

# HOW TO USE THE SYSTEM

## A SPECIAL TELECOM AUSTRALIA REPORT

Presented by  
The Australian  
Women's Weekly for  
Telecom Australia  
The third of  
four weekly reports









# MAKING IT EASIER TO GET TOGETHER

These words don't just apply to the ease of a phone call; they are a part of Telecom's plans to make it easier for people to do business with them

**T**elecom Australia has decentralized its operations into 83 districts covering the length and breadth of Australia. The districts cover suburban or country areas, and control day-to-day Telecom operations within the area.

Associated with the districts are 120-plus Telecom business offices where customers may see the range of equipment, order a phone, pay accounts and make general inquiries about Telecom.

A modernization programme is under way to re-locate business offices in attractive ground floor areas in major shopping centres to give customers a one-stop shop for all manner of Telecom business.

The programme sees these offices eventually being located in all large population centres with smaller centres being served on an agency basis or by telephone.

A visit or a phone call (free) to a Telecom business office can put you in touch with the range of equipment, such as extension phones, redphones, extension bells

and alarms, long cords, control lock phones, aids for handicapped people.

For people in business and larger homes there are intercom systems built into the telephone service. There are switchboards and telex machines. You can be put on the right track to buy special attachments from approved suppliers — loudspeaking telephones, answering machines, telefinder pagers, facsimile machines, repertory diallers. For the investor there's information on Telecom Loans.

Again through the business office, advantage can be taken of Telecom's unique after-sales service to business customers. This service keeps Telecom's service advisors on the move in factories and offices training switchboard and telex operators, teaching staff how to make best use of their telephone system, keeping people up-to-date with the changing facts of telecommunications.

Today's customers rightly won't take "any telephone as long as it's black." They want to look at the colour

range and decide whether a colorfone, a touchfone, wallfone or an ericofon will best suit them. If they spend a lot of time outdoors, they'll think of an extension bell.

A telephone that can be moved from one room to another may suit one household. Another may want extra phones located in different parts of the home.

If they're building a new home, they would arrange for it to be wired during construction.

Later when their garden was being planned they'd find out where their telephone cables are laid.

Doing business with Telecom is going to get easier and easier. But because there's so much to be done at your home, in the telephone exchange and between the exchange and your home, when you want a phone, plan for it.

In the front of the telephone directory, there's an address and a phone number for your local Telecom business office. That's a good place to start getting the most out of the system.

**Next week: The future.**

**THE COVER:** Shows a typical Telecom business office offering a range of telecommunications equipment. **LEFT:** Some of the people who make Telecom work around the clock. They include a surveyor, an office girl, a lineman and two technicians.



## TAKING THE AGONY OUT

**S**o you're finally making the break and upping stakes. You're leaving for an extended holiday, two or three months; your firm has offered some retraining in another State, which means six months away from home; or you're off on that often-dreamed-of year-long world trip.

You've paid your fee at the Post Office for mail to be redirected, the lawn mower man has been paid for months ahead, the cat and dog are staying with friends, tenants have agreed to your terms. Everything's rosy — but don't forget you need to make arrangements for your telephone service, too.

You have a number of options, and most will ensure you have the same phone number when you return home.

**If the home will not be occupied**, you can have the service disconnected at the exchange but the telephone left where it is. Your phone

number is reserved and the directory entry remains.

Rental is charged while you're away, plus a \$5 fee (covering disconnection and reconnection). If the telephone bill is due while you are away, make arrangements for payment.

For safety, you can have the phone removed and reinstalled on your return, while keeping your old number and directory entry. Rental is charged while you're away, and a \$20 fee for the work involved. Again, you should arrange for bills to be paid in your absence.

If you don't like the idea of paying rental while not using the phone, you can cancel the service and re-apply for a new one when you get home.

You don't pay the rent, but your phone number is not reserved and your entry is dropped from the next telephone directory. When the phone is connected again, the service connection fee of \$60 has to be paid,

plus three or six months' rent in advance.

**If the house is going to be occupied** and your tenants or house-sitters don't want the phone, any of the three previous arrangements can be adopted.

If they want the service, you may leave the phone working in your name. You as the subscriber are responsible for all charges while you're away, and have to make arrangements with the tenant for payment.

For a small fee, a detailed statement can be provided when you leave, so that you can settle the account privately with those in the house. Telecom needs advance notice to provide this.

You can cancel the service in your name from a nominated date. A closing statement is sent and your directory entry deleted. Then the occupier takes over the service on an "in-place" basis, paying all bills rendered in his or her name. The

initial payment is three or six months' rental in advance, plus \$10, and a new directory entry is made for the occupier.

When you come home, the temporary occupier cancels the service and you take it over on an "in-place" basis.

You pay three or six months' rental in advance plus a \$10 fee. Your directory entry is re-inserted and the temporary occupier's is deleted.

This means responsibility for payment is fixed on the tenant while you are away. If there is any likelihood of the tenant leaving and cancelling the service before you return, you could be liable for a \$60 connection fee to have the service restored. It may also be necessary for you to have a new number. If there is a possibility of this occurring, appoint an agent or talk to Telecom.

**If your absence will be short**, say two or three

## Positive aid for the handicapped

**T**elecom recently was a joint sponsor of a film called "Who's Handicapped?" produced to convince employers that disabled people are capable of giving a full day's competent work.

Ken Telfer, 46, is a perfect example of what the film was trying to get across. He is blind in one eye and has only three percent vision in the other, yet from 7.15 am to 4 pm he operates a special switchboard at Telecom's Pitt Street Exchange in Sydney.

"When I first came here I couldn't distinguish any of the lights because they were all the same colour," Ken said. "Now we have modified the switchboard with different coloured lights, and when each glows I know by the colour where the call is coming from."

In each State, Telecom

has a special placements officer in charge of giving positions to handicapped people.

"Telecom is sympathetic to disabled people," said Glenn Radford, the New South Wales officer. "There is no discrimination, and if they are capable they go straight on to our job lists, like anyone else."

Ken Telfer was given the job after four interviews. "I think that employers can rely on handicapped people," he said. "A job to us is very important and, once we have secured one, we want to prove our worth and hold it down as long as possible."

Three years ago, Ken, a librarian, was holidaying with his family on the north coast of New South Wales when their car became bogged on a beach. Through his exertion trying to free the car, the retinas of both eyes

became detached and he woke up next morning blind.

"It is rather a blow to one's ego to have been working for all your life and then one day being completely limited in what you can do," Ken said.

"I spent over a year in hospital, then several months at the Royal Blind Society, learning mobility, touch-typing, audio-typing and a general introduction to a blind world."

