

"NO DIAL TONE" CONDITIONS  
IN DIAL OFFICES

In handling indications of possible trouble and reports of trouble received from customers in dial offices, some special recognition should be given to conditions which arise from failure to receive dial tone as promptly as usual. During periods of heavy traffic the frequency with which customers dial without waiting for dial tone increases and also there are more cases where the customer upon failing to receive dial tone reports his telephone out of order.

In general, explanations of "no dial tone" situations should be confined to general terms but should be carried far enough to satisfy the customer if this can be done from the general knowledge the operator has. Expressions of regret are appropriate, of course, and the explanation should be made in accordance with the circumstances and the customer's remarks. For example, when the customer merely reports his line in trouble because he did not receive dial tone, the operator might ask if he is using the line now, and if so, she could explain that the situation has cleared and that it seems to be all right now. He may then be advised, if necessary, that dial tone delays or short periods of no dial tone may be encountered occasionally during the busy periods of the day or during periods of emergency, as the case may be. It should also be made clear that when such a condition occurs during these periods, the customer should wait for a few minutes and try again, always listening for dial tone before dialing. While Repair Service operators should continue to ticket all reports in the usual way in accordance with local directions for Repair Service Clerks in each case where the customer indicates that he has noticed an absence of dial tone when such delay was or might have been due to traffic congestion, it seems desirable to point out the circumstances and thus to relieve his mind as to his telephone being out of order. Similarly, when the situation suggests that the customer may have dialed before tone at a time when the traffic was heavy, the occasion may be taken to stress the necessity of listening for the tone. In this connection, operators having occasion to deal with such situations, such as Repair Service, dial Assistance, and Sender Monitor Operators, should be informed of emergency measures taken, so that they may be adequately prepared to meet ensuing situations.

August 5, 1942

"NO DIAL TONE" CONDITIONS  
IN DIAL OFFICES (Continued)

If the customer wishes to discuss the matter further, the operator may explain that dial tone is the equipment's way of indicating that it is ready to receive an order and that, when too many calls are made within a brief space of time, the equipment is delayed in answering some of them just as in a manual office the operator was sometimes slow in answering. When it is known that the overload resulted from some particular emergency this specific point should be used in the explanation. In the case of air raids, the suggestion should be added that only the most urgent calls be made until sometime after the all clear signal is sounded because it is important to keep equipment clear for essential calls by the defense organizations.

If the customer claims that a particularly important call was delayed because of the failure, express regret, but no further explanation is necessary unless it is indicated, or you know, that his line is one of the essential lines that should be in service at all times. Reports of delay from these lines should be reported immediately. Of course, all reports of delay will be ticketed as previously discussed.

If the customer carries the discussion further, explain that during periods of emergency we feel we must protect the public welfare of the community by giving the essential services such as fire, police, air raid wardens, etc. first preference.

If the customer asks if his line was taken out of service or inquires about the practice of taking lines out of service during such periods, explain that you do not have specific information on that subject and refer him to the business office.