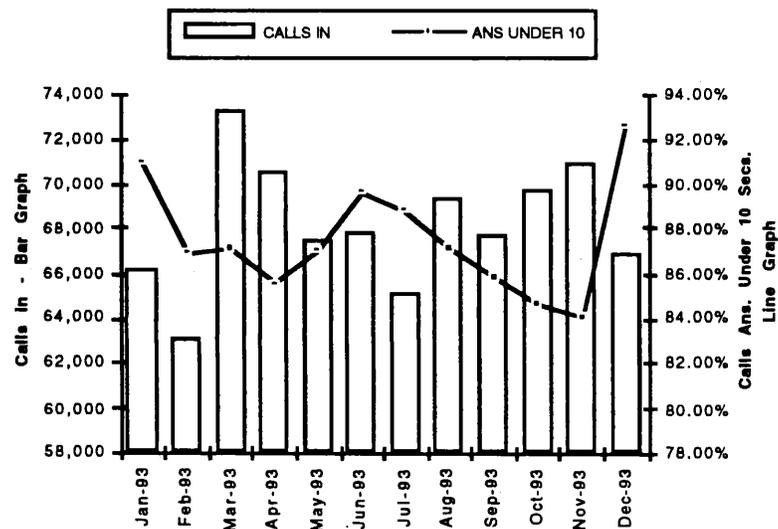
2.330 Statistical Information

The contractor provides statistical information to the Board monthly. The report gives data on the number of calls received in the reporting period and the efficiency of the relay in processing those calls. Daily call statistics (including the number of calls in, answered, outgoing and abandoned), the percentage of calls answered in under ten and under thirty seconds, the average time per call, the percentage of calls from the Metro and the Greater Minnesota areas, the average call statistics per operator per hour, public relations activities, human resource activities, and consumer comments are fully documented.

There was a monthly average of 88,898 *outgoing* calls placed through the MRS during 1992. For 1993, the average monthly call volume was 95,346. This is a 7.3% increase over calendar year 1992.

The FCC has established as a minimum standard that 85% of all *incoming* calls to the relay center must be answered within 10 seconds. During 1993 the MRS answered 87.38% of all calls within that 10 second period.

Figure 1: Minnesota Relay Service Activity, 1/93 - 12/93



The grand total of *incoming* calls since inception of service in March of 1989 is 3,006,284. The grand total of *outgoing* calls is 4,218,655.

2.331 Program Promotion

During 1993, the Minnesota Relay Service carried out extensive public relations activities in the community. Highlights of the accomplishments of the Customer Relations Specialists include:

- Presentations given to 54 different groups involving approximately 2,061 participants.
- Sixty-two tours of the relay service conducted involving approximately 385 persons.
- Seventeen exhibits were held and materials were made available to approximately 7500 individuals.
- Information packets were sent out to approximately 177 persons.
- Approximately 5000 letters, brochures, etc. were sent to Minnesota state agencies, legislators, summer camps, hospitals, nursing homes, boarding care homes and supervised living facilities.

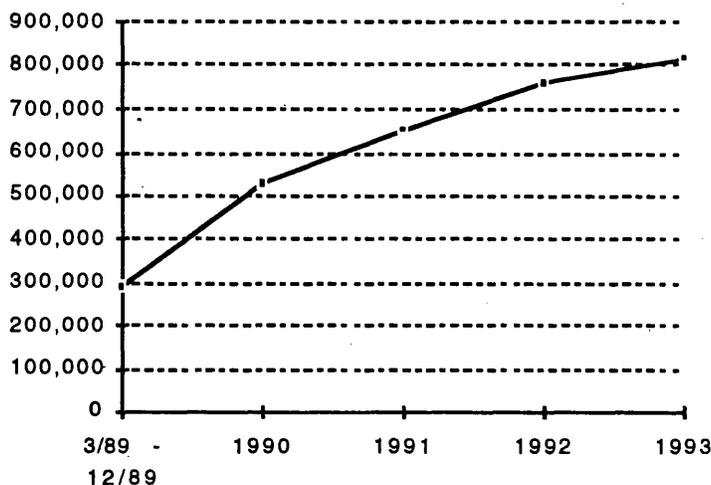
The Customer Relations Specialists also responded to over 600 consumer comments during the year and conducted two Consumer Satisfaction Surveys.

The 1993 Customer Relations Report can be found in Appendix G. A summary of the MRS Consumer Satisfaction Survey results can be found in Appendix H.

2.332 Evolution of Service

Since 1992, the number of communication assistants (CAs) has grown from seventy to ninety-one full time equivalent employees (FTEs) in 1993. The demand for relay service in Minnesota has increased 7.5%. The continued growth in utilization of the service as illustrated in the Figure 2.

Figure 2: Number of Incoming Calls to the MRS, 3/89 - 11/92



2.340 FCC Certification

Title IV of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) entitled "Telecommunications" requires that each state develop and maintain a telecommunications relay service (TRS). The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) is responsible for ensuring that each state establishes a TRS which meets certain minimum standards and to certify those states that meet those standards by July 26, 1993 (FCC Report and Order 91-213 adopted July 11, 1991).

TACIP submitted its request for certification on September 28, 1992. The Board was notified by the FCC on July 8, 1993 that the Minnesota Relay Service (MRS) "meets or exceeds all operational, technical, and functional minimum standards contained in paragraph 64.604 of our rules, and makes available adequate procedures and remedies for enforcing the requirements of the state program." This certification remains in effect for a five year period beginning July 26, 1993 and ending July 25, 1998.

TACIP's Report to the Federal Communication Commission dated September 28, 1992 set forth in narrative form a description of the operational, technical and functional standards it met or planned to meet prior to July 26, 1993. The letter received from the FCC certifying the MRS is included as Appendix I.

2.341 MRS Facility Upgrade

To meet FCC standards for telecommunications relay service, it was necessary to implement a major upgrade to the existing relay facility. Two areas in which the MRS needed improvements were voice and hearing carryover (VCO/HCO) technology and redundancy in its power supply. To provide the VCO/HCO feature which allows a hearing-impaired person to use his/her voice or a speech-impaired person to use his/her hearing, it was necessary make significant changes in the existing hardware and software used in the relay process. The capacity of the PBX used by the MRS was doubled, new modems with the VCO/HCO technology were purchased, and new communication software and call processing procedures had to be developed. Uninterruptible Power Supply (UPS) units were installed in each operator station and the PBX.

2.350 Authority to Resell Long Distance Service

The MRS serves all of Minnesota through its St. Paul office. People seeking relay service may call in from anywhere within the state and place a call to any telephone user. Non-relay users would normally incur long distance charges for equivalent intrastate calls. Because the MRS was not a telephone company serving specific users, it had limited ability to determine appropriate long distance charges for MRS users.

The only viable option was to charge the user for the call through the relay service center when a toll charge would have ordinarily been applied. The most logical solution was to have either the MRS or the TACIP Board charge rates to cover long distance costs from an interexchange carrier based on usage rather than distance. An ever-changing extended area service (local free calling areas) and the introduction of equal access to competitive long distance rates has further complicated the implementation of a billing system.

On March 8, 1989, TACIP filed a request with the PUC for a certificate of authority to resell long distance service within the state of Minnesota. The PUC approved the request.

It was not known if the proposed rates would cover the billing costs as such information was not available at the time of the request. The TACIP Board has now researched the costs of intrastate long distance calls placed through the relay, and is implementing a billing and collection system which will begin March 1, 1994.

The Board informed the PUC of progress in implementing a long distance billing system through quarterly reports during 1993.

2.360 Long Distance Billing and Collection System

TACIP has made many attempts to establish a billing system since it began providing TRS in Minnesota in March, 1989. It has always been the Board's intention to ensure that the users of the MRS are provided a relay service that is functionally equivalent to the service received by persons who do not need the relay service to communicate over the telephone. The Board includes in its definition of functional equivalency not only a speedy and transparent service as possible, but also paying for long distance service when there would have normally been a charge if the call had been placed direct dial.

Unfortunately, the Board has met with many technical and financial obstacles that have delayed the implementation of a billing system. The Board has investigated the use of a service bureau, a Local Exchange Carrier (LEC), an Interexchange Carrier (IXC), the State's North Star Network, and the Board's own resources by purchasing technology to do the billing itself. All of these options proved to be cost prohibitive. The Commission agreed with the Board's conclusion and agreed to the delay of the implementation of a billing system until the costs to the Board of absorbing the long distance charges reached \$5,000 a month. This was the amount the Board had estimated in its December 31, 1991 report to the Commission that would have to be collected to break even. On August 14, 1992, the Board informed the Commission that the costs of absorbing intrastate long distance charges had exceeded \$5,000 and even though the current cost projections for the billing system exceeded that amount, the Board would proceed with the implementation. The Commission's

response to this report was to order the Board to implement a billing system by January 31, 1994.

The Board has proceeded toward billing by installing station message detail, acquiring call accounting software, changing call processing procedures to require operators to obtain and input the initiating caller's phone number (in the absence of Automatic Number Identification), having additional software written to force this process, researching the acquisition of ANI and Caller I.D. service, making arrangements with MCI to process call data, and asking the Department of Administration to incorporate the MRS call data into the State's new billing system. The time line for the plan implementation was altered due to the statutory requirement for the Board to re-bid the contract for the operation of MRS. The Board viewed this as an opportunity to find a TRS vendor who could provide a billing system as part of an overall relay service. Unfortunately, the only bid received by the Board that included billing was judged to be cost prohibitive. (Funding the proposal would have required a 31-cent TACIP surcharge.)

As reported to the Commission in the TACIP Board's September 30, 1993 report, a Request for Proposal has been issued for a service bureau to do the billing for the MRS. As mentioned above, this option was explored before but the call volume through the relay was too small to interest potential vendors. The Board has concluded that this approach will be more cost effective and more likely to produce a billing system by the Commission deadline. No proposals were received. Potential vendors indicated that they did not respond to the RFP because of the dollar amount the Board anticipated spending on a billing service would be insufficient. The RFP was reissued with a higher estimated annual cost for billing. Proposals are due January 14, 1994.

When no proposals were received for the RFP, TACIP immediately began work on incorporating the MRS billing into the State of Minnesota billing system. A project team was formed and meets weekly to analyze the issue, identify problems and solutions, and establish a project schedule. Because the Intertechnologies Group (InterTech), Department of Administration, will have to delay a number of projects to assist TACIP, no significant time investment can be made by InterTech staff until after the TACIP Executive Committee reviews responses to the reissued RFP and makes a decision on the use of a service bureau (January 18, 1994). If no proposals are received or accepted, the Committee will then decide whether TACIP will use the State billing system or develop its own.

In addition to exploring the use of the state's billing system, TACIP is researching the possibility of developing its own system. MCI, through its STARS contract with the State of Minnesota, has offered to assist TACIP in developing its own billing system which will be based on the software already written for TACIP to analyze the calls placed through the MRS. InterTech has also offered its technical expertise to help TACIP in developing its own system.

The implementation of a long distance billing system has proved to be a difficult challenge for other state relay services as well. Where relay service has been or is currently being provided by anyone other than an IXC or LEC, no other state has billed for intrastate long distance calls placed through their relay. All current and previous independent relays (relay not provided by an IXC or LEC) in Arizona, Connecticut, Kansas, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Mexico, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Utah, Vermont, and the State of Washington have explored billing and determined it would be cost prohibitive. (Connecticut estimated their cost would be approximately \$1,000,000.) This fact demonstrates that billing for relay calls is a very difficult undertaking unless the TRS provider is already setup to do so, such as a telephone company. When TACIP begins billing, Minnesota will be the only independent relay service to ever bill for intrastate long distance calls. (Utah and Minnesota are now the only remaining independent relays in the nation).

2.370 Strike by D.E.A.F. Employees

During May 1993, the Communications Assistants and the training personnel at D.E.A.F. joined the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) union. Representatives of the union and D.E.A.F. management began discussing wage and other issues during the summer; these were unresolved and the two sides broke off talks on November 2, 1993. A strike vote was taken and on Monday, November 8, the union CAs went on strike. MRS service continued during the strike although the FCC standard for response time was not met. The TACIP Board met on November 5 and November 10 to consider the matter. At the November 10th meeting, the Board voted to suspend its contract with D.E.A.F. for the operation of the MRS unless service was brought up to the required standards by Monday, November 15. After this Board meeting, the two parties resumed negotiations and an agreement was reached on November 11. A vote was taken by union members and full service resumed at the MRS on Friday, November 12.