The switchboard he operates is a special one at the Exchange. It has 20 public lines from the street and 120 emergency lines including fire and sump pump alarms, and emergency elevator telephones.

Ken manages all the distress calls, calming people down until help arrives.

**Ken Telfer on duty at the Pitt Street Exchange, NSW.**





# OF MOVING

months, there is another arrangement which may be made if you wish to ensure that on your return you have the same telephone number.

You can have the service disconnected at the exchange but the telephone equipment left in place (as previously described). Your telephone rental continues, and the tenant takes over the service on a temporary basis.

The tenant is given a new number. When you return to your home, the tenant cancels his service, you have yours reconnected and are debited \$5.

This provides several safeguards: you continue as a subscriber, your phone number is reserved, your directory entry is not affected, and the tenant is responsible for paying call charges and his own phone rental.

**If you're moving permanently within Australia,** you can have the service moved to your new address.

If a service is at the new address, a \$10 fee applies. If a new phone service is needed, a \$60 service connection fee applies.

If the new address is in another telephone exchange area, your phone number will be changed.

Alternatively, you can cancel the phone service from the date of vacating your home, leaving a forwarding address for the closing bill.

(Should you later want a phone at the new address, a \$60 service connection fee is payable.)

If you're making the big leap to **another country,** you should cancel the phone service from the date you vacate the house, leaving a forwarding address for the closing bill.

It's a good idea to give Telecom as much notice as possible if you are moving. Further information can be obtained from Telecom sales offices in each State.



The portable Red Phone is popular in hospitals.

## Red Phone: The convenient link

**A**ny owner of a small business — be it wine bar, garage or corner store — has had customers asking, "May I use your phone?" It's all very well, and one likes to oblige, but it can stop important business calls going out or coming in — and there's always the odd person who forgets to pay for the call.

In a big office the problem becomes more acute. It's virtually impossible to stop private phone calls; often staff must make calls to friends or tradesmen during the day. And the cost of keeping track of private calls, to be deducted from employees' wages, is often greater than the amount of the private calls made.

But there is an answer, the Red Phone. Operated on a coin-in-the-slot and pay-

on-answer basis, it is an extra service to clients and staff and saves the bother of checking on calls. The subscriber collects the money and holds the key to the cash container. Telecom says a remarkably low average number of calls per day needs to be made in order to cover Red Phone rental.

So there it is. In an office, the Red Phone will be used by staff who want privacy for their calls, rather than making them at their desks where they can be overheard, and the regular phones are reserved for their proper use, business calls.

Red Phone accessories include signs, shelves, stands and acoustic hoods.

For extra information, contact your local Telecom Business Office, listed in the telephone directory.





# HOW YOUR TELEPHONE

Counting your telephone calls is a job entrusted to a delicately tuned meter installed at your local telephone exchange. The meter registers "effective" local and STD dialled calls made from your telephone. It works on the same principle as a gas or electricity meter.

The meter is operated by a pulse of electric current which is triggered when the person at the number called lifts the handpiece off its cradle. Calls you make which are ineffective are not recorded.

There is no time limit for local calls and most subscribers make more local calls than any other type.

What is a local call?

In the diagram (right) you can see that telephone exchanges are grouped into zones. A local call is simply a call between telephones in the same zone or in adjoining zones.

For example a local call would be one made between phones in Zone A, or between Zone A and B.

A trunk call is one between non-adjoining zones, eg, a call between Zones F and D. There are two types of trunk calls. The first are those you dial, Subscriber Trunk Dialed (STD), and the second are trunk calls which are booked through the operator.

When you make an effective STD call your telephone meter will tick over at the rate determined by the distance of the call and whether you are in the day-rate or night-rate charging period.

These meter registrations occur at regular intervals during your call and stop immediately you hang up the phone.

STD calls are cheaper than trunk calls booked through the operator because you are only charged for the time you speak and not as in operator-con-

nected calls for the minimum three-minute segments.

On your telephone bill, STD call charges appear under metered calls (M/C) charges.

Operator connected calls do not register on your meter. Instead, the operator makes out a docket detailing the call. The dockets for the operator-connected trunk calls you have made are debited against your account. They appear on your phone bill under Trunks (TKS). An extra charge is made for each operator connected call which could have been made by STD.

Telecom adds that it does not expect its customers to pay for ineffective calls. If equipment failures cause a wrong number or a cut-off, tell the Service Difficulties and Faults operator. She will arrange a rebate.

If your telephone bill arrives and you think it's too high, Telecom suggests you think about all those calls you made before you start complaining.

It's easy to overlook calls, particularly those made in haste. Telecom has therefore drawn up a list of calls which most people make. They include calls to: friends, relatives, neighbours, recorded information services, dentist, doctor, department stores, local supermarkets, chemist, heating oil dealer, laundry, dry cleaners, hairdresser.

Casual STD or operator connected trunk calls can also be generated through: relatives or friends visiting from interstate or the country; advising a birth to interstate or country friends and relatives; booking accommodation for holidays.

However . . . Telecom adds that if you should have any lingering doubts about your phone bill just call the inquiries telephone number shown on your account or ask at the local Sales Office or Post Office.



ABOVE: The details related to a call are made available to operators through this device. RIGHT: Every phone has its own meter on the exchange board. BELOW: Calls made within a zone or to adjoining zones are classed as local calls, as between Zone A and Zone B.



## Finding faults in a hurry is their job

There's nothing worse than a dead telephone. But, very fortunately, Telecom's system for bringing a faulty phone back to life is highly efficient.

There are 28 Fault Dispatch Centres in Australian capital cities to cope with the problems of their four million phone connections.

