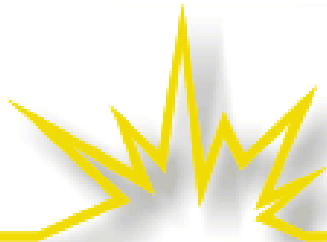


Consumer Protection From A Regulator's Perspective

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Consumer Protection Objectives

- Access to the Process
- Public Education
- Public Perception of Fairness
- Fairness in Fact
- Balancing the Powers of the Parties
- Efficient Utilization of Commission Resources



Framework For Customer Protection

- Undue Discrimination
 - Fairness Within Classes
 - Fairness Among Classes
- Private vs. Public Interests
- Protection of Institutional Integrity
- Due Process Considerations



Dealing With Conflicts

- Competing Interests
 - Customers vs. Utility
 - Customers vs. Customers
 - Utility vs. Other Social Interests
 - Customers vs. Other Social Interest



Role of Commission

- Commissioners
 - Direct consumer contacts
 - Political contacts
 - Public presence



Role of Commission

- Commission Protection Staff
 - Direct consumer contacts
 - Political contacts
 - Public presence



Role of Commission

- Advocacy Staff
 - Consumer Protection Staff Feedback
 - Development of Rate Case Issues



Role of Commission

- Enforcement Functions
 - Transaction-based Enforcement
 - Audit-based Enforcement
 - Performance-based Enforcement



Interplay of the Parties

- Relationship to Commission/Commissioners
- Relationship to Staff
- Interface between Utility, Commission and Consumer
 - Staff to Staff
 - Management to Commissioners
 - Consumer to Utility
 - Consumer to Commission



Structural Tools

- Consumer Protection Rules
 - Line extensions
 - Billing/Metering Disputes
 - Disconnections
 - Disclosure



Structural Tools

- Complaint Process
 - Within Utility
 - Required Process for Consumer Dispute Resolution
 - At the Commission
 - Informal Complaints
 - Formal Complaints



Structural Tools

- Alternative Dispute Resolution
 - Mediation
 - Arbitration
 - Staff "dispositions"