2.400 Equipment Distribution Program

The Equipment Distribution Program is responsible for distributing telecommunication devices to eligible Minnesota citizens, informing communication-impaired persons of services available through the program, providing training in the use of the telecommunications devices and maintaining the devices. The 1993 legislation expanded the definition of "communication-impaired persons" to include mobility-impaired. The new language states that "communication-impaired" means certified as deaf, severely hearing-impaired, hard-of-hearing, speech-impaired, deaf and blind, or mobility-impaired if the mobility impairment significantly impedes the ability to use standard customer premises equipment.

The TACIP distribution program is administered through an interagency agreement by the Department of Human Services, Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services Division

(DHHSD). Services are provided through six of DHHSD's regional offices located around the state. The map in Appendix J shows the makeup of the regions and the number of households served to date by EDP. The organizational chart for EDP is included in this report as Appendix K.

2.410 Authority to Provide Equipment

Subdivision 5 (3) of Statute 237.51 provides the Board with the authority to establish specifications for special communication devices to be purchased under Section 237.53, subdivision 3. This authorizes the Board to evaluate and purchase communication devices that may be beneficial to eligible persons under its distribution program.

2.420 Policy and Adoption of Administrative Rules

From the beginning of the TACIP programs, it was clear that there was a dramatic need to provide appropriate telephone access equipment to communication-impaired persons in Minnesota. The EDP Committee worked with a number of individuals and organizations to identify communication-impaired populations, the kind of telecommunications equipment needed, and the eligibility criteria for the program. Terms such as "severely hearing-impaired", "residency", and "appeal process" were defined and a priority system for distribution was established. During 1993, the TACIP Board continued to clarify and define the EDP's role. It recommended updated standards for communication devices and changes in the administrative rules governing the program to incorporate the changes in the TACIP legislation passed in 1993.

2.430 EDP Contract

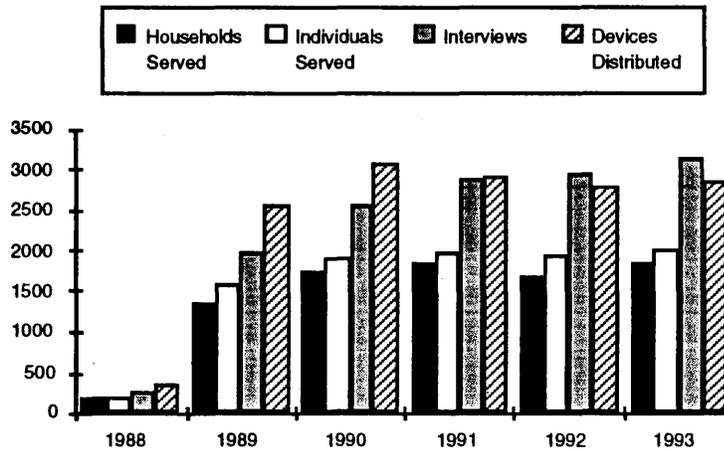
By statute, the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) is required to administer the Equipment Distribution Program for the TACIP Board. The Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Services Division (DHHSD) of the Department of Human Services provides TACIP with access to an established network of regional service centers around the state and professional staff experienced in working with communication-impaired persons. This approach has proven very effective.

The TACIP Board, through its EDP Committee, developed equipment specifications and administrative rules in consultation with DHS and the State Attorney General's office. An interagency agreement was then established. It is renewed each fiscal year; the current contract runs through June 30, 1994. The result of this agreement continues to be the delivery of efficient and high quality TACIP services.

2.440 Statistical Information

The TACIP Board receives a monthly report from DHHS describing its EDP activities. The report fully documents outreach activity, the number of interviews conducted, the number of households receiving equipment, and kinds of equipment distributed. Distribution data from the beginning of the program in October 1988 through December 1993 is contained in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Equipment Distribution Program Activity, 1988 - 1993



2.441 Program Promotion

The task of outreach and program promotion for EDP has been delegated to DHHS through its contract with TACIP. Presentations by EDP staff explain the program, outline the eligibility requirements, demonstrate types of equipment currently available, explain the availability of the statewide telecommunications relay service, and provide other pertinent information. Since the program began in 1988, more than 1,400 presentations have been given to over 34,000 participants across the state. During 1993, the EDP conducted its third Consumer Satisfaction Survey. The survey was sent to 210 randomly selected recipients of EDP services, thirty from each greater Minnesota office and sixty from the metropolitan area. The selected consumers received service between September 1992 and February 1993. The survey participants were able to respond without revealing their identity. Of the 155 surveys returned, over 95% were favorable. Of the 155 participants, 85% indicated that the equipment they received made them feel safer by giving them access to emergency services, friends and family. The findings were consistent with surveys done in 1991 and 1992. The survey results appear as Appendix L.

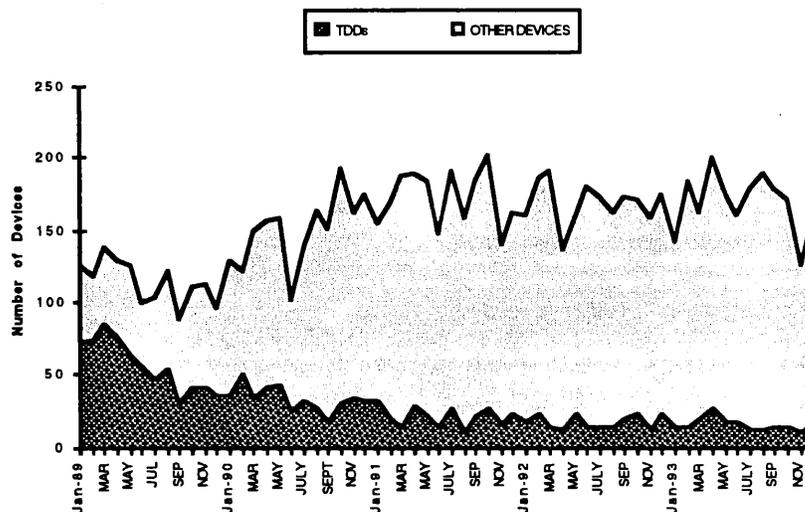
2.450 Evolution of Service

Initially, EDP primarily distributed telecommunications devices for the deaf (TTY/TDDs) to people who were identified as members of the "deaf community".

Deaf people throughout the state were aware of the work being done to establish TACIP and its services and they were anxiously awaiting the start of the program. However, it was known that individuals with moderate to severe hearing losses and those people with profound hearing losses occurring later in life represent the largest population to be served.

The graph in Figure 4 indicates the number of telecommunications devices for the deaf (TTY/TDDs) and other equipment distributed since the beginning of the program. There has been a shift in demand from TTY/TDDs to other types of equipment such as amplified telephones for hearing and speech-impaired persons, large visual displays and braille devices for deaf/visually impaired persons, and other adaptive equipment for qualified persons with special needs who cannot use the "standard" equipment distributed by EDP.

Figure 4: Equipment Distribution by Type, 1988 - 1993



The largest EDP consumer group is now made up of senior citizens (over the age of 65). This population experiences an extremely high incidence of hearing loss and is most in need of telephone service to access health, safety and social services to maintain self-support and self-sufficiency. Speech-impaired people comprise another group which continues to receive an increasing amount of service from EDP.

2.451 Services for Special Needs Recipients

The Equipment Distribution Program continues to serve people with multiple disabilities. In accordance with the TACIP statute passed during the spring session of the 1993 Legislature, EDP began serving people with mobility impairments on July 1, 1993. A mobility-impaired person is eligible for EDP services if his/her

mobility impairment significantly impedes ability to access standard customer premise equipment. Devices distributed to this population include speaker phones that allow for "hands free" operation and special switches that can be attached to activate the phone if necessary. Promotion of this program for the mobility-impaired was initiated by sending a letter to more than one hundred organizations across the state serving people with disabilities. The EDP brochure has been redesigned to reflect this change. Promotional presentations have been modified to include information on telecommunication equipment available to people with mobility impairments, and special presentations targeting the mobility-impaired population are being conducted. EDP also serves persons who are communication-impaired and also have other disabilities such as blindness, and other physical limitations. Serving these consumers is time intensive and sometimes requires that an evaluation be done by a rehabilitation engineer or a speech and language pathologist. EDP works closely with other state and private agencies to ensure that there is no duplication of service and to provide for efficient use of TACIP resources.

3.000 FUNDING MECHANISM

Funding for the TACIP programs comes from a seventeen-cent surcharge on all telephone access lines in Minnesota.

3.100 Revenues

Minnesota statute 237.52, subdivision 2 as amended in 1993 requires that the TACIP Board annually recommend to the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) an "adequate and appropriate mechanism" to fund the program. The PUC reviews the Board's budget for reasonableness and may modify the budget to the extent it is unreasonable. The PUC then determines the funding mechanism to be used within 60 days of receipt of the recommendation of the TACIP Program Administrator and orders the imposition of surcharges effective on the earliest practicable date. A maximum monthly surcharge of 20 cents was established by the Legislature.

3.110 Reimbursement for Interstate TRS

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) directed the FCC to establish requirements, guidelines, procedures, and minimum standards for Telecommunications Relay Services (TRS). The FCC conducted a proceeding (CC Docket 90-571) to examine and resolve a variety of TRS issues, one of which was the recovery of the costs of providing interstate TRS by service providers. The FCC Order released on July 20, 1993 established rules requiring a nationwide fund to recover the costs of providing interstate TRS, and named the National Exchange Carrier Association (NECA) as the Fund's first administrator. The Fund became operational effective July 26, 1993. The TACIP Board is one of thirteen TRS providers that now receives reimbursement from the TRS Fund.

3.200 Fiscal Year 1993 Actual and Fiscal Year 1994 Estimated Revenues and Expenditures

FY 1993 (July 1, 1992 - June 30, 1993)

Revenues:

Income from Surcharge =	\$ 2,740,650
Balance Forward =	1,498,834
Income from Investments =	54,563
Total Revenues	\$ 4,294,047

Expenses:

TACIP Administration	\$ 216,315
Equipment Distribution Program	751,589
Minnesota Relay Service	2,759,319
Total Expenses	\$ 3,727,223
Balance Forward	\$ 566,824

FY 1994 (July 1, 1993 - June 30, 1994)

Revenues (Projected):

Income from Surcharge =	\$ 4,511,814
Income from NECA =	52,000
Income from Long Distance Billing =	35,000
Balance Forward =	566,824
Income from Investments =	28,341
Total Revenues	\$ 5,193,979

Expenses (Projected):

TACIP Administration	\$ 238,757
Equipment Distribution Program	952,369
Minnesota Relay Service	3,856,761
Total Expenses	\$ 5,047,887
Balance Forward	\$ 146,092

4.000 ACCOMMODATIONS AVAILABLE FOR TACIP MEETINGS

The TACIP Board provides a variety of services to ensure the complete accessibility of its Board and Committee meetings.

4.100 Sign Language Interpreters

Certified sign language interpreters are provided at all TACIP meetings. Tactile interpreters for persons with deaf/blindness are also available upon request.

4.200 Live Captioning

A court reporter with custom designed equipment is provided at most meetings and upon request for people with a hearing impairment who do not use sign language interpreters. The court reporter and the equipment enable the meeting discussion to be transcribed immediately and projected on a screen or monitor to be read by everyone in the room.

4.300 Assistive Listening Devices

Specialized amplification devices such as a FM, Infrared and Loop systems are available upon request for persons who are hard of hearing and require additional amplification to hear the proceedings.

4.400 Wheelchair Accessibility

All TACIP Board and Committee meetings are held in locations where the building and the parking lot are fully wheelchair accessible.

5.000 CONCLUSION

TACIP's programs, the Equipment Distribution Program and the Minnesota Relay Service, have been successful by any measure. Thousands of persons have been helped to live better, easier, more complete lives by enhancing their ability to communicate over the telephone. Minnesotans with hearing, speech and mobility impairments have been able to lead more independent lives and maintain contact with friends, family, health care and emergency services. Communication-impaired people, who have historically been discriminated against in employment, are now able to compete on a more equal footing for jobs. The services provided by TACIP have enabled persons with communication impairments to become part of the societal network created by the telephone.

