

COMMON CARRIAGE PRINCIPLES  
IN THE NEW TELECOMMUNICATIONS ENVIRONMENT

(Issued May 24, 1989)

I. INTRODUCTION

This is a request for comments on the proper scope and application of the principles of common carriage to the present and future telecommunications environment, in particular with a view toward the evolution of telephone networks into mass media carriers, including carriage of video programs. After a discussion of the importance of common carriage, current policy questions are discussed with specific questions for each issue raised. Draft rules are then presented in Part III which address the principal common carrier obligations of communications companies within our jurisdiction. Appendices follow which contain a more detailed discussion of the background of common carriage generally and its more specific application to communications. Parties are invited to address these rules and questions and other issues which they see as relevant to this proceeding.

It should be noted at the outset that concern with common carriage is not inconsistent with the move, which we should continue to support, toward a reduction in regulation and an increased reliance on market forces. Application of common

**IV. CONCLUSION**

Common carriage is a set of principles which has balanced public and private interests for centuries. Our interest is ensuring that benefits of common carriage be maintained, and in particular that access to and distribution of information be assured while adjusting to new network technologies and services, yet without stifling market forces and innovation.

This proceeding is an opportunity for all interested parties to advise the Commission how these principles should be applied.

In May 1989, the New York Public Service Commission  
 issued "Common Carrier Principles in the New  
 Telecommunications Environment." The purpose of the  
 document was to stimulate public comment on the  
 concept of common carriage by providing the public  
 with a detailed analysis of the topic, and a set of  
 proposed rules to govern common carriage in the  
 future. The document's principal author was  
 Commissioner Eli M. Noam.

Editors Note: