

Consumer Advisory Committee
Reporting of Consumer Complaints and Inquiries
Recommendation adopted: November 19, 2004

Issue 1: The purpose of the FCC's Quarterly Reports is to provide a snapshot of the types of informal complaints and inquiries that the FCC receives from consumers on a variety of telecom and media issues. It was never the goal or purpose of the Quarterly Report to offer trend and data analysis. The FCC lets the numbers speak for themselves. There is general concern, however, that publishing only the top five categories may not reflect informal complaints and inquiries that may be significant to a particular segment of the general population or a particular area of the country.

Recommendation #1: For those informal complaints and inquiries that do not fall within the top five categories identified in the Quarterly Report, the Commission should expand the number of categories or report such numbers using a summary table in the Quarterly Report. The Consumer Complaint Working Group will provide CGB with a suggested format or models that the working group believes may be helpful to consumers.

Issue #2: There is concern whether informal complaints and inquiries are properly coded to ensure that the categories accurately reflect the number of complaints in a particular category. The Consumer Complaint Working Group appreciates that the FCC Call Center is faced with the same problem as any Call Center, *i.e.*, how to minimize bias and human error in the coding of consumer complaint and at the same time, improve the Call Center's efficiency.

Recommendation #2: Constant training, education, review and auditing of FCC Call Center personnel, *i.e.*, CAMs, is key to minimizing errors and bias in the process. The Consumer Complaint Working Group recommends the FCC establish, if it has not already done so, a process wherein it continually reviews and audits the work product of its Call Centers, identify areas of concerns, and provide on-going training for its CAMS at regular intervals. It is important that such review or audits includes input and feedback from CAMs.

Issue #3: FCC conducts several consumer outreach efforts to Indian country, rural America, consumers with disabilities, elderly consumers, parents, etc. Consumers participating in these outreach activities may raise issues and concerns that may not be currently reflected in the FCC's Quarterly Reports.

Recommendation #3: Informal complaints and concerns raised at FCC consumer outreach forums and initiatives should be included in the FCC Quarterly Report. The Consumer Complaint Working Group recommends the FCC review, and if necessary

develop internal processes and procedures to ensure that this information is getting to the appropriate staff within the Commission for appropriate action.

Issue #4: While the FCC's Quarterly Reports do not include data and trend analysis, the FCC makes the full range of categories, numbers and underlying data available subject to the Freedom of Information Act. The FCC has a FOIA process in place and information on how to navigate that process is available at the FCC's website. However, it appears that the general public is not aware of the website and may not be familiar with the FCC's FOIA process.

Recommendation #4: The CAC recommends the FCC find or develop ways to better inform consumers who may want to obtain more detailed information related to the Quarterly Reports about the FCC's FOIA process. Education and outreach efforts should highlight where this information is available electronically and in print, but also how to navigate the FOIA process.

Finally, as a means of "closing the loop" for these recommendations, we would appreciate receiving a formal response to these recommendations at the next scheduled meeting of the newly rechartered CAC.