Appendix A

TACIP Statute: Minnesota Statute 237.50 - 237.56 (1993)

CHAPTER: 237
TELEPHONE AND TELEGRAPH COMPANIES; TELECOMMUNICATIONS CARRIERS
COMMUNICATION-IMPAIRED PERSONS

237.50 DEFINITIONS.

Subdivision 1. Scope. The terms used in sections 237.50 to 237.56 have the meanings given them in this section.

237.50 DEFINITIONS.

Subd. 2. Board. "Board" means the telecommunication access for communication-impaired persons board established in section 237.51.

237.50 DEFINITIONS.

Subd. 3. Communication impaired. "Communication impaired" means certified as deaf, severely hearing impaired, hard-of-hearing, speech impaired, deaf and blind, or mobility impaired if the mobility impairment significantly impedes the ability to use standard customer premises equipment.

237.50 DEFINITIONS.

Subd. 4. Communication device. "Communication device" means a device that when connected to a telephone enables a communication-impaired person to communicate with another person utilizing the telephone system. A "communication device" includes a ring signaler, an amplification device, a telephone device for the deaf, a braille device for use with a telephone, and any other device the board deems necessary.

237.50 DEFINITIONS.

Subd. 4a. Deaf. "Deaf" means a hearing impairment of such severity that the individual must depend primarily upon visual communication such as writing, lip reading, manual communication, and gestures.

237.50 DEFINITIONS.

Subd. 5. Exchange. "Exchange" means a unit area established and described by the tariff of a telephone company for the administration of telephone service in a specified geographical area, usually embracing a city, town, or village and its environs, and served by one or more central offices, together with associated facilities used in providing service within that area.

237.50 DEFINITIONS.

Subd. 6. Fund. "Fund" means the telecommunication access for communication-impaired persons fund established in section 237.52.

237.50 DEFINITIONS.

Subd. 6a. Hard-of-hearing. "Hard-of-hearing" means a hearing impairment resulting in a functional loss, but not to the extent that the individual must depend primarily upon visual communication.

237.50 DEFINITIONS.

Subd. 7. Interexchange service. "Interexchange service" means telephone service between points in two or more exchanges.

237.50 DEFINITIONS.

Subd. 8. Inter-LATA interexchange service. "Inter-LATA interexchange service" means interexchange service originating and terminating in different LATAs.

237.50 DEFINITIONS.

Subd. 9. Local access and transport area. "Local access and transport area (LATA)" means a geographical area designated by the Modification of Final Judgment in U.S. v. Western Electric Co., Inc., 552 F. Supp. 131 (D.D.C. 1982), including modifications in effect on the effective date of sections 237.51 to 237.54.

237.50 DEFINITIONS.

Subd. 10. Local exchange service. "Local exchange service" means telephone service between points within an exchange.

237.50 DEFINITIONS.

Subd. 11. Telecommunication relay service. "Telecommunication relay service" means a central statewide service through which a communication-impaired person, using a communication device, may send and receive messages to and from a non-communication-impaired person whose telephone is not equipped with a communication device and through which a non-communication-impaired person may, by using voice communication, send and receive messages to and from a communication-impaired person.

237.50 DEFINITIONS.

NOTE: This section, as added by Laws 1987, chapter 308, section 1, is repealed June 30, 1993. See Laws 1987, chapter 308, section 8.

237.50 DEFINITIONS.

History: 1987 c 308 s 1; 1988 c 621 s 2; 1993 c 272 s 2-6

COMMUNICATION-IMPAIRED PERSONS

237.51 BOARD.

Subdivision 1. Creation. The telecommunication access for communication-impaired persons board is established to establish and administer a program to distribute communication devices to eligible communication-impaired persons and to create and maintain a telecommunication relay service.

237.51 BOARD.

Subd. 2. Members. The board consists of 12 persons to include:

(1) the commissioner of the department of administration or the commissioner's designee;

(2) seven communication-impaired persons appointed by the governor at least three of whom reside outside a metropolitan county, as defined in section 473.121, subdivision 4, at the time of appointment, at least four of whom are deaf, one of whom is speech impaired, one of whom is mobility impaired, and one of whom is hard-of-hearing;

(3) one person appointed by the governor who is a professional in the area of communications disabilities;

(4) one person appointed by the governor to represent the telephone company providing local exchange service to the largest number of persons;

(5) one member of the Minnesota Telephone Association appointed by the governor to represent other affected telephone companies; and

(6) one person appointed by the governor to represent companies providing inter-LATA interexchange telephone service if the company with whom the person is employed does not have a contract to operate a telecommunication relay service under section 237.54 and agrees not to enter such a contract for at least one year after the person leaves the board.

237.51 BOARD.

Subd. 3. Terms; compensation; removal; vacancy. The membership terms, compensation, and removal of members and the filling of membership vacancies are governed by section 15.0575.

237.51 BOARD.

Subd. 4. Meetings. The board shall meet at least annually.

237.51 BOARD.

Subd. 5. Duties. In addition to any duties specified elsewhere in sections 237.51 to 237.56, the board shall:

(1) define economic hardship, special needs, and household criteria so as to determine the priority of eligible applicants for initial distribution of devices and to determine circumstances necessitating provision of more than one communication device per household;

(2) establish a method to verify eligibility requirements;

(3) establish specifications for communication devices to be purchased under section 237.53, subdivision 3;

(4) enter contracts for the establishment and operation of the telecommunication relay service pursuant to section 237.54;

(5) inform the public and specifically the community of communication-impaired persons of the program;

(6) prepare the reports required by section 237.55;

(7) administer the fund created in section 237.52;

(8) reestablish and fill the position of program administrator whose position is in the unclassified service and establish and fill other positions in the classified service required to conduct the business of the board;

(9) adopt rules, including emergency rules, under chapter 14 to implement the provisions of sections 237.50 to 237.56; and

(10) notwithstanding any provision of chapter 16B, develop guidelines for the purchase of some communication devices from local retailers and dispensers if the board determines that otherwise they will be economically harmed by implementation of sections 237.50 to 237.56.

237.51 BOARD.

Subd. 6. Administrative support. The commissioner of the department of administration shall provide staff assistance not including the program administrator and other board staff who are to be chosen by the board, administrative services, and office space under a contract with the board. The board shall reimburse the commissioner for services, staff, and space provided. The board may request necessary information from the supervising officer of any state agency.

237.51 BOARD.

NOTE: This section, as added by Laws 1987, chapter 308, section 2, is repealed June 30, 1993. See Laws 1987, chapter 308, section 8.

237.51 BOARD.

History: 1987 c 186 s 15; 1987 c 308 s 2; 1988 c 621 s 3; 1990 c 571 s 41; 1990 c 598 s 3; 1992 c 430 s 1,2; 1992 c 518 s 1; 1993 c 272 s 7-11

CHAPTER: 237 TELEPHONE AND TELEGRAPH COMPANIES; TELECOMMUNICATIONS CARRIERS COMMUNICATION-IMPAIRED PERSONS

237.52 FUND; ASSESSMENT.

Subdivision 1. Fund. A telecommunication access for communication-impaired persons fund is established as an account in the state treasury. Earnings, such as interest, dividends, and any other earnings arising from fund assets, must be credited to the fund.

237.52 FUND; ASSESSMENT.

Subd. 2. Assessment. The board shall annually

recommend to the commission an adequate and appropriate mechanism to implement sections 237.50 to 237.56. The public utilities commission shall review the board's budget for reasonableness and may modify the budget to the extent it is unreasonable. The commission shall annually determine the funding mechanism to be used within 60 days of receipt of the recommendation of the program administrator and shall order the imposition of surcharges effective on the earliest practicable date. The commission shall establish a monthly charge no greater than 20 cents for each customer access line, including trunk equivalents as designated by the commission pursuant to section 403.11, subdivision 1.

237.52 FUND; ASSESSMENT.

Subd. 3. Collection. Every telephone company providing local service in this state shall collect the charges established by the commission under subdivision 2 and transfer amounts collected to the commissioner of administration in the same manner as provided in section 403.11, subdivision 1, paragraph (c). The commissioner of administration must deposit the receipts in the fund established in subdivision 1.

237.52 FUND; ASSESSMENT.

Subd. 4. Appropriation. Money in the fund is appropriated to the board to implement sections 237.51 to 237.56.

237.52 FUND; ASSESSMENT.

Subd. 5. Expenditures. Money in the fund may only be used for:

(1) expenses of the board, including personnel cost, public relations, board members' expenses, preparation of reports, and other reasonable expenses not to exceed 20 percent of total program expenditures;

(2) reimbursing the commissioner of human services for purchases made or services provided pursuant to section 237.53;

(3) reimbursing telephone companies for purchases made or services provided under section 237.53, subdivision 5; and

(4) contracting for establishment and operation of the telecommunication relay service required by section 237.54.

All costs directly associated with the establishment of the board and program, the purchase and distribution of communication devices, and the establishment and operation of the telecommunication relay service are either reimbursable or directly payable from the fund after authorization by the board. Notwithstanding section 16A.41, the board may advance money to the contractor of the telecommunication relay service if the contractor establishes to the board's satisfaction that the advance payment is necessary for the operation of the service. The advance payment may be used only for working capital reserve for the operation of the service. The advance payment must be offset or repaid by the end of the contract fiscal year together with interest accrued from the date of payment.

237.52 FUND; ASSESSMENT.

NOTE: This section, as added by Laws 1987, chapter 308, section 3, is repealed June 30, 1993. See Laws 1987, chapter 308, section 8.

237.52 FUND; ASSESSMENT.

History: 1987 c 308 s 3; 1988 c 621 s 4; 1992 c 518 s 2; 1993 c 272 s 12,13

CHAPTER: 237
TELEPHONE AND TELEGRAPH COMPANIES; TELECOMMUNICATIONS CARRIERS
COMMUNICATION-IMPAIRED PERSONS

237.53 COMMUNICATION DEVICES.

Subdivision 1. Application. A person applying for a communication device under this section must apply to the program administrator on a form prescribed by the board.

237.53 COMMUNICATION DEVICES.

Subd. 2. Eligibility. To be eligible to obtain a communication device under this section, a person must be:

- (1) at least five years of age;
- (2) communication impaired;
- (3) a resident of the state;
- (4) a resident in a household that has a median income at or below the applicable median household income in the state, except a deaf and blind person applying for a telebraille unit may reside in a household that has a median income no more than 150 percent of the applicable median household income in the state; and
- (5) a resident in a household that has telephone service or that has made application for service and has been assigned a telephone number.

237.53 COMMUNICATION DEVICES.

Subd. 3. Distribution. The commissioner of human services shall purchase and distribute a sufficient number of communication devices so that each eligible household receives an appropriate device. The commissioner of human services shall distribute the devices to eligible households in each service area free of charge as directed by the board under section 237.51, subdivision 5.

237.53 COMMUNICATION DEVICES.

Subd. 4. Training; maintenance. The commissioner of human services shall maintain the communication devices until the warranty period expires, and provide training, without charge, to first-time users of the devices.

237.53 COMMUNICATION DEVICES.

Subd. 5. Wiring installation. If a communication-impaired person is not served by telephone service

and is subject to economic hardship as determined by the board, the telephone company providing local service shall at the direction of the administrator of the program install necessary outside wiring without charge to the household.

237.53 COMMUNICATION DEVICES.

Subd. 6. Ownership. All communication devices purchased pursuant to subdivision 3 will become the property of the state of Minnesota.

237.53 COMMUNICATION DEVICES.

Subd. 7. Standards. The communication devices distributed under this section must comply with the electronic industries association standards and approved by the Federal Communications Commission. The commissioner of human services must provide each eligible person a choice of several models of devices, the retail value of which may not exceed \$600 for a communication device for the deaf, and a retail value of \$7,000 for a telebraille device, or an amount authorized by the board for a telephone device for the deaf with auxiliary equipment.

237.53 COMMUNICATION DEVICES.

Subd. 8. [Repealed, 1988 c 621 s 19]

237.53 COMMUNICATION DEVICES.

NOTE: This section, as added by Laws 1987, chapter 308, section 4, is repealed June 30, 1993. See Laws 1987, chapter 308, section 8.