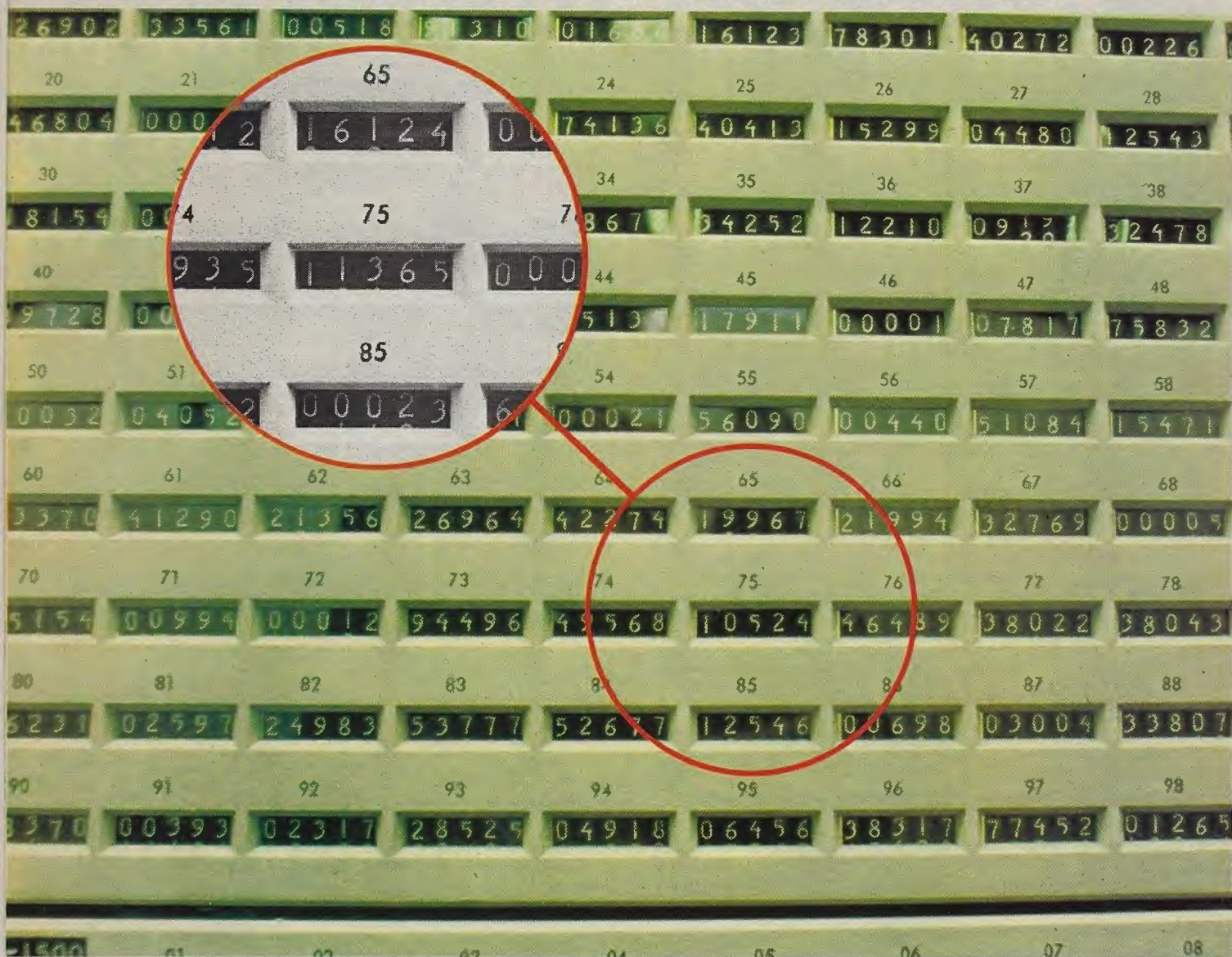
One centre, the Brighton Centre in Victoria, receives about 5000 inquiries and complaints a week. Of these, 4000 are from subscribers and 1000 for public telephones. To cope with the faults and to rectify them as quickly and efficiently as possible, the Brighton Centre has a staff of 79.

After lodging your complaint with the Service Difficulties switchboard operator, a telex is sent to the Brighton Centre. A fault docket is immediately made out and passed on to a master card index operator.

The Brighton Centre has



# CALLS ARE COUNTED



cards for every telephone in their area — a total of about 205,000. These cards record the complete history of the service installation, faults recorded and cleared and any other relevant information.

Of the 4000 subscriber complaints received each week, about 3000 will check out to be in good order.

Faults can occur in exchange equipment, in PABX equipment in businesses, in the line or with the phone in the subscriber's premises.

If a problem is confirmed it is then the technician's job to decide which field of

operation is responsible for the repair.

Contact between the Despatch Centre and the repair men is usually by telephone. When a technician rings in with details of faults already cleared he is given a short list of other problems in his vicinity.

When the repair man has cleared the fault he reports to despatchers at the centre who note the details on the master card, which is then returned to storage.

Key field staff are also in radio contact with the despatchers.

The Brighton Despatch

Centre is manned from 7 am until 10 pm but staff are on alert for recall should an emergency arise.

Repairmen can call on help from workmates so the job can be completed in the minimum of time. Often, two men work on faults in distribution pillars — those cement pillars seen on street corners. Some pillars carry 900 lines and if major damage has occurred, such as from a car accident, the severed cables take a while to repair.

A large part of the centre's work is to repair about 300 public telephones every

week. About 160 of these faults are caused by vandals.

Faults in PABX equipment used in large organizations and business houses are taken care of by specialist technical officers. The Brighton Centre has 10 such officers and each can clear a critical fault — where hundreds of extensions in one office are affected — within four hours. Other field technicians can clear about 14 subscriber faults a day.

In other words, they're keeping Australia talking.

As the repair men say, "It's the best repair service in Australia."



## GETTING ON WITH WORK

There are all kinds of people doing all kinds of jobs at Telecom, from the man who carries the tools on his lineman's round to the top professional engineer who investigates the latest in electronic equipment.

School leavers, clerks, tradesmen, switchboard operators, administration staff, engineers — whatever your preferences or qualifications — the career chances are good in this organization.

There are top Telecom professionals who began their careers as clerks or telegraph boys, and it is still possible for young people with the School Certificate or its equivalent to join Telecom Australia — as clerks or technicians in training, for instance — and work their way up, through internal examinations or subsidized technical or tertiary studies, to the very top.

Telecom takes its training and development programme seriously. It involves the development of the whole organization, individuals and groups.

Telecom's employees have always been encouraged to think up suggestions for improvement in their work. One of the best-known innovators was lineman Neil Symons, whose "hot-twist" method of joining polythene-covered wires won him \$2000 from his employers in 1960 when his invention saved them countless man-hours.

Once upon a time, employees wishing to progress in their jobs had to study in their own time and work their way up through the system. Now they have the opportunity to train and advance, with Telecom's help.

They are given up to five hours a week, plus travelling time, off work to attend lectures at university or technical college. Their fees are paid and they are given study leave. As they achieve

State standards, such as the Electronics and Communications Certificate, so they progress within the system.

In-house specialist training and job development courses are available to a wide range of staff. The use of videotaped programmes for on-the-job training and staff information is being developed. Executives at all levels have the opportunity to attend a variety of internal management seminars as well as management programmes in universities and colleges.

As telecommunications expand and become more efficient to meet the demands of the public, so new job opportunities are created. With the expansion of Datel equipment, the need for information has seen a growth in the computer field.

