

► Sao Paulo back in service after CO fire kills 11,000 channels

Overheated equipment caused a major fire Aug. 23 in a Sao Paulo, Brazil, central office, knocking out an estimated 11,000 PCM channels, temporarily silencing 55,000 local lines, and affecting telephone service for at least 135,000 people in one of the world's most densely-populated cities.

According to *TE&M* sources and Brazilian newspaper reports, the fire badly damaged transmission and switching equipment in the Bras CO on the east side of the city. However, all lines were expected to be back in service at *TE&M* presstime, according to Telesp (Telecomunicações de Sao Paulo S.A.) officials.

Reports indicated that the fire was caused by overheated pulse code modulation equipment manufactured by Telettra. The fire destroyed 11,000 out of 30,000 channels; however, actions taken by the local fire department to

extinguish the fire also damaged 10,000 lines of switching equipment located one floor below where the fire began. Those 10,000 lines will need to be replaced, sources stated.

The entire Sao Paulo metropolitan area was affected by the fire, since many calls were routed through the Bras exchange. Police and hospital lines were out of service, and callers at the international airport in Cumbica were unable to reach 80% of the city.—*Mary Walter, managing editor*