237.53 COMMUNICATION DEVICES.

History: 1987 c 308 s 4; 1988 c 621 s 5-8

CHAPTER: 237

TELEPHONE AND TELEGRAPH COMPANIES; TELECOMMUNICATIONS CARRIERS COMMUNICATION-IMPAIRED PERSONS

237.54 TELECOMMUNICATION RELAY SERVICE.

Subdivision 1. Establishment. The board shall contract with an inter-LATA interexchange telephone service provider to establish a third-party telecommunication relay service with an "800" number to enable telecommunication between communication-impaired persons and non-communication-impaired persons.

237.54 TELECOMMUNICATION RELAY SERVICE.

Subd. 2. Operation. The board shall contract with a local consumer organization that serves communication-impaired persons for operation of the telecommunication relay system. The board may contract with other than a local consumer organization if the board finds by at least a two-thirds majority vote that no local consumer organization is available

to enter into or perform a reasonable contract to operate a telecommunications relay system. The operator of the system shall keep all messages confidential, shall train personnel in the unique needs of communication-impaired people, and shall inform communication-impaired persons and the public of the availability and use of the system. The operator shall not relay a message unless it originates or terminates through a communication device for the deaf or a braille device for use with a telephone.

237.54 TELECOMMUNICATION RELAY SERVICE.

NOTE: This section, as added by Laws 1987, chapter 308, section 5, is repealed June 30, 1993. See Laws 1987, chapter 308, section 8.

237.54 TELECOMMUNICATION RELAY SERVICE.

History: 1987 c 308 s 5; 1993 c 272 s 14

CHAPTER: 237
TELEPHONE AND TELEGRAPH COMPANIES; TELECOMMUNICATIONS CARRIERS
COMMUNICATION-IMPAIRED PERSONS

237.55 REPORTS; PLANS.

The board must prepare a report for presentation to the commission by January 31 of each year. Each report must review the accessibility of the telephone system to communication-impaired persons, review the ability of non-communication-impaired persons to communicate with communication-impaired persons via the telephone system, describe services provided, account for money received and disbursed annually for each aspect of the program to date, and include predicted future operation.

237.55 REPORTS; PLANS.

NOTE: This section, as added by Laws 1987, chapter 308, section 6, is repealed June 30, 1993. See Laws 1987, chapter 308, section 8.

237.55 REPORTS; PLANS.

History: 1987 c 308 s 6; 1993 c 272 s 15

CHAPTER: 237
TELEPHONE AND TELEGRAPH COMPANIES; TELECOMMUNICATIONS CARRIERS
COMMUNICATION-IMPAIRED PERSONS

237.56 ADEQUATE SERVICE.

The services required to be provided under sections 237.50 to 237.55 may be enforced under section 237.081 upon a complaint of at least two communication-impaired persons within the service area of any one telephone company, provided that if only one person within the service area of a company is receiving service under sections 237.50 to 237.55, the commission may

proceed upon a complaint from that person.

237.56 ADEQUATE SERVICE.

NOTE: This section, as added by Laws 1987, chapter 308, section 7, is repealed June 30, 1993. See Laws 1987, chapter 308, section 8.

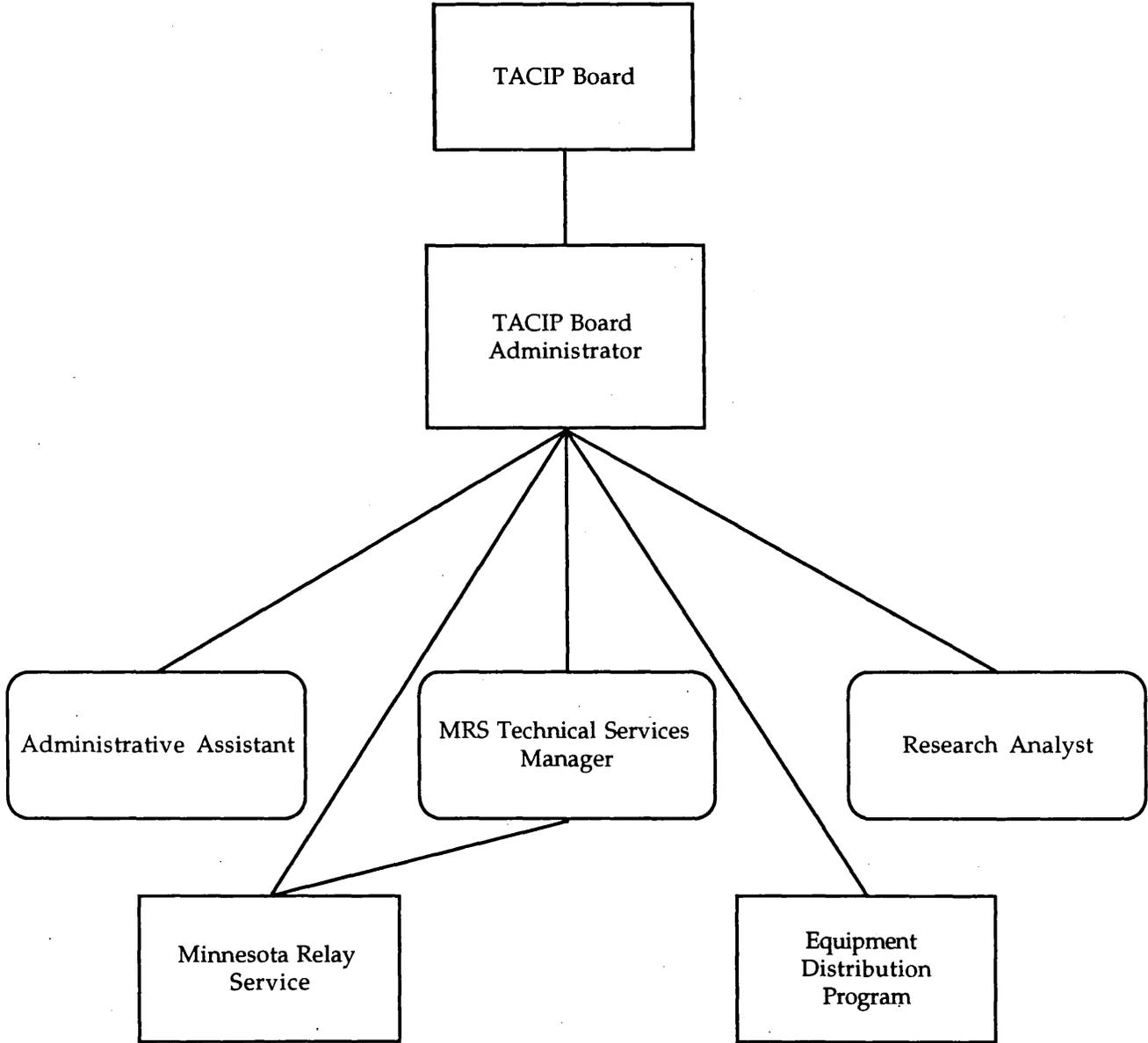
237.56 ADEQUATE SERVICE.

History: 1987 c 308 s 7

Appendix B

TACIP Organizational Chart

TACIP Board Administration
Organizational Chart



Appendix C

Summary of Changes in TACIP Statute

CHAPTER 272 (HF 584/TACIP)

AMENDMENT	PURPOSE	BACKGROUND [AMENDMENT ORIGINATOR]
<p>Local Access Surcharge [Section 1]</p> <p>Definitions [Sections 2-7]</p> <p>Board Representation [Section 8]</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specifies that program fee must be collected through surcharge and listed on phone bill <p>Additions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Communication impaired" amended to include mobility impairment affecting telephone accessibility • "Deaf" defined • "Hard-of-Hearing" defined <p>Substitutions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Message Relay Service" changed to "Telecommunications Relay Service" [throughout bill] • Description of braille device substituted for trade name "Telebraille" <p>Added:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two consumers • Requirement that 3 of the 7 consumers reside in Greater Minnesota <p>Deleted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representative from DHS (EDP contractor) • Representative from organization operating relay <p>Amended:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Company providing Inter-LATA rep. may not currently, or within one year after participation on Board, operate a relay service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written into original versions of HF584/Senate Companion 698 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supported by TACIP Board, mobility impaired community [REP OZMENT, HOUSE REG INDUSTRIES] • Definitions used by Department of Human Services [SEN MARTY] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language recommended by Federal Communications Commission [TACIP] • Enables EDP to contract with various manufacturers of equipment for braille [TACIP] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional consumers/greater Minnesota representation proposed by TACIP Board <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deletions intended to eliminate conflicts of interest on Board [House language written into original versions of HF584/Senate Companion 698]
<p>Board Meeting Date [Section 9]</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board required to meet annually rather than quarterly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Added in JOBS , ENERGY & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT [SEN KROENING]

AMENDMENT	PURPOSE	BACKGROUND [AMENDMENT ORIGINATOR]
<p>TACIP Administrative Staff [Sections 10-11]</p> <p>Assessment of Program Fee [Section 12]</p> <p>Operation of Relay [Section 14]</p> <p>Reports [Section 15, 18]</p> <p>Competency of Witness [Section 16]</p> <p>Sunset Date [Section 17]</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish civil service positions to provide support staff to Board Administrator • Surcharge cap raised to twenty cents • PUC to review TACIP budget • Board may contract with other organization if primary operator cannot fulfill duties • Eliminates obsolete reporting requirements • Changes due date of annual report to January 31st of each year • Requires Board to report to Legislature on billing issues • "Communication Assistants" protected from testifying regarding information communicated in a relayed call • Repealed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enables Administrator to have support staff dedicated to TACIP operation [TACIP Board] • Cap level recommended by PUC in 2/93 report to Legislature • Lessens likelihood of relay shut-down should circumstances render contracted organization unable to provide service[TACIP Board] • Supported by Board/PUC • Proposed by Board/PUC • Supported by Board[SEN MARTY] • Protects operator/relay organization against responsibility for data communicated by individuals using relay. Proposed by organization operating relay[SEN JOHNSON, J.B.] • Supported by Board/PUC
<p>Transitional Authority [Section 19]</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PUC given immediate authority to set up increased surcharge collection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enables PUC to immediately set up changes required to raise surcharge so that adequate funding available to fund FCC-mandated changes before deadline
<p>Directory Assistance for the Blind [Section 20]</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Public Service to study telephone directory assistance services to the blind 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mandates research on directory assistance accessibility to the blind[SEN JOHNSTON, T.D.]

Appendix D
TACIP Board Policies

DRAFT STATEMENT OF TACIP BOARD
INTERNAL PROCEDURAL POLICY

1/24/94

Preamble

The Telecommunication Access for Communication-Impaired Persons Board (TACIP) adopts the following procedures to manage its internal decision making process. The TACIP finds that these rules do not directly affect the rights of, or procedure available to, the public. They shall become effective immediately upon their adoption by a majority vote of the TACIP Board.

I. Organization

The Board (TACIP) consist of 12 members as set forth in Minn. Stat. § 237.51. The Board shall elect from its members a chair and a vice-chair or co-chairs biannually, by a majority vote of the Board each date. The Board chair has authority to create temporary or standing committees. Membership of the committees shall be selected by the chair. Committees shall investigate and deliberate such matters as the full TACIP may refer to it and shall make recommendations to the full Board. No act or recommendation of any committee shall be deemed a final action of the TACIP unless the Board specifically delegates authority to a committee to take final action. The chair of each committee shall report to the TACIP Board on all meetings of the committee.

A. Board and Committee Officers

The officers of the Board shall consist of a chair, vice-chair, and committee chairs. Officers of the Board are elected by a majority of the members present at the meeting when the vote for officers is taken. Officers serve at the pleasure of the Board and can be replaced or removed by a majority vote of the full Board. In the absence of the chairperson, the vice-chair shall assume the responsibilities of the chair. In the absence of the Chair and Vice Chair, the another member of the Board Executive Committee shall conduct Board meetings.

B. Committees

Four major committees shall be established by TACIP to develop policies and procedures for recommendation to the full Board and to monitor their implementation. On behalf of the Board, the committees will also oversee the preparation of reports to

appropriate state agencies and inform the public of services available through TACIP.

The four committees of the Board shall be: the Executive Committee; the Legislative Committee; the Minnesota Relay Service (MRS) Committee; and the Equipment Distribution Program (EDP) Committee.

1. Executive Committee

The five member Executive Committee, with authorization from the full board, provides oversight of the day-to-day operations of the TACIP Board. Matters handled by the Executive Committee include development and issuance of Requests for Proposal (RFP), negotiation of contracts with service providers, the review and recommendation of program budgets to the full Board, and Board personnel issues,

The Executive Committee shall be comprised of the Chair of the Board, the Vice-Chair, and three Board members elected by a majority of the current Board membership.

