

The Hartford test was authorized in substantial part to determine the effect of a successful Pay-TV system on free TV. The test was unnecessary if the Commission were willing to determine the public interest in this regard solely on the basis of speculation. The test was, in fact, a failure and, as such, it provided no indication of what an economically viable Pay-TV system would do to free television. The conclusions drawn by the Commission purportedly from the Hartford experience bear no relation to the facts in question and are as much pure speculation today as they would have been if offered in 1955.

2. The Disconnect Rate Indicated Public Dissatisfaction

The Commission essentially ignores the number of disconnects although disconnects may be as significant in assessing the test as the failure to attract additional subscribers. Of a total of 8,329 subscribers during the three years, there were 3,478 disconnects. During the third year the disconnects (1,670) virtually equaled the new installations (1,752). In the overall, disconnects constituted 40% of the total installations.

There is no detailed explanation concerning the disconnects and it is never adverted to except in the context of explaining future projections. Thus, on page 29 of the Comments we are told that the proponents have allowed for a 20% disconnect rate in their projections and that this is comparable to the "15-20% 'disconnect-connect' annual turnover experienced by telephone companies in many markets." The fact remains, however, that the disconnect rate in Hartford over the three-year period was 40% and no clearer evidence of public disapproval is required.