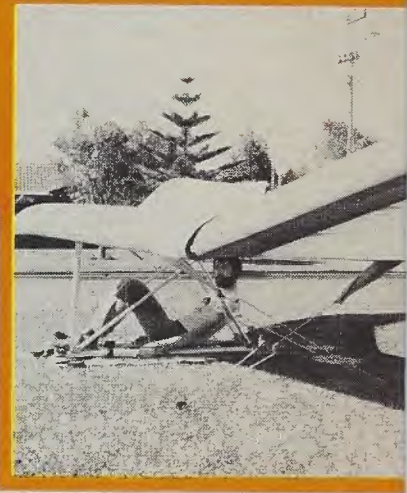
Radio is another exciting area in which new skills are needed. Telecom staffs and equips all of the television and radio transmitters for the Australian Broadcasting Commission. Many of Telecom's services are made possible by broadband radio systems which require skilled technicians.

Advancement within the system can be more dynamic if employees are prepared to travel to interstate posts. Telecom encourages this and all positions are advertised nationally, the jobs going to the most efficient people.

Safety is a major concern. In such a huge organization which uses tonnes of machinery, fleets of motor vehicles for its operations and is constantly developing its building programme to include office blocks and giant telephone exchanges, accidents are bound to happen. To help reduce the accident rate and avoid fatalities, Telecom has mounted a safety campaign which will make every employee — from the worker in



**ABOVE:** Brisbane telephone installation staff built and manned this craft for the Brisbane River raft race. **RIGHT:** Technical officer John Norman, from Perth, spent 340 hours building himself this hang glider.



the field to the office worker — more conscious of safety procedures.

Its employees are encouraged not only to take care in their particular jobs but to be on the lookout for safety hazards which should be brought to the notice of the management. The aim is to reduce the number of accidents by 50 percent in five years.

Staff welfare is important at Telecom, and special officers have been appointed to give staff counselling to people with such problems as bereavement, and even drug addiction and alcoholism.

The physical well-being of employees is another area in which Telecom aims for constant improvement. Among other innovations are specially designed chairs, devel-

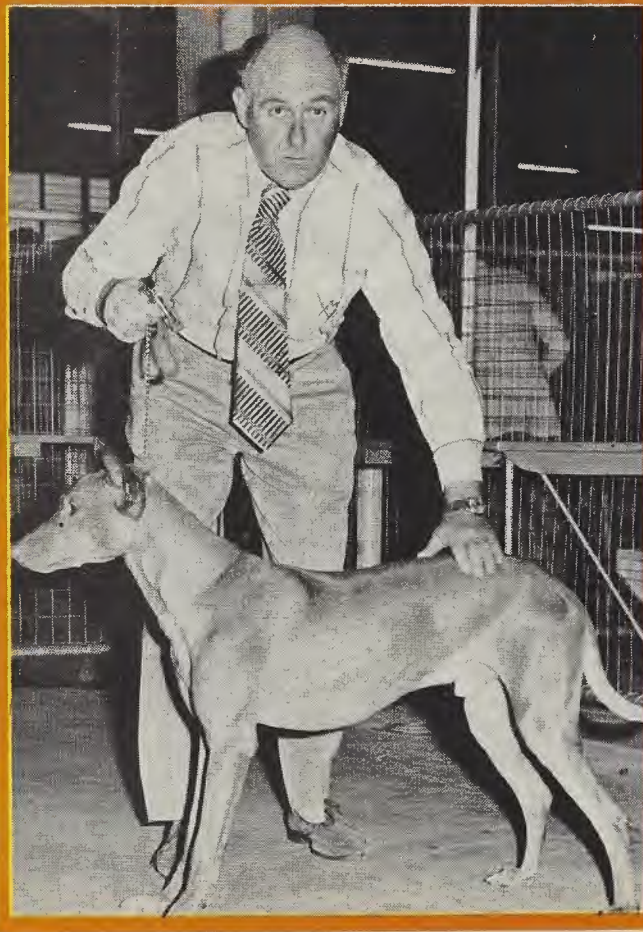
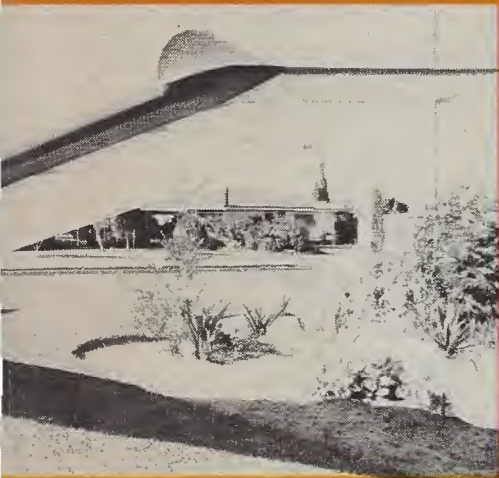
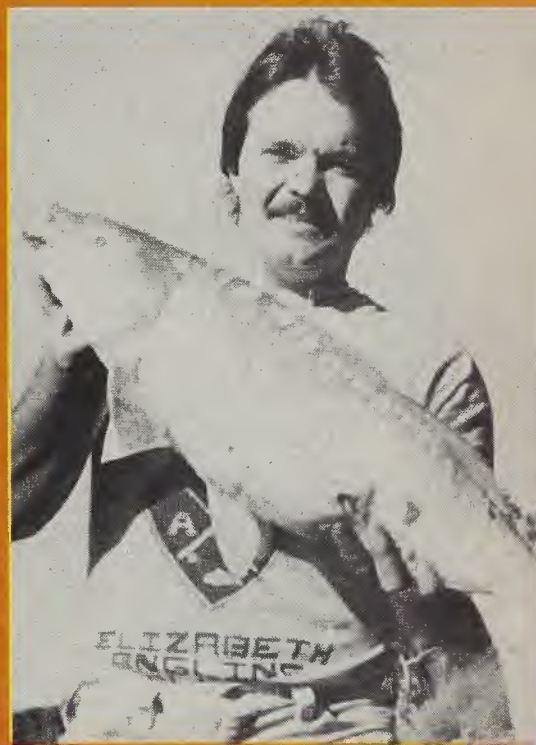
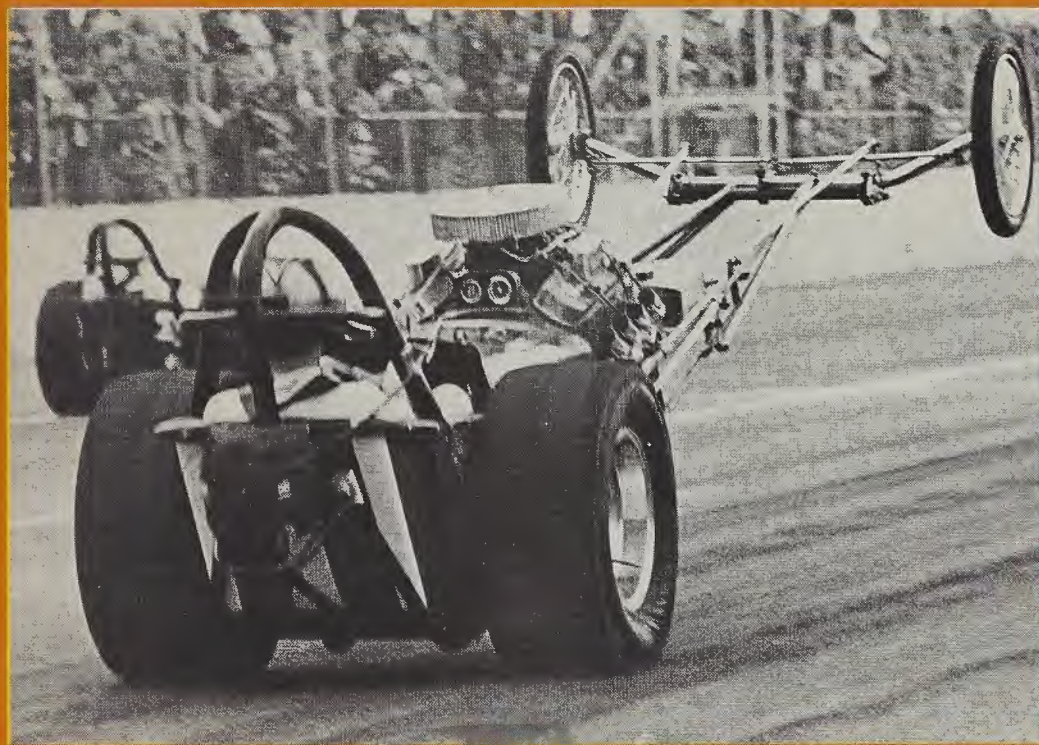
oped by a physiotherapist, to give back support to process workers sitting at benches in Telecom workshops.