2. Legislative Committee

The Legislative Committee researches and develops recommendations on program issues that require changes to Minnesota statute regarding telecommunications access for communication impaired persons. The work of the committee often requires input from users of TACIP services. The committee may therefore include representatives from organizations serving communication impaired persons in addition to Board members.

Members of the Legislative Committee shall be appointed by the Board Chair. Non-Board members of the Legislative Committee will not have voting status.

3. Equipment Distribution Program Committee

The EDP committee provides guidance to the Minnesota Department of Human Services for the implementation of the distribution program to ensure that persons who qualify to receive equipment are served as efficiently and economically as possible. The Committee conducts research and makes recommendations to the full board regarding the

types of equipment to be provided, the method of distribution, the training to be provided to recipients and equipment maintenance. This committee is also responsible for recommending modification of the administrative rules regulating EDP and for establishing guidelines for, and the monitoring of, the Special Purchase Program.

Members of the EDP Committee shall be appointed by the Chair. The Coordinator of EDP shall be a non-voting member of the Committee.

4. Minnesota Relay Service Committee

The MRS Committee provides guidance to the organization under contract with the TACIP Board to operate the MRS. The Committee is responsible to address the development and operational requirements of the MRS. The Committee reviews data on relay operations, makes recommendations regarding relay policies and procedures to ensure compliance with state and federal requirements for relay service.

Members of the MRS Committee shall be appointed by the Board Chair. One representative from the organization operating the MRS shall be a non-voting member of the Committee.

All committees have the authority to implement procedural and/or policy decisions on a temporary basis. The full Board must approve changes on or before the date of its next regularly scheduled meeting. This authority only applies to changes that do not involve the expenditure of additional funds and must be in compliance with State and Federal rules and regulations.

II. Board Meetings

A. Meetings Times

The Board shall meet every three months unless the chair or majority of Board determines it is necessary to meet more or less frequently. The Board shall meet at least once each year.

B. Attendance

Each Board member shall be present every meeting of the TACIP Board. If a Board member expects to be absent that member shall

inform the chairperson or the TACIP Administrator in advance. Any Board member may be removed only as set forth in Minn. Stat. § 15.075, subd. 4.

C. Voting

1. Each Board member present at a meeting shall vote on all questions presented by the chair. Such votes shall be in the form of a negative or affirmative position on the question. A statement of abstention shall not be recognized by the chair, unless the reason is due to a conflict of interest.
2. Each Board member shall vote in person. The chair shall not recognize proxies, telephone votes or any other form of non-present voting.
3. The chair shall announce the results of the vote after the last Board member has voted. If any Board member questions the ruling of the chair a request may be made for a repolling and each Board member shall repeat their vote.
4. If the result of the tally is a tie vote the motion shall fail and the status quo remains.

D. Minutes

Minutes of all Board actions shall be approved at each meeting. The subsequent approval of the minutes constitutes consent as to their accuracy only.

III. Quorum

The TACIP shall take no action in the absence of a quorum. A majority of the current Board members must be present at a meeting to constitute a quorum. Any action taken by a majority vote of the TACIP when a quorum is present shall be a valid action of the Board.

IV. Motions

Any Board member seeking formal action of TACIP shall present their proposition in the form of a motion. A motion does not have to be seconded to be considered by the Board.

V. Debate

Any motion may be debated by the Board except those which are solely procedural, i.e., motions to table or to adjourn. Debate will continue until all members have had an opportunity to address the proposed action before the Board. In the event a Board member desires to terminate discussion a motion to vote immediately may be made. The Board will proceed to vote on the motion to vote immediately. If the motion to vote immediately prevails, debate is terminated and the action before the Board is then voted upon.

VI. Amendments

All motions are subject to a motion to amend. A motion to amend is debatable and shall take precedence over the original motion.

VIII. Reconsideration: Actions to Rescind

Any action by the Board may be altered, amended, or reconsidered. However, only a Board member voting on the prevailing side may move to alter, amend or reconsider. Once a motion to alter, amend or reconsider has passed the prior action is deemed to be null and void.

Every action of the TACIP is binding unless amended, altered or reconsidered in conformance with this provision.

IX. Procedural Matters Not Set Forth

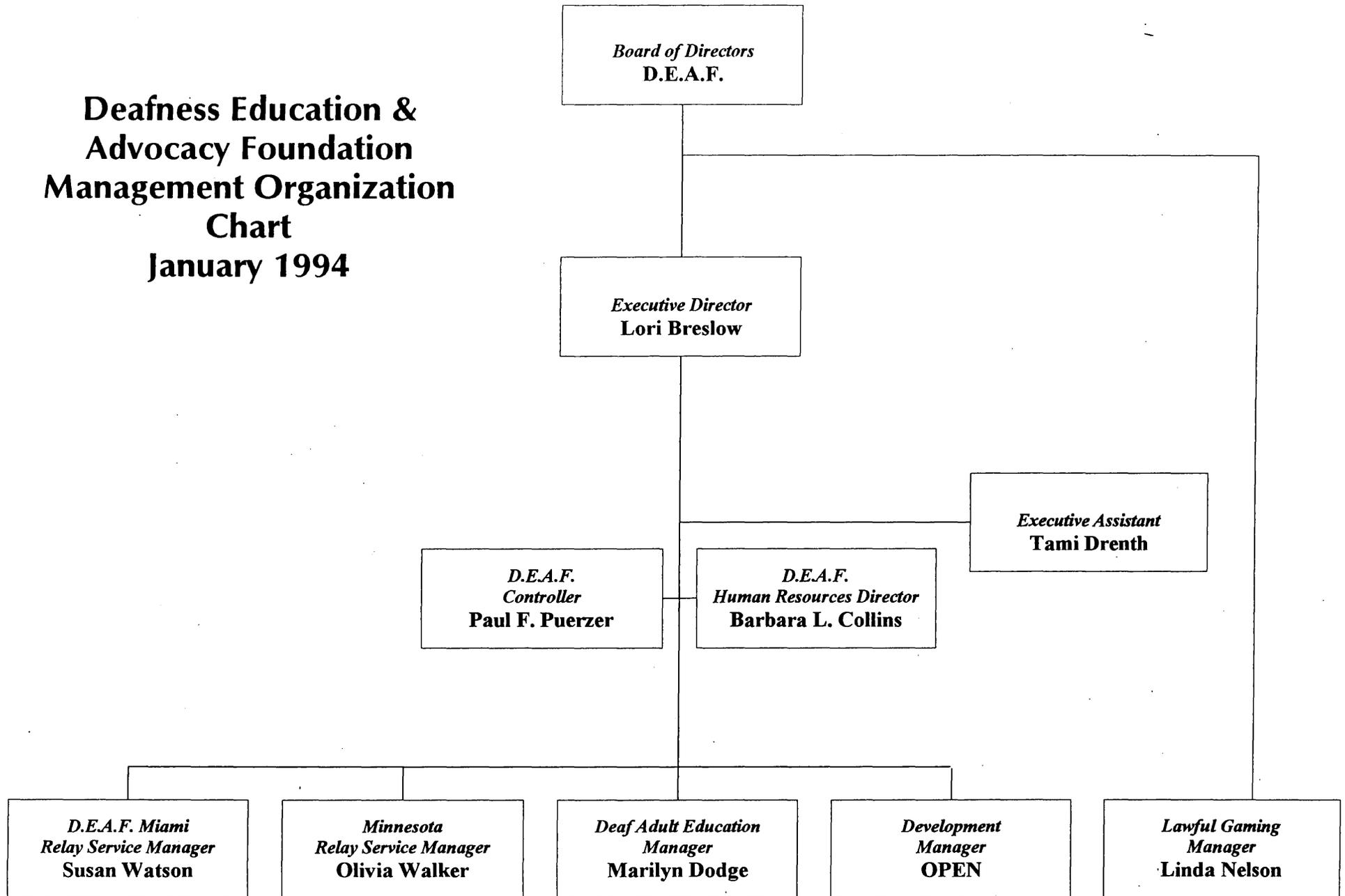
To the extent that a question is not decided by the specific requirements contained herein, the chair shall decide all other procedural questions in conformance with Mason, Manual of Legislative Procedure, 1970 edition.

X. Exceptions

The Board, upon a finding of good cause, may suspend the procedures on a majority vote of the TACIP.

Appendix E
MRS Organizational Chart

**Deafness Education &
Advocacy Foundation
Management Organization
Chart
January 1994**



**Deafness Education &
Advocacy Foundation
Minnesota Relay Service
Operations Organization Chart
January 1994**

*Minnesota Relay Service
Manager*
Olivia Walker
20010

*Customer Relations
Specialists*
**Micheal Zeledon
Leslie Cotter**
20030
200301

Receptionist
Kim Williams
20050

Operations Supervisor
Betsy Petersen
20110

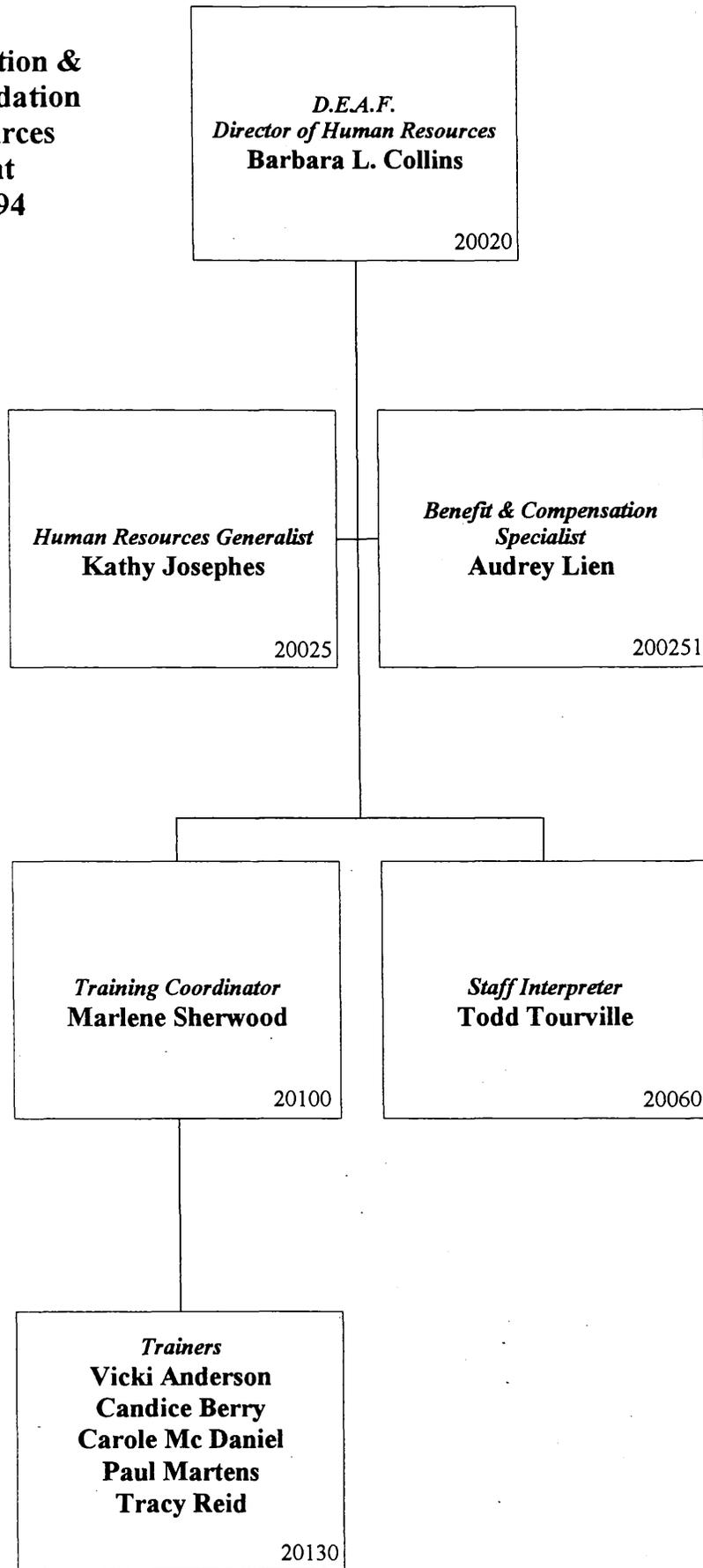
Supervisors
**Julie Engbloom
Scott Hartmann
Cliff Kain
Brenda Narow
Cristi Stalwick
Julia Schrenkler
Russ Van Wagner
Barbara Wild** 20120

