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Subpart A—Preface

§ 32.1 Background.

The revised Uniform System of Accounts (USOA) is a historical financial accounting system which reports the results of operational and financial events in a manner which enables both management and regulators to assess these results within a specified accounting period. The USOA also provides the financial community and others with financial performance results. In order for an accounting system to fulfill these purposes, it must exhibit consistency and stability in financial reporting (including the results published for regulatory purposes). Accordingly, the USOA has been designed to reflect stable, recurring financial data based to the extent regulatory considerations permit upon the consistency of the well established body of accounting theories and principles commonly referred to as generally accepted accounting principles.

§ 32.2 Basis of the accounts.

(a) The financial accounts of a company are used to record, in monetary terms, the basic transactions which occur. Certain natural groupings of these transactions are called (in different contexts) transaction cycles, business processes, functions or activities. The concept, however, is the same in each case; i.e., the natural groupings represent what happens within the company on a consistent and continuing basis. This repetitive nature of the natural groupings, over long periods of time, lends an element of stability to the financial account structure.

(b) Within the telecommunications industry companies, certain recurring functions (natural groupings) do take place in the course of providing products and services to customers. These accounts reflect, to the extent feasible, those functions. For example, the primary bases of the accounts containing the investment in telecommunications plant are the functions *performed by* the assets. In addition, because of the anticipated effects of future innovations, the telecommunications plant accounts are intended to permit technological distinctions. Similarly, the primary bases of plant operations, customer operations and corporate operations expense accounts are the functions *performed by* individuals. The revenue accounts, on the other hand, reflect a market perspective of natural groupings based primarily upon the products and services *purchased by* customers.

(c) In the course of developing the bases for this account structure, several other alternatives were explored. It was, for example, determined that, because of the variety and continual changing of various cost allocation mechanisms, the financial accounts of a company should not reflect an *a priori* allocation of revenues, investments or expenses to products or services, jurisdictions or organizational structures. (Note also § 32.14 (c) and (d) of subpart B.) It was also determined that costs (in the case of assets) should not be recorded based solely upon physical attributes such as location, description or size.

(d) Care has been taken in this account structure to avoid confusing a function with an organizational responsibility, particularly as it relates to the expense accounts. Whereas in the past, specific organizations may have performed specific functions, the future environment with its increasing mechanization and other changes will result in entirely new or restructured organizations. Thus, any relationships drawn between organizations and accounts would become increasingly meaningless with the passage of time.

(e) These accounts, then, are intended to reflect a functional and technological view of the telecommunications industry. This view will provide a stable and consistent foundation for the recording of financial data.

(f) The financial data contained in the accounts, together with the detailed information contained in the underlying financial and other subsidiary records required by this Commission, will provide the information necessary to support separations, cost of service and management reporting requirements. The basic account structure has been designed to remain stable as reporting requirements change.