

P-427, 520, 407, 426, 421, 430, 405/CP-93-160 ORDER SCHEDULING
THE FILING OF COST STUDIES AND PROPOSED RATES

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 the Petition
for Extended Area Service From
the Big Lake Exchange to the
Minneapolis/St. Paul
Metropolitan Calling Area

ISSUE DATE: May 11, 1993

DOCKET NO. P-427