*Communications Assistants
(155)*
20140
20150

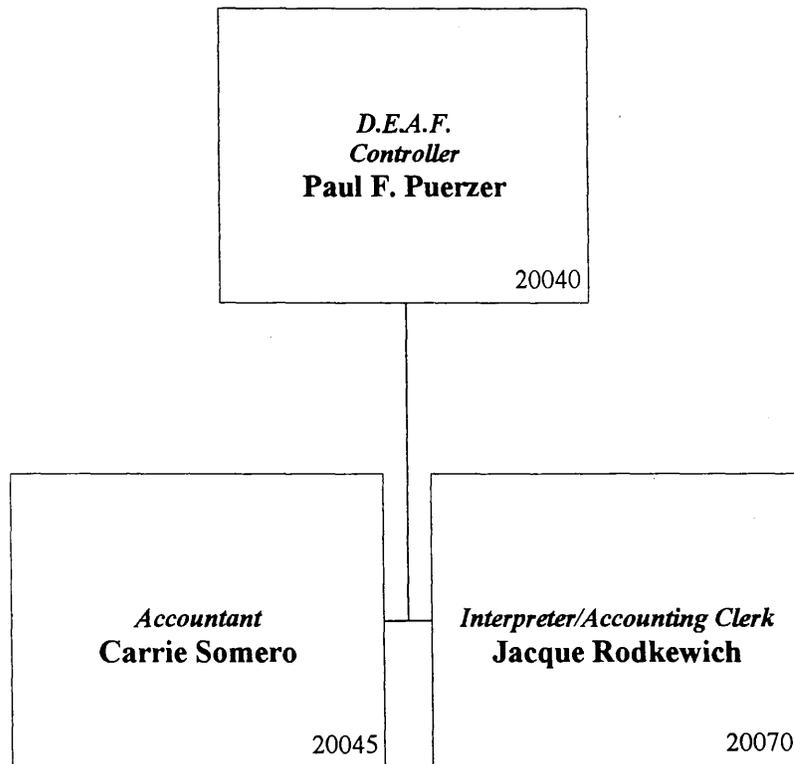
Administrative Assistant
Trich Shipley
20015

*MIS Coordinator
(Temporary)*
Christopher Anderson
20080

**Deafness Education &
Advocacy Foundation
Human Resources
Department
January 1994**



**Deafness Education &
Advocacy Foundation
Accounting Department
· January 1994**



Appendix F

MRS Policies and Procedures

Minnesota Relay Service Policies and Procedures

June 23, 1993

I. General Policies

- A. The primary goal of the MRS is to make the telephone system fully accessible for people who require a Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD) to communicate over the telephone. The MRS provides a necessary link between people who use TDDs and people who use voice to communicate over regular telephone lines.
- B. All calls and information relayed by the MRS are 100% confidential.
- C. The MRS is established for the benefit of all Minnesotans. Any telephone user can access the MRS as long as the Relay originates or terminates in Minnesota and involves a TDD user and a voice user.
- D. MRS systems and policies are designed to mirror, as closely as possible, the complete phone service that is provided to hearing persons and meets all standards established by this policy document.
- E. Relay Operators shall merely act as a communication tool to link TDD users and voice users.
- F. Relay Operators shall process all relay requests in a courteous and professional manner.
- G. The MRS shall NOT:
 - 1. Store messages to relay later;
 - 2. Act as an information referral or directory assistance service;
 - 3. Be a direct source of counseling or intervention;
 - 4. Call multi-person chat lines, "call Santa" lines or 1-976 phone sex services. Such calls are a direct cost to the Relay Service and are impossible to relay;
 - 5. Do telemarketing or "cold calling" in which a caller is contacting a list of strangers to sell a product or get new business. [This restriction will be removed as of 7/26/93 in accordance with FCC policy.];
 - 6. Make "obscene phone calls" in the traditional definition. This does not apply to obscene language within a conversation between consenting persons. Called parties who receive obscene or harassing phone calls should contact the telephone company to deal with the problem.

II. Call Processing Procedure

- A. Relay Operators shall identify themselves by code number and gender when answering the telephone.
- B. The calling party shall give the Operator his/her area code and telephone number and the area code and telephone number of the person they want to contact called party. (Note: The Operator may need a minimum of information in order to connect the caller with the person they wish to reach and may need to obtain the names of both parties to complete long distance calls.)
- C. Relay users shall be encouraged to prepare all necessary information before calling the Relay Service.
- D. Relay Operators shall not wait for a calling party to look up telephone numbers or information. The Operator shall ask the calling party to hang up and call back when they are ready.
- E. Relay Operators shall keep the calling party informed about everything that occurs on the voice line, i.e., "dialing now, ringing, line busy, answered, on hold," etc. All macros will be standardized and follow the scripts in Appendix I of this document.
- F. Relay Operators shall relay exactly what is said except when clarification is necessary due to the voice-user's confusion.
- G. Relay Operators shall leave messages with a called party as requested by the calling party. Users of the relay will be encouraged to keep messages brief and clear and should leave instructions about the relay if necessary. In situations where both parties are TDD users or both parties are non-TDD users, no relay or "message service" will be provided. The Operator will suggest that the two parties contact each other directly.
- H. There will be no limit to the number of calls a person can request during each relay contact.
- I. There will be no limit placed on the length of a relay call.
- J. Operators shall explain the relay function and procedure to the called party if the party is unfamiliar with this service. [A macro will be developed reads "I am now explaining the relay service."]
- K. Operators shall not terminate the call before ascertaining that both participants have finished. The calling party shall always have the final word.

- L. Operators shall allow a minimum of 15 rings when contacting a TDD number and 8 rings when contacting a voice number.
- M. Operators may request that the speaking party slow down or stop speaking, as necessary.
- N. If a TDD transmission is garbled or unintelligible, the Operator shall inform the TDD-user and suggest possible solutions to the problem. If the problems persist, the Operator will recommend that the caller hang up and try again.
- O. Operators shall receive adequate training on relay call processing procedures including TDD etiquette, common abbreviations used, American Sign Language, and any other area deemed necessary by the TACIP Board.
- P. If while relaying a call the operator realizes that one of the callers is a friend or family member, he/she shall transfer the call as quickly as possible to another operator.

III. Confidentiality

- A. The MRS will not keep any record of the content of relay conversations. Transactional information (i.e., phone numbers for billing purposes) needed to conduct the business of the MRS and the TACIP Board will be confidential.
- B. Operators shall not divulge the content of, or parties involved in, a relayed call, nor act on any information contained in a relay conversation.
- C. Breach of confidentiality by a Relay Operator shall result in immediate termination of employment (after such breach is investigated and confirmed by the Relay Manager).
- D. Operators will be required to sign a Pledge of Confidentiality before relaying any calls.
- E. Operators will be assigned a code number to insure anonymity.
- F. The workstation where an operator "logs on" will be tracked daily and records of the work location of each operator maintained on an ongoing basis. Operators will not be permitted to change work stations during a given day without good reason and prior supervisor approval.

IV. Emergency Calls

- A. TDD-users will be encouraged to call the 911-TDD number in the event of an emergency.
- B. Operators shall process emergency relays as efficiently as possible and will have emergency phone numbers readily available at all times.
- C. In the event of a suicide, drug or rape-crisis call the Operator will connect with and relay to an appropriate social service crisis hotline.

V. Operator Responsibilities

- A. Operators shall translate ASL/English as necessary to fit each party's language needs.
- B. Operators shall accurately and faithfully convey the spirit and content of all calls.
- C. The relay user is responsible to judge the appropriateness of the content of the conversation and act accordingly. The operator will not try to influence that decision.
- D. Operators shall only provide information on the use of the relay service and will not provide opinions or suggestions on other topics. They will only transmit information between the parties involved in the relay call.
- E. Operators shall always conduct themselves in a professional and courteous manner.

VI. Information Referral

- A. Requesting information from a Relay Operator is not a relay request and will not be processed.
- B. Requests for directory assistance will be referred to the AT&T toll free TTY/TDD directory assistance number. If the caller insists on using the local directory assistance, the operator will call 411 and relay the call.
- C. Callers requesting information about the Relay Service will be referred to the Customer Service Representative.

VII. Service Standards

A. Operator Training/Monitoring

- 1.) All Operators shall be trained on Relay Service policies, procedures, ethics, American Sign Language grammar and Deaf Culture.
- 2.) Line supervisors will regularly evaluate the Operators' performance by observing relay calls, both the voice and TDD conversations and provide written reports to the management of the organization providing relay services. Line supervisors shall also preserve the confidentiality of the content of and identification of the calls.

B. Operator Quality Assurance

- 1.) The relay provider will encourage relay users to contact the Customer Service Representative with any concerns they may have with the quality of service received from the relay service. The caller should also be asked to provide documentation of any problems if possible. The number of the Customer Service Representative will be provided whenever necessary.

VIII. Access

- A. Calling parties in the Metro area shall be encouraged to access the Relay Service through the local access number (297-5353).
- B. Calling parties in Minnesota but outside the Metro area shall be encouraged to access the Relay Service through the toll-free IN-WATS number (1-800-627-3529).
- C. Calling parties outside Minnesota shall access the Relay Service through the local access number (612-297-5353).
- D. Callers can place relay calls to any destination as long as charges that normally would be assessed if the call were a direct dial call are charged to the appropriate party.
- E. Operators shall not relay calls that both initiate and terminate in another state.

IX. Billing

- A. Callers shall not be charged for relay calls that would be local (non-toll) calls if direct dialed from the caller's point of origin to point of termination.
- B. Callers shall be charged for intrastate relay calls that terminate outside the calling party's local area. Rates shall approximate standard toll rates as

closely as possible. Operators will obtain all necessary long distance billing information from the caller before the call is placed.

- C. Callers shall be billed for calls that terminate outside of Minnesota using collect calling, credit card, third-party billing or any other method approved by the TACIP Board.

X. Hiring

A. The provider of the Minnesota Relay Service shall hire well-qualified individuals to perform the tasks necessary to meet its stated objectives, and does not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, religion, color, sex, national origin or ancestry, age, disability, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual or affectional orientation or identity or appearance, profession or family affiliation.

XI. Publicity

A. All public relations materials regarding the MRS including brochures, flyers, displays, video and audio tapes and all print media shall be created in conjunction with Relay Management and the TACIP Administrator and must receive prior approval of the TACIP Board before the purchase or use of the materials.

B. During all public relations activity where use of the relay is explained, MRS staff shall:

1. Explain the proper procedures for using the MRS;
2. Encourage users to prepare all necessary information before calling the MRS;
3. Encourage users when leaving messages to be brief and clear and should leave instructions about how to use the relay if necessary;
4. Encourage users to call 911 in the event of an emergency;
5. Encourage metro area residents to access the relay through the local access number;
6. Encourage Greater Minnesota residents to access the relay through the toll free WATS number;
7. Explain how common problems encountered by relay users can be overcome.
8. Explain the relationship between the TACIP Board and the operator of the relay and that the Board is responsible for all aspects of the MRS.

XII. Changes in Policies/Procedures

Any change in the policies/procedures of the Minnesota Relay Service must have prior approval of the TACIP Board before implementation and/or public notification.