One of the biggest advantages of working for Telecom is access to the facilities offered by the Post-Tel Institute, an association which offers staff everything from cultural outings and sporting facilities to educational courses.

As our pictures show, the people of Telecom have a wide variety of hobbies and



# AND PLAY



ABOVE: SA Fishing Champion is Telecom clerk Dave Piper.  
ABOVE LEFT: Top drag racer Russell Parker works at the Telecom Workshops, Adelaide.  
LEFT: Alex Thompson, Qld., breeds rare pharaoh hounds.

interests, ranging from drag racing to the breeding of rare Egyptian dogs.

An important aspect of life in Telecom is industrial and personnel relations. A formal body called the Telecommunications Consultative Council comprises seven senior representatives of Telecom and 10 representatives of staff organisations with membership in Telecom. The chairman is Telecom's Chief General Manager and the deputy

chairman is chosen by the Council from representatives of the staff organisations.

Matters considered by the Council include terms and conditions of employment (other than rates of pay and classification issues), welfare, health and safety, standards of office and also residential accommodation, amenities, training and educational programmes for the development of officers in the Commission and other personnel policies, for example, appointments, staffing, etc.

Sub-committees of the TCC have been set up to look at important subjects such as new technology, child care, study leave, housing rentals and worker participation.



# EQUALITY IN EMPLOYMENT

**T**elecom Australia has a policy of equality in employment for all, and, under this policy, special efforts are made to employ handicapped people.

Telecom regards as handicapped a person who, because of physical or mental illness or disability, appears likely to encounter substantial difficulty in obtaining or maintaining employment, or in undertaking work they have done in the past and which, but for the disability, would be suited to that person's experience and qualifications.

Telecom has nominated a special placements officer in each State. This officer liaises with organizations working for the handicapped, making special testing arrangements for handicapped applicants where necessary, and placing successful handicapped applicants in jobs. Where necessary, the special placements officer can arrange modifications to buildings or supply of special equipment.

Telecom has devoted a lot of attention to increasing acceptance of handicapped people among staff and supervisors.

Telecom's policy of employing handicapped people has been publicized through the staff journal "Telecom."

A film on the employment of handicapped people has also been sponsored by Telecom and the Department of Employment and Industrial Relations. The film will be used with managers, supervisors and staff of Telecom to help overcome prejudices against employing handicapped people.

A booklet is being produced which gives Telecom's policy in relation to handicapped employment and gives information about specific disabilities. The booklet will be distributed to managers, supervisors and interested staff.

It is intended to produce a

series of posters for display in Telecom workplaces which will publicize case studies of handicapped people employed by Telecom. This is designed to make staff more aware of the policy of employing handicapped people.

If you would like to know more about the employment of handicapped people in Telecom, contact Glenn Radford, special placements officer on telephone 231 2282 (Sydney).

People with handicaps have considerable employment potential. Like the rest of the workforce they are a diverse group in terms of abilities and education.

Given the opportunity, they have many skills to offer in the work situation, enhanced by their desire to participate in open employment.

## Special equipment

**T**elecom can provide a wide variety of communication equipment for people with physical handicaps. A consultancy service is also provided to advise, and to arrange for installation of equipment. Service advisers are also available to train handicapped people in the use of equipment after installation.

There are five broad types of handicaps for which Telecom can provide special equipment:

**Hearing** — Gliding tone caller, volume control telephone with switch for gliding tone caller, hearing aid coupler, Ericofon (inbuilt coupling effect), extension bell with switch, extension bell without switch, and visual signals, indicator and switch.

**Speech** — Amplified microphone assembly.

**Vision** — Modified manual switchboards.

**Manipulative** — Phone



Douglas Biffen has been with Telecom for 31 years.

with hands-free headset.

**Mobility** — Wallfone (wheelchair users), long cord on standard handset, specially sited coin telephones for wheelchair users and disabled drivers, and mobile "Redphones" in hospitals.

There is also a wide variety of Telecom-approved equipment available from private suppliers. This includes loud speaking telephones, automatic dialling machines and telephone stands with handpiece holders.

## Advisory booklet

**T**elecom has completed the draft of a booklet on the employment of handicapped people and specific disabilities. The aim of the booklet is to provide information about specific disabilities in order to overcome the reluctance on the part of some supervisors to accept handicapped people under their direction.

It will also provide supervisors of handicapped people with factual information, both about specific disabilities and where to go to get further assistance.

The booklet should also assist employees who have handicapped people among their co-workers.

Telecom has adopted a policy of equality in employment for all people employed or seeking employment. Under this policy, special efforts are being made to employ more handicapped people. What is needed is the confidence of managers, supervisors and co-workers in the abilities of the handicapped. Given the confidence, the individual can do the rest. It is hoped that the information contained in the booklet will give its readers this confidence.

