

P-407, 421/CP-89-105 ORDER CERTIFYING POLLING RESULTS AND
DIRECTING THE INSTALLATION OF EXTENDED AREA SERVICE

BEFORE THE MINNESOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

Don Storm	Chair
Tom Burton	Commissioner
Cynthia A. Kitlinski	Commissioner
Dee Knaak	Commissioner
Norma McKanna	Commissioner

In the Matter of a Petition for
Extended Area Service From the
Nickerson Exchange to the Askov,
Carlton, and Moose Lake
Exchanges

ISSUE DATE: May 5, 1993

DOCKET NO. P-407, 421/CP-89-105

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PROCEDURAL HISTORY

On February 21, 1989, customers within the Nickerson exchange filed a petition requesting that the Commission authorize extended area service (EAS) to the Askov, Carlton, and Moose Lake exchanges.

On April 27, 1990, the Minnesota legislature enacted legislation regulating the installation of extended area service (EAS) in Minnesota. The legislation specifies the circumstances under which the Commission will require the installation of EAS. Minn. Stat. § 237.161 (1990).

On July 5, 1990, the Commission issued its ORDER REQUIRING TRAFFIC STUDIES, COST STUDIES, AND PROPOSED RATES. In this Order, the Commission directed the submission of updated traffic studies for the Nickerson to Askov and Nickerson to Carlton routes.

On September 17, 1991, the Commission issued its ORDER FINDING TWO ROUTES INELIGIBLE AND REQUIRING REVISED COST STUDIES AND PROPOSED RATES FOR A THIRD. In this Order, the Commission required GTE of Minnesota, Inc. (GTE) and U S West Communications, Inc. (USWC) to file their revised cost studies and proposed rates regarding the proposed Nickerson-Moose Lake EAS route within 90 days of the Order and directed the Department to file its report and recommendations regarding the companies' filings within an additional 60 days.

On December 13 and December 16, 1991, respectively, USWC and GTE filed their revised cost studies and proposed rates.

On March 13, 1992, the Commission issued its ORDER GRANTING TIME EXTENSIONS to allow USWC to correct errors in calculating its cost studies in several pending EAS cases, including this case.

On March 27, 1992, USWC filed its revised cost study and proposed rates.

On April 2, 1992, GTE filed its proposed rates and cost studies.

On September 18, 1992, the Commission issued its ORDER ADOPTING RATES FOR POLLING. In that Order, the Commission set EAS rates for Nickerson and Moose Lake and directed GTE to cooperate fully with Commission Staff and Commission contractors to expedite the polling of Nickerson subscribers.

On April 20, 1993, the Commission met to consider this matter.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Polling of customers in the Nickerson exchange took place between February 12, 1993 and April 12, 1993. Approximately 60 percent of Nickerson subscribers returned their polling ballots. The Commission finds that the polling was properly conducted and recorded. No party alleged irregularities in the process or contested the results.

The ballots sought response from Nickerson subscribers regarding the proposed EAS between the Nickerson and Moose Lake exchanges. Of the 196 Nickerson subscribers who returned their polling ballots, 99 or 50.1 percent favored the proposed Nickerson-Moose Lake EAS route and 97 or 49.9 percent opposed it.

Based on these results, the Commission finds that the Nickerson petition has met the third and final criterion established by Minn. Stat. § 237.161, subd. 1 (1992).

Accordingly, pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 237.161, subd. 1 (1992) the Commission will grant the petition and require GTE Minnesota (the telephone company serving the Nickerson exchange) and USWC (the telephone company serving the Moose Lake exchange) to install EAS over the proposed route. If these companies (USWC and GTE) incur nonrecurring expenses due to the implementation of EAS, they must file a proposal for recovery of those expenses no later than 120 days prior to the planned implementation date of the EAS.

ORDER

1. The Commission hereby certifies the polling results set forth in the text of this Order.
2. Consistent with the requirements of this Order, GTE Minnesota (GTE) and U S West Communications, Inc. (USWC) shall proceed expeditiously to install extended area service (EAS) between the Nickerson and Moose Lake exchanges.
3. GTE and USWC shall file implementation plans and schedules with the Commission within 60 days of this Order and shall file updated implementation schedules with the Commission every 90 days thereafter.
4. Within 10 days of this Order, GTE and USWC shall file proposed polling results notices with Commission Staff. The companies' proposed notices shall be directed to their respective subscribers in the Nickerson and Moose Lake exchanges, informing them of the polling results and the anticipated implementation date. After these notices have been approved by Commission Staff, GTE and USWC shall distribute them to their respective customers in the Nickerson and Moose Lake exchanges as bill inserts included in the earliest possible billing cycle.
5. At least 90 days before the start of the service, GTE and USWC shall submit to Commission Staff for approval a second bill-insert type notice. This notice shall 1) describe the EAS service, 2) instruct customers on dialing, 3) inform subscribers regarding the EAS rate additives applicable in each exchange, and 4) inform subscribers of the actual implementation date. After this second notice has been approved by Commission Staff, GTE and USWC shall distribute it as a bill-insert in the billing cycle that concludes one month before the EAS is implemented.
6. Thirty days before implementing EAS between Nickerson and Moose Lake, GTE and USWC shall file tariff sheets reflecting the prior Commission Order establishing the rates for EAS in these exchanges.
7. GTE and USWC shall file any request to recover nonrecurring expenses incurred due to the implementation of EAS at least 120 days before the planned implementation date.
8. This Order shall become effective immediately.

BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION

Richard R. Lancaster
Executive Secretary

(S E A L)