Appendix G

MRS Annual Customer Relations Report

Annual Customer Relations Report: January 1993 - December 1993

	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
Presentations												
# of Presentations	2	5	0	3	11	3	3	2	2	11	5	7
# of Participants	45	53	0	97	685	85	50	90	95	670	82	109
Cancelled/Postponed	0	0	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Average # in Attendance	24	11	0	32	62	28	17	45	48	61	16	16
YTD Presentations	2	7	7	10	21	24	27	29	31	42	47	54
YTD Participants	45	98	98	195	880	965	1015	1105	1200	1870	1952	2061
Tours												
# of Tours	5	1	4	15	4	5	7	4	11	2	1	3
# of Participants	25	10	35	139	7	11	38	11	98	4	2	5
Cancelled/Postponed	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Average # in Attendance	5	10	9	9	2	2	5	3	9	2	2	2
YTD Tours	5	6	10	25	29	34	41	45	56	58	59	62
YTD Participants	25	35	70	209	216	227	265	276	374	378	380	385
Exhibits												
# of Exhibits	1	0	2	0	1	2	1	1	2	3	4	0
# of Participants	550	0	370	0	253	130	200	1500	2050	1200	2100	0
Cancelled/Postponed	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Average # in Attendance	550	0	185	0	253	65	200	1500	1025	400	525	0
YTD Exhibits	1	1	3	3	4	6	7	8	10	13	17	17
YTD Participants	550	550	920	920	1173	1303	1503	3003	5053	6253	8353	8353
Information Requests												
YTD	10	12	34	24	11	20	19	9	13	8	14	3
YTD	10	22	56	80	91	111	130	139	152	160	174	177
Consumer Comments												
YTD	20	89	139	75	59	49	40	63	35	32	66	74
YTD	20	109	248	323	382	431	471	534	569	601	667	741

YTD TOTAL PARTICIPANTS - 10799

Appendix H

MRS Consumer Satisfaction Survey Summaries

CONSUMER SATISFACTION SURVEY

The Minnesota Relay Service (MRS) values our consumers' suggestions and comments. Please take a few minutes to fill out the following so we know what you like and dislike. If any items do not apply to you please leave blank.

PLEASE CIRCLE YOUR CHOICE:
4= always; 3= frequently; 2= sometimes; 1= never

1. It is easy to reach the MRS.

54%	36%	10%	0%
4	3	2	1

2. My calls to M.R.S. are answered on the first or second ring.

20%	37%	29%	14%
4	3	2	1

3. The Operator/Communication Assistant (CA) is polite.

70%	23%	7%	0%
4	3	2	1

4. The CA understands American Sign Language and changes it to English correctly.

44%	8%	8%	4%
4	3	2	1

5. The CA types fast enough.

61%	29%	10%	0%
4	3	2	1

6. The CA lets me know what is going on during my call
 (for example: "answering machine", "background music", etc.).

53%	25%	15%	7%
4	3	2	1

7. The CA expresses my feelings.

50%	29%	15%	7%
4	3	2	1

8. I trust MRS to be private about my conversations.

68%	15%	17%	0%
4	3	2	1

Please see other side

9. I use MRS for: (circle all that apply to you)
- | | | | | | | | |
|--|----|----|----|--------|----|---------|--------------|
| | 21 | 25 | 17 | 34 | 12 | 33 | Doctor |
| | | | | Family | | Friends | Dentist |
| | | | | | | | Pizza |
| | | | | | | | Medical |
| | | | | | | | School |
| | | | | | | | Emergencies |
| | | | | | | | Out-of-state |
10. I am: Deaf ⁴ Hard of Hearing ³ Hearing ¹⁸ ⁷ ¹⁵
 Speech Impaired ⁴ Other _____
11. Please circle age group you are in: 5-20 ³ 21-40 ¹⁸ 41-60 ⁷ 61+ ¹⁵
12. Please circle how often you use M.R.S.? ¹⁶ Everyday ²
 Few times a week ²⁰ Few times a month ⁴ Very little

13. What county do you live in? (For example: Anoka, Cook)

Fill in county: 43 from 20 counties in Greater Minnesota; 25 from 7-county Metro Area

Additional Comments and suggestions: see attached

Would you like someone from our office to contact you?: **YES NO**
(Please circle one)

If yes: Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Telephone () _____ (circle one) Voice TDD Both

or call MRS at (612) 297-5328 (Voice/TDD)
or the TACIP Board at (612) 296-0412 (Voice) - (612) 296-9836 (TDD)

- Please return this survey by using the postage paid preaddressed envelope -

Thank you for helping your Relay!

The Minnesota Relay Service is a program of the State of Minnesota, TACIP Board,
provided under contract by DEAF.

PLEASE RESPOND BY FEBRUARY 28, 1993

Here are the comments made on the questionnaire:

- No problems as all works out fine
- You should be proud of your service!
- 10,000 thanks for reducing my vehicle's mileage by 10,000 miles annually.
- MRS must keep going! Or I'd be helpless.
- MRS should answer (faster) in emergencies.
- We find it ok. No suggestions.
- Keep up good work.
- I'm really happy to have (my) TDD as I don't drive and now I can call my daughter and save them a trip.
- I'm very satisfied with (MRS).
- Tell operators not to use too much.....spaces. Wastes paper.
- We can't go without MRS! It really helps us to communicate with anyone like daycare, carpooling, work, family, etc. We can't imagine if we have no MRS. Keep it up! We are very happy with your service.
- I am very glad the (MRS) is there to help us communicate. I feel the barrier of talking on the phone with hearing people has broken. Keep up the good work.
- (need info on out-of-state calls).
- My hearing friends use MRS also. They think it is a wonderful thing to have.

- The MRS has been a great service to me. It allows me to make my own calls rather than depending on other people. The operators are always friendly and cheerful. It is a great service that helps me live in a hearing community.

- I am well pleased with the service.

- MRS is a very wonderful service for hearing impaired people. Without them our lives would be very difficult to communicate on phone.

- MRS is very good business.

- Having this has been fantastic for me--I no longer feel isolated.

- You are my voice. The relay service has again opened many doors for me--allowing me as a volunteer concerned (with) issues that may affect the disabled-elderly....

- Between 1 PM and 2:30 PM...nobody answers when left to be ringing more than 10 times. If they are on break, we suggest you to have 2 groups.

As decided at the last committee meeting, we are sending out a second sample mailing of approximately 150 to users of the regional centers, not EDP clients this time. The mailing will take place Friday, March 19, and we are asking for a response by April 5.

CONSUMER SATISFACTION SURVEY

April, 1993

The Minnesota Relay Service (MRS) values our consumers' suggestions and comments. Please take a few minutes to fill out the following so we know what you like and dislike. If any items do not apply to you please leave blank.

PLEASE CIRCLE YOUR CHOICE:

4= always; 3= frequently; 2= sometimes; 1= never

Percent of
Responses

1. It is easy to reach the MRS.

4	3	2	1
42%	46%	10%	2%

2. My calls to M.R.S. are answered on the first or second ring.

4	3	2	1
10%	50%	28%	12%

3. The Operator/Communication Assistant (CA) is polite.

4	3	2	1
61%	36%	2%	-

4. The CA understands American Sign Language and changes it to English correctly.

4	3	2	1
40%	43%	14%	3%

5. The CA types fast enough.

4	3	2	1
41%	49%	8%	2%

6. The CA lets me know what is going on during my call
(for example: "answering machine", "background music", etc.).

4	3	2	1
40%	37%	21%	2%

7. The CA expresses my feelings.

4	3	2	1
43%	43%	-	14%

8. I trust MRS to be private about my conversations.

4	3	2	1
60%	24%	-	16%

Please see other side

Additional Comments and Suggestions:

Suggestion: make rule about multiple calls and stick to it!

I get many misdials--embarrassing!

Always proud of MRS comparing to other state relays. I've used 5 different state relays. Yours is best!

Sometimes CAs misspell, etc.

I don't use relay for confidential calls.

Sometimes typing goes too slow or clumsy. If operators have limited English skills they should take class to improve English and ASL conversation skills.

I'd like to have the background info--I enjoy it (question 6).

Operators working on first day, do(es) he/she have someone assist/supervise work? I've had some "not so good" experience with dayone operators.

Delay is GREAT very often, waiting for info to be typed (question 5).

When explaining service to a first-time user (hearing), should tell them that ALL BACKGROUND conversation will be relayed to the deaf person also.

Please continue to provide this service--it is very valuable.

We use it to contact a relative who is deaf, and it's been very successful and satisfactory. We appreciate the service very much.

The CA should use EVERY word--HONESTLY especially when persons describe where they live and where to meet one another.

MRS is wonderful opportunity for many hearing impaired and deaf citizens

During a conversation the message I needed to get across was not accomplished.

Doing a very good job keep up the good work I thank you for the help.

More operators are needed 3:30-6:30 PM. Also 7:30-9:30 AM. Once I couldn't get a line to tell my employer I would be late, and it's often difficult to get a line after school's out at 3:30.

How call for 911 in Jackson, Minnesota? Let me know ok?

CA is very patient with me and it is much appreciated. CA is also pleasant.

I am satisfied!

Monotone voices!! Something they need to emphasize more! (question 7).

When I have used MRS I have been very appreciative. Everything was done smoothly and professionally. I am glad MRS is available.

Appendix I
FCC Certification Letter

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20554

IN REPLY REFER TO:

July 8, 1993

Mr. Bill Lamson
Administrator
Telecommunications Access for Communication Impaired Persons
Centennial Building, First Floor
658 Cedar Street
Saint Paul, MN 55155-1603

RE: Telecommunications Relay Services (TRS)
State Certification Grant
Application No. TRS-28-92: MINNESOTA

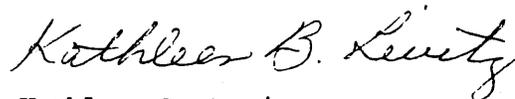
Dear Mr. Lamson:

Pursuant to Title IV of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, § 225 of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended, and §§ 64.601 - 64.605 of the Code of Federal Regulations, 47 C.F.R. §§ 64.601-64.605, Application No. TRS-28-92: MINNESOTA is hereby granted. The referenced state TRS application meets or exceeds all operational, technical, and functional minimum standards contained in § 64.604 of our rules, and makes available adequate procedures and remedies for enforcing the requirements of the state program.

This certification shall remain in effect for a five year period beginning July 26, 1993, and ending July 25, 1998. As of July 26, 1997, the state may apply for renewal of its certification by filing documentation as prescribed by 47 C.F.R. § 64.605.

For good cause shown, we hereby suspend enforcement, until July 26, 1995, of the requirement that TRS shall be capable of handling coin-sent paid calls. At that time, we will review whether such a service is technically feasible.

Sincerely,



Kathleen B. Levitz
Acting Chief
Common Carrier Bureau



Appendix J
Households Served by EDP

Number of Households Served by Equipment Distribution Program to Date (9/88 - 12/93)

Upper Northwest RSC Area
Counties Served
 Polk Beltrami
 Lake of the Woods Kirtson
 Marshall Pennington
 Roseau Red Lake
 Clearwater

◆ Crookston

1,281
Households

◆ Virginia

Northwest RSC Area
Counties Served
 Becker Hubbard
 Douglas Norman
 Mahnomen Wadena
 Ottertail
 Todd
 Clay
 Grant
 Wilkin
 Traverse
 Cass

1,301
Households

☆ Fergus Falls

Northeast RSC Area
Counties Served
 Aitkin Cook
 Itasca St. Louis
 Carlton Koochiching
 Lake

Duluth ☆

East Central RSC Area
Counties Served
 Chisago Mille Lacs
 Isanti Stearns
 Sherburne Pine
 Crow Wing Morrison
 Benton Wright
 Kanabec

☆ St. Cloud

1,204
Households

Metro RSC Area
Counties Served
 Anoka Carver
 Dakota Hennepin
 Ramsey Scott
 Washington

4,035
Households
 ☆ St. Paul

West Central RSC Area
Counties Served
 Chippewa Lac qui Parle
 Stevens Pope
 Swift Meeker
 Kandiyohi McLeod
 Yellow Medicine
 Renville
 Big Stone

◆ Willmar

986
Households

☆ Mankato

1,021
Households

☆ Rochester

Southwest RSC Area
Counties Served
 Faribault
 Blue Earth Brown Cottonwood
 Jackson Martin Murray
 Rock Pipestone Nicollet
 Sibley Redwood Watonwan
 Lincoln Lyon Nobles

Southeast RSC Area
Counties Served
 Olmsted Fillmore
 Wabasha LaSueur
 Houston Winona
 Dodge Steele
 Freeborn Mower
 Rice Goodhue
 Waseca