The booklet describes broadly 17 handicaps and provides guidelines for the employment of people with these disabilities as well as suitable emergency action should the need arise.

The booklet should be available soon.



# FOR ALL

## Handicaps no bar to these employees

**S**tephanie Goff is an accounting machinist in Telecom's Revenue Branch. Although profoundly deaf, her disability has created few problems for her at work; indeed, in the accounting machine office, her deafness is in some ways an advantage as the noise of the machinery can be somewhat distracting for some people.

Stephanie's section in Revenue Branch handles all accounting work from the computation of local charges to actual customer billing. At present there are three deaf girls in the 48-girl staff.

Prior to joining Telecom, Stephanie attended occupational deaf classes at Blacktown and Lalor Park Public Schools and more recently, Arthur Phillip High School. Teachers in these classes do much more than provide general education — they assist in all aspects of life in which deafness might be a problem, particularly in finding employment. The head of the Occupational Deaf Department at Arthur Phillip is Mr Ralph Harris; he and his staff train students both for employment and also social acceptability. Education alone is not enough to enable a person to cope with deafness.

Stephanie Goff lives in Girraween. Besides her parents, Wendy and Robert, she has a 24-year-old sister Penny. Like any 17-year-old, Stephanie has many interests. She plays 4th grade hockey for Merrylands and also likes dancing, swimming and travel. At home, she looks after a variety of pets, including four cats, two



Stephanie Goff has found her deafness to be an advantage in some aspects of her work.

dogs, a cockatoo and a guinea pig.

At work, Stephanie's deafness has not been a major obstacle. She is a competent accounting machinist and has little difficulty in associating with other staff. When Stephanie came to revenue, five other girls from her training class were sent to the same branch. These girls were able to help Stephanie settle into her new office.

Stephanie Goff is a good example of how a major handicap need not be a difficulty in an employment situation. Her deafness does not affect her ability to work — she has learned all of the required skills for the job and

is a valued member of the branch.

Doug Biffen is a clerical assistant grade 7. At present he is the acting registry manager in the Engineering Department's office services section. Following a soccer injury and the resultant infection when he was 11, Doug's right leg was amputated.

But such a handicap has not stopped Doug Biffen from pursuing two careers. Now 61, he originally trained as a painter and has served Telecom for 31 years as a clerical assistant.

When Doug joined the then Postmaster-General's Department he was the clerical assistant to the foreman

motor mechanic responsible for the vehicle fleet. After 14½ years there he moved to radio section and was involved in the installation of the country television stations and translator network.

Doug was then promoted to the trunk services section. While working there, Apollo 7 made the first landing on the moon and trunk service section was closely associated with switching work for the project. The staff involved were awarded certificates for their efforts on the project. Then in 1973, trunk service was associated with the launching of the satellite workshop and staff were again commended for their efforts.



## THE RAW MATERIAL

**S**upplying equipment and materials for Telecom is a major operation. Huge storage areas in every capital city stock vast quantities of vital components for the telecommunications industry, ready for dispatch to the many smaller distribution depots which form a network spanning the country.

One of the largest distribution centres is Telecom's warehouse complex at Greenacre, New South Wales, where \$40 million worth of equipment is stored Tier upon tier of electrical components, telephone receivers, manual switchboards and other paraphernalia connected with the telecommunications business vie for space in a gigantic storage system that reaches seven metres from floor to ceiling.

It takes 13 forklift trucks and four mobile cranes just to move and stack materials between the 12 storage warehouses and outdoor storage area on the 20-hectare site. There are 170 storemen employed full time to look after the stock.

At the head office of the Supply Branch in North Sydney, thousands of orders are received daily from all over Australia for items as varied as safety helmets, tiny electronic components for switching mechanisms, insulated gloves and ballpoint pens.

Cable is a large and vital part of Telecom's equipment. Reel upon reel of it is stacked in a large outdoor area at the Greenacre storage site.

Some of it is as thick as a man's wrist, covered with insulating rubber and containing hundreds of tightly packed copper wires along which electronic messages will one day travel. This year, Telecom will use enough new cable to circle the Earth 66 times.

When equipment is worn out or obsolete, Telecom sells



Cable is stacked outdoors (left); other items are piled high (right) in the warehouses.

some of it as scrap metal. In New South Wales alone this "scrap" brings in \$1.5 million a year.

Add to this other equipment, including Telecom road vehicles which are replaced every two years, and you have a giant annual State "garage" sale that raises \$7 million to be returned to the coffers of Telecom to help the business expand and maintain its efficiency.

Orders arrive at the Greenacre warehouse daily

from the Supply Branch's head office.

Three days later the orders are neatly packaged and ready at the loading bay for delivery vehicles to pick them up and take them to distribution centres throughout Australia.

It is a constant effort of efficiency and control to keep items in stock, correctly "filed" for quick access, and to have orders ready for delivery on time.

Most of the equipment Telecom uses is manu-

factured in Australia. Indeed, Telecom provides business for a sizeable section of the country's industry and, to ensure quality products, a small army of testers employed by Telecom is permanently based at engineering works to check that the products coming off the line come up to standard.

A small proportion of the equipment used is made overseas and imported.

These imported items are tested at the Greenacre warehouse site.

## An unusual shopping list

**I**magine setting out each week to buy nearly \$7 million worth of household needs.

At Telecom, to keep pace with customer needs, the buying is prodigious. This year it will spend \$24.5 million on ordinary telephones, \$43 million on underground cable and \$74 million on telephone exchange equipment, to name

just a few items in the major \$315 million shopping list each year.

It will also buy beach umbrellas to protect linemen who are seated in the sun for hours jointing cables. There'll be skis for those working in the Alps and special balloons for surveying the path of a new microwave system.

Fibreglass fishing rod

sections will be bought for pulling cables through underground ducts and sheep for keeping the grass down at a remote radio telephone installation.

From abrasives to Xerox machines, Telecom's daily purchases could include multi-million buys from Australian factories to a few bags of cement from a country hardware store.



## THE \$53M EXERCISE

Australia's first telephone directory appeared in Melbourne in 1880. It was one page long. In 1978 — 98 years later — nine million directories were distributed across the country.

New South Wales topped the list — 22 directories and a distribution in Sydney of 1.5 million. Victoria came up with 12 directories and a distribution in Melbourne of 1.4 million. Queensland rated nine directories, South Australia six — one of them covering the Northern Territory — and Tasmania three. One directory covered the metropolitan area of Perth, a second the rest of Western Australia.

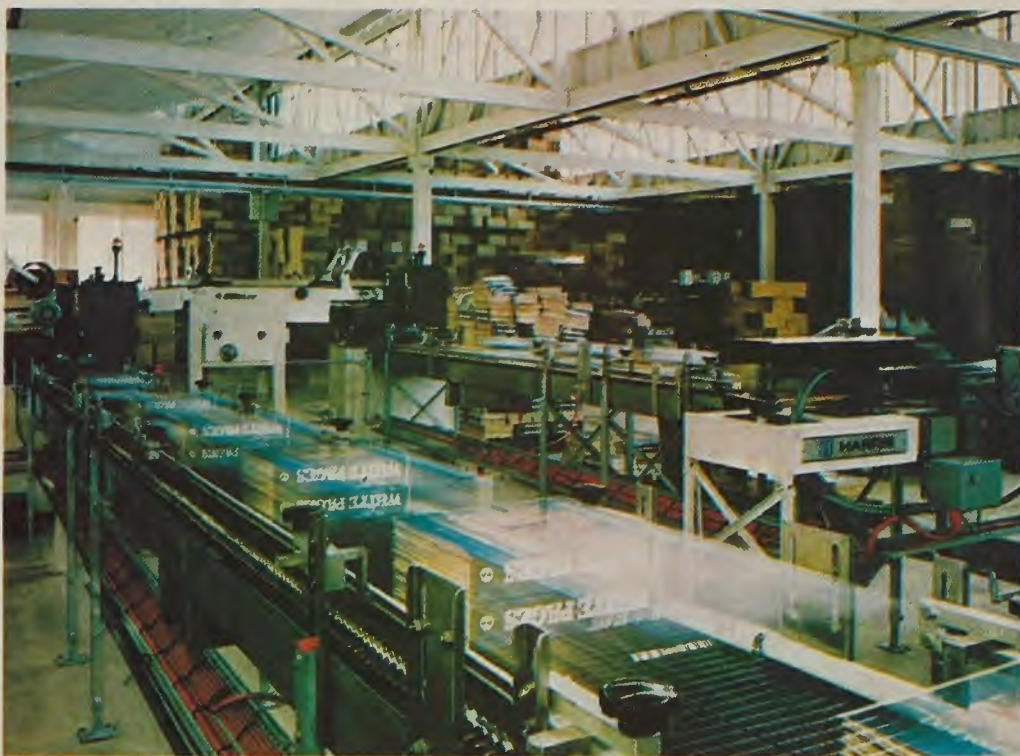
Sydney's White Pages make up one of the world's largest single volumes — 1904 pages and all free. It is likely that in the next three years or so (before it breaks its spine) it will follow the examples of London and New York and split into more than a single volume.

Each day about 2000 alterations or cancellations to the listings are received. A huge computer holds the information until the time to print, then the computer sorts it out — a 14-hour process.

As well as daily changes, on July 1 last year, the close-off date, 500 letters and 9000 last-minute orders were received.

Yellow Pages first appeared in 1926. They list every business in Australia which has a telephone. While obsolete services are deleted every year, more and more new products and services are included. Sydney and Melbourne Yellow Pages run neck to neck with 1560 pages each.

A Telecom staff of 450 is directly involved in publishing directories and production costs have reached a peak of \$53 million. Light paper — 22,000 tonnes of it — cost \$12 million. Australia Pulp and Paper Mills near



These scenes show the Sydney directory being printed, cut and bound.

Devonport, Tasmania provided 9500 tonnes for the 1978 directories. Nearly 5000 tonnes came from Canada, the rest from the USA, Sweden and Finland.

Cover boards from Australia Paper Mills took 500 tonnes of material at a cost of \$300,000. Printing was handled in Australia and cost \$11 million. Computer compilation cost one million dollars and distribution cost \$1.6 million. Salaries account for the remainder of the costs.

A lot of money for fat books dropped on the doorstep free.

Directory Assistance is a

free service employing nearly 1700 operators and handling 65 million calls a year throughout Australia, a service that cost \$4 million in 1972 and rose to \$26 million by 1978. Queries are answered in 90 seconds and research has uncovered some costly lassitude among telephone subscribers. A great many people (about 75 percent) asking for assistance could have taken a second look in the directory and found the number themselves!

About \$3 million of Telecom's revenue comes from telex directories, telegraphic code address

directories (TCAD) and reproduction rights for directories to be recorded on micro film for libraries, business organizations, etc. Multiple entries and additional information in the White Pages bring in \$8 million, and advertising in the Yellow Pages a hearty \$49 million.

Quite a bit of revenue comes, too, from recorded information services which are not free but highly informative. Apart from what the weather, ships, the Stock Exchange, television, cinemas and theatres were up to it is possible to find out information such as the fact that Alexander the Great died at the age of 33, that lipsticks are selling at half price in the department store round the corner and where lawn mowers are going cheap.

Also how to make two cool summer drinks — banana bender and honey egg nog with or without nutmeg.



## IT'S GOT A GREAT CAST...

It's got a great cast... but. No other book lists such a galaxy of talent. There are more Smiths and Joneses than you'd think possible. There are names of the great, and unknown, almost unpronounceable, names.

This you quickly find out as you skim through the pages of the phone book looking for the number of a near-forgotten relative.

But how many people who look through the beginning of the phone book, ever consult the index or write down special emergency numbers on the inside front cover.

"Who do I ring to find out...?" "Do they have a recorded service for the cricket scores?" "How do I get an early morning call?" "Can I call someone on ship?" "Can I really call Hollywood?"

Maybe we're all lazy. Maybe we don't want to be up to date with the latest information. Maybe we think we don't have the time.

It only takes a glance down the index, a skim through the first few pages of the phone book and you'll know where to turn to get the information you want.

To make it easier the information pages in the next

Sydney and Melbourne phone books will have a new look. The front information pages will be staggered, like a staircase, so that you can see at a glance what's on each page.

STD area codes, charges, directory entries, business offices, international calls, etc, will be even easier to find.

They're all there now — all you need is a few minutes to glance down the index and make yourself familiar with where things are. Those few minutes will pay off when at some later time you need to find something in a hurry.

Now let's turn to the

Yellow Pages. There's an old joke that you'll find editors under "Paper Rulers."

The way to use the Yellow Pages is to look at the index first.

That way you'll find that Percolators are under the heading — Coffee Brewing Devices, Pebbled Paving — Paving, Personal Loans — Financiers, Pavlova Makers — Pastrycooks, and Pizzas — Pie Manufacturers, Restaurants or Take Away Foods.

When you need a little help through the Yellow Pages help yourself first to the index and you'll find exactly what you want.

## The 24-hour information bank

The soft voice on the telephone suggested eating Eggs Grandmere at midnight.

Then, after a few flicks of the telephone dial, another voice said rain had stopped play in the cricket but the racing was still on.