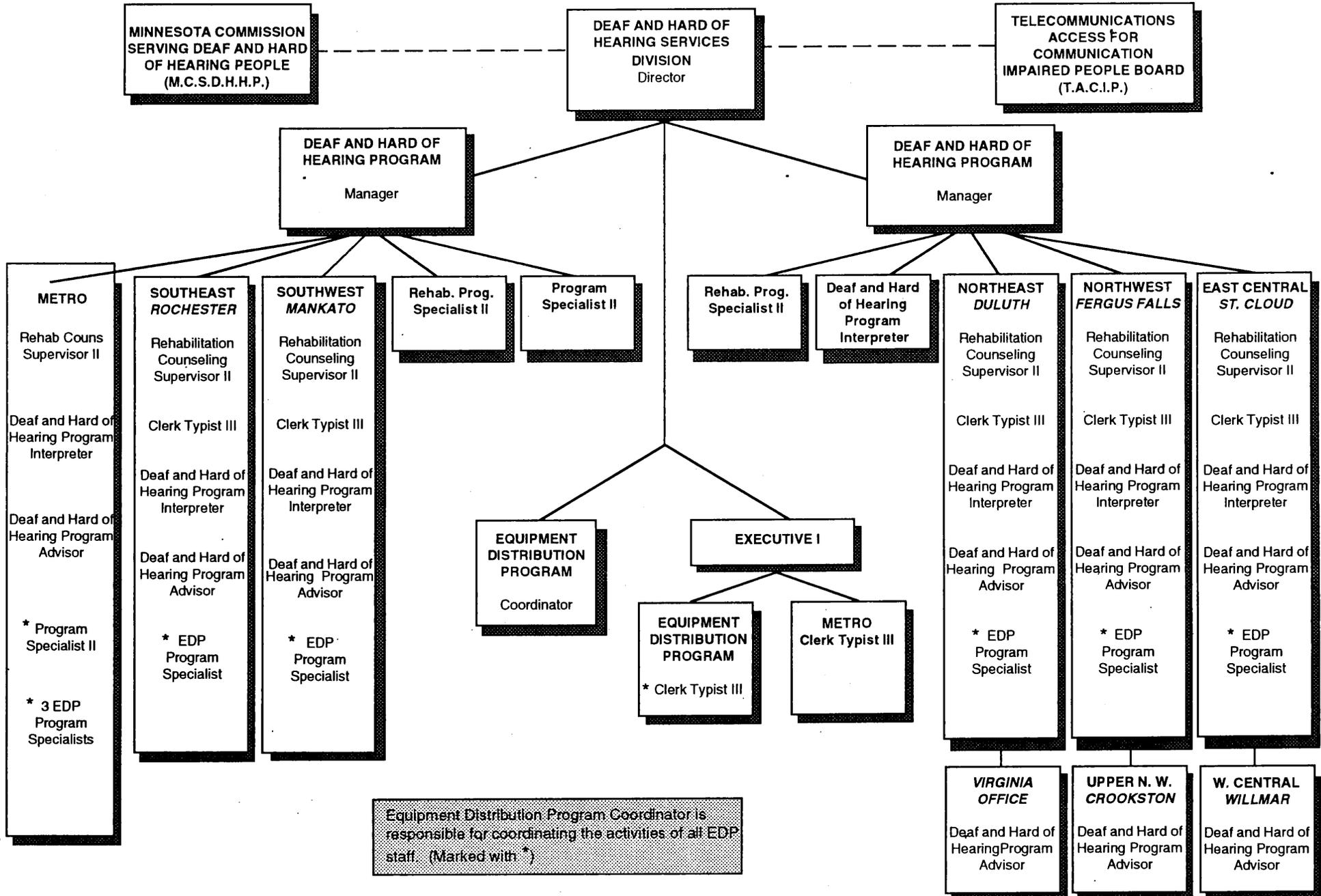
☆ RSC Office

◆ One Person Office

There are no EDP staff in the one person offices, therefore, EDP clients in the Willmar region are served by St. Cloud, EDP clients in the Crookston area are served by Fergus Falls, and EDP clients in the Virginia area are served by Duluth.

Appendix K
EDP Organizational Chart

Minnesota Department of Human Services
Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services Division



Equipment Distribution Program Coordinator is responsible for coordinating the activities of all EDP staff. (Marked with *)

Appendix L

EDP Consumer Satisfaction Survey Summary

Equipment Distribution Program Consumer Satisfaction Survey

March 1993

In an effort to continue monitoring the quality and effectiveness of the services provided by EDP, a consumer satisfaction survey was mailed to 210 recipients of EDP services. The survey attempted to measure the level of satisfaction of people who have received EDP services. To get the highest response rate possible, the survey was limited to seven yes or no questions and one "check-off" style question. Included at the end of the survey was a comment section allowing responders to elaborate on their answers and/or give their name and address so EDP staff could follow up with additional information or services. Thirty consumers were selected from the case files of each program specialist for a total of 210. The selected consumers received service between August of 1992 and January of 1993. To keep the survey as objective as possible, EDP staff were not told of the survey until after the questionnaires were mailed and the recipients were able to respond without revealing their identity. The results of the survey have been compiled for individual RSC offices and statewide.

STATEWIDE

Number of surveys mailed: 210 (30 for each for 7 program specialists)

Number of surveys returned: 154

Question #1

Are you satisfied with the telephone equipment you received?

Yes 147 No 1

Question #2

Are you currently using the equipment you received?

Yes 150 No 1

Question #3

Do you feel you were served in a timely manner?

Yes 151 No 3

Question #4

Did you receive enough training on how to use and install the equipment?

Yes 145 No 3

Question #5

Were your questions answered clearly and completely?

Yes 146 No 2

Question #6

Generally speaking, are you happy with the service you received from the Equipment Distribution Program?

Yes 149 No 2

Question #7

Would you like us to contact you about the service and/or equipment you received?

Yes 17 No 104

Question #8

Has the telephone equipment you received: (Please check all that apply)

Given you the ability to access the telephone independently?

checked 132

Made you feel safer by giving you access to emergency services, friends, and family?

checked 132

Helped you communicate with your employer or potential employers?

checked 45

Allowed you to schedule your own appointments?

checked 100

Helped you participate in the life and culture of your community?

checked 105

EDP CONSUMER SATISFACTION SURVEY
FEBRUARY, 1993
SUMMARY OF CONSUMER COMMENTS

I sincerely love my phone. I can talk to people as tho they were standing right in front of me. I thank you from the bottom of my heart. I feel like a new person because I am able to keep in contact with friends, relatives, etc. Thanks a million. And thanks to the nice lady that brought the phone.

I am pleased with the service of my telephone. I like the spaces that I have programmed in. Thank you.

If it wouldn't be for the phone, I couldn't talk to anyone. I used to have my children answer the phone. With the ringer I received with it, I can also hear the phone for myself. It's great, I really didn't know what I was missing, but I do now. Thank you for all your help and support.

I am happy with my new phone.

The TDD and especially the relay service which allows one to call ANY phone are godsend to deaf people. Just 2 things:

- Sometimes in the late PM or holidays the circuits are tied up. If these times can be predicted, perhaps more operators are needed.
- My daughter in Superior, Wisconsin would have to call long distance to call me on the TDD. She recently found out that Wisconsin has a relay service and she can call directly. Publicize this fact.

I am so pleased with my new phone. It is my most valued possession. I can hear perfectly on it. I thank you for introducing me to this new invention.

Everything was explained and showed how to use the equipment. Thank you for your help. I am truly happy I received the phone.

The telephone has helped me to hear more clearly. I have hearing aids and the regular phone made too many noises and I had to remove my hearing aid.

The service was excellent. The phone has been replaced but still gives trouble - a phone call to the manufacturer was not helpful.

It took a very long time from the time I filled out the papers until I received the actual phone. They would say they were coming and never come. It took nearly 6 months for installation.

I am very well satisfied, I hear so clearly, almost hard to believe.

I appreciate the phone equipment. I can hear again on the phone. Thank you.

We have a TDD that we use to call our son with. The only problem we have with the new phone is that the receiver (handset) does not fit into the acoustic cups of the TDD. Could someone check with us sometime?

Am so glad as it really has helped me in ever so many ways. Thanks.

I can't thank you enough for the help through this program. I am able to do things away from the telephone. I can hear the phone ringing in all parts of the house. Also my Clarity phone helps to hear and understand people better. Thanks again.

I would like you to call at my house, its a few things I want to speak to you about. Would appreciate you calling me.

The services provided to me make it easier and enjoyable to answer and make phone calls.

I can use my telephone because now I can hear and understand what people say. Thank you.

I have arthritis very bad. It is nice to just push a button and have the number dialed. I am 92 years old.

Just knowing I can hear it ring allows me to be more relaxed while going about my work at home.

If a number I am calling has been changed, how do I change it so I can press the button for a second call? I am very happy with the phone.

I don't believe the phone works right. But it answers my purpose when the phone is ringing the 'Lamp Module' flashes my phone. (that's great).

Nobody showed me how to push my phone number in. Thank you.

The TDD is great, however, I can't hear the phone ring when I'm home alone, I can't receive calls. I was given a ringer, but even though I'm told it is very loud, it is too high pitched for me to hear. I would prefer a visual ringer.

I don't think I hear any better than I did with my own. I would like to have you come here. I am not as satisfied and I thought I would be.

Very, very pleased with the lady who made this possible.

We are very grateful for this service.

We were very surprised when we were offered this equipment. It seemed to be almost too good to be true. We are very appreciative and thankful tp be able to get the equipment and the service. Your representative was most helpful and capable in every way. Thanks to her, and your department in every way.

I could not hear on a regular phone. Now I can hear real good. I can now schedule my own appointments.

It does not ring as loud as it did at first.

I am very satisfied. I'll be 82 years old, and it has helped me a lot.

The telephone has been a blessing. I was about ready to throw in the towel and give up. Now I can hear and others say I seem clearer. It helps me to see the numbers. We never could have been able to get the telephone with out your help. Words cannot express how grateful I am. May God bless all that made this possible.

I really enjoy my phone because I hear people a lot better and when my family calls, I can hear them. I do have a hearing aid which doesn't help me much. Thank you.

I sure enjoy the new phone. Now I can hear people that talk so low, and have no problems with long distance calls either. Thanks for everything.

It's so nice that I don't have to ask people to repeat. Thanks for the program - my children think it's a wonderful thing.

Generally, I am doing well with the telephone. Sometimes I have difficulty understanding people that is because of the nature of my hearing loss. Generally, I am doing much better than being without a phone. Finally, I want to say that my hearing loss scares me a lot because I barely survive.

Before I received your telephone. I bought a ATT 210 dial on the receiver phone and I can not hear people on it and I was told there is nothing that can be done to it. Your phone is excellent and I thank you very much for being so kind.

Great service. Really enjoy the phone. Thanks.

This phone I can hear any place in the apt and if I am asleep.

The phone helps me with volume, but not with clarity of tone. I use the phone as a second phone so I do not have to hurry from another room. I have an ATT phone that has more clarity as well as volume that I use as my main phone.

I am very grateful an appreciate the service very much. Not once have I had to hand the phone to someone else to finish the call.

The phone with the louder ringer and separate very loud "ringer" make things so much better because I can hear the phone ringing. Before I many times didn't get my calls - mostly when I had the TV on. Thank you.

It was so good that your service provided to hearing impaired because I know that they depended on the equipment to communicate all over the the state. Also it helps them to be successful with the hearing world.

Many thanks - to your wonderful work.

The EDP program is excellent!

Stay on forever!

If I get calls from long distance like from NY or Cal. don't seem to come clear, hard to understand.

I really enjoy that I can hear better in my conversations on the phone. I used to miss so much.

I have my own private conversations. It's a really wonderful tool. It's the best thing that has happened to me.

Yes. The gal that brought me the telephone was the best. And I am very happy with it. If it goes kaput, I'll call the number she gave me.

I'm happy to say I can hear the bell all over the apartment. I would like something for my apartment door, however.

I really appreciate being able to hear clearly over the telephone. I wish I would have had something like this 20 years ago. Thanks again.

Sirs. I drive the RSVP taking people to appointments, Dr., shopping, airport or whatever for those over age 60 or on Medical Assistance to Rochester, St. Paul, Mankato, etc. Sop I get all the calls for this at my home on the phone from you and I am very thankful for this as I have a hearing problem, and am alone in this house. My wife has Alzheimers and has been in a rest home for over 4 years. Thank you very much.

More knowledge should be made available to the public. They should be made aware of these programs. Many people are not aware of their options for this type of equipment. There is a demand for this by many people.

I am very pleased with the equipment. Now I can talk with my daughters and hear them. I think all people with a hearing loss should have this service. Thank you!

I am filling this survey for a girl who is 7 years old. As parents we are very happy to have this service and out daughter has expressed to us how much she likes the phone. Thank you.

We also appreciated knowing your young man salesman. He was quite thoughtful.

Great service and a courteous employee.