Several more flicks and a young man named Alvin gave a short, reassuring

sermon on being alone. Cooking, sport and religion... they're all available at the other end of your phone courtesy of Telecom's recorded information services.

"Information" is the key word. The services are crisply presented and fact-laden.

The services in each State and territory vary slightly but

for the cost of a local call you can usually hear ABC announcer Len Grice telling you the time to the split-second, an authoritative newsreader from a local radio station giving a news summary and in NSW there is a venerable disease information phone number. For a few cents you can discover if your planned picnic will be

drenched by rain or if you have won the soccer pools. And, having won the pools, there is even a stock exchange report phone number for you.

By the way, for those interested in midnight snacks, the Telecom chef says Grandmere is simply scrambled eggs with diced fried bread folded in.

## All in a day's work

Burping babies, weeping wives, brazen bullies... they're all in a day's work for the patient operators of Telecom's subscriber information services. Among the minor classics...

A subscriber requested the number of the "Royal Doulton Hotel," Narrandera. After much searching the operator asked if the caller was sure she had the correct name.

"Oh yes," she replied. "I stayed there last week and I looked at the bottom of the cup and it had Royal Doulton on it."

A request for Mrs Smith created the following dialogue:

Operator: "Her initials please."

Subscriber: "I don't know them."

"I will need something to identify her."

"Oh, her two sons will identify her."

A request for Smith (no initial): "Lives in that street behind the water tower."

Request for Christie, B. (no address):

Operator: "There are six B. Christies."

Subscriber: "Which one is Basil?"

Agitated woman (bordering on hysteria): "My drying machine is going to blow up

or catch fire and I don't know what to do, and I'm frightened, it's been playing up for two hours now and" (voice breaks into sobs).

The operator, speaking firmly, persuaded the caller to go to the laundry, switch off the power and remove the plug. When this was done she reassured the lady the machine would not now blow up or catch fire, and suggested to now much calmer person that she make a cup of tea, get her breath back and ring for a service call. The operator waited for the lady to go to the laundry, obtain the machine's brand name, and then gave her the firm's number to ring.

"Thank you my dear,"

said the voice, "I wish you could come and have the cup of tea with me, you've been so kind."

"I am a lady 80 years old, partially blind with a white stick. Will I get into trouble if I don't vote on Saturday?"

"Where will I find the Stocking Nest Hotel?" (actually required the "Stop and Rest Hotel").

Request for number of Mr Board at Manly.

Operator: "Initials?"

Subscriber: "M.W.S.D."

Operator: "Do you want the Metropolitan Water and Sewerage Board?"



# LET YOUR FINGERS SHOP

**F**ed up, hot, itchy with sweat and with sore feet, you collapse, seriously wondering if the contemplated extravagance of a new air conditioner (colour television, home extension, new car or whatever) is really worthwhile.

You wearily think there's something to be said for the old Henry Ford marketing dictum, "You can have any colour you want so long as it's black," or the Russian model — one State-owned marketing chain selling everything, no discounts, no choice and a six-month waiting list for luxuries.

This pen picture is no joke. It's happened to every one of us. We decide — with a certain amount of money burning a hole in our bank books — that we want something desperately.

The time is right, we've had enough of making do with second best, and haven't the government and big business been imploring us to loosen our purse strings and save the economy?

All of a sudden, there's a concentrated poring over full-page newspaper advertisements, and odd pieces of newsprint scattered all over the house and office desk drawers; we strain to catch the television commercials, previously used for a quick sprint to the bathroom or for making a quick cup of coffee; we spend our lunch hours galloping from department store to department store, through hordes of straining bodies doing exactly the same thing.

The wonders of advertising mean there's a plethora of information on prices, convenient long-term credit, models and special offers.

One firm offers unbeatable discounts; another gives the best after-sales service, full satisfaction or your money back.

Eventually we get so fed up we buy from the nearest

stockist and hang the expense, because it's all too much effort ... and our nearest and dearest are weary of the daily instalments in our progress.

Of course, there is an easier way. (There always is, as our infinitely resourceful and logical spouses or friends — until it's their turn to do the buying — could tell us.) It's shopping by phone.

"Let your fingers do the walking" was a recent Telecom theme. Certainly dialling a number or 12 is cheaper than paying a fortune in parking fees (or parking tickets), bus and taxi

fares — and easier on the temper too. You don't even work up a sweat as you sit there cool and calm with a cuppa, pen and notebook, chatting to all those obliging traders at the other end of the line.

Those obliging people can't pressure you into an injudicious decision, because you're not there to sign on the bottom line of that all-important small print.

Even if you do strike a switchboard girl who transfers you from department to department — very rare, anyway, when you're buying and not complaining — it's

still easier than struggling kilometres around town.

Collect your newspaper advertisements if you must, but also open up the Yellow Pages telephone directory, where all the types of people you're looking for are handily classified.

Settle yourself down on a Saturday morning, late shopping night (if you're lucky enough to be in a State that has such a convenience), or any weekday if things are quiet and start phoning.

You'll find comparative shopping via the telephone a lot easier than Shank's Pony.

## Some Telecom targets

In a recently released Corporate Plan, Telecom Australia set out many targets for future operations. They included: A telephone in nine out of every 10 Australian homes by 1987; the real cost of telecommunications services to the customer to continue to decline; a continual investment programme to improve the availability, diversity and efficiency of telecommunications services; and STD (subscriber trunk dialling) penetration of 90 percent of Australian homes in 1979/80, and 95 percent in 1986/87.

### 1977

Total calls: 4.5 thousand million

Six homes in ten have a telephone



### 1987

Total calls: 7.8 thousand million

Nine homes in ten have a telephone





## TALKING BETWEEN CITIES



As businesses expand geographically, communication needs become more demanding and specialized. The humble telephone plays a continuing role in individual discussions long-distance, and the telex effectively dispatches and receives reams of routine business memos, schedules and data.

However, what happens when a conference is suddenly needed between sales and marketing staff divided between Sydney and Melbourne, for instance? Until fairly recently it meant an expensive group visit and hours lost in travelling time.

Nowadays Telecom has a simple and efficient solution — Confravision.

Teams of executives in Melbourne and Sydney can meet by television and



**ABOVE:** Conferences using Confravision eliminate travelling time and costs.

**LEFT:** The screens show the group in the other city.

One screen can be used to show data. **BELOW LEFT:** A technician prepares for a Confravision meeting.

discuss their business with the minimum of fuss. The comfortable studio setting is more like a boardroom than a film set and the participants are in constant visual and aural contact. In addition graphs, charts and any other visual information can be transmitted for perusal.

In a normal situation up to six people sit facing cameras in each studio and carry on their business meeting as if they were sharing the same room. The transmissions may also be recorded for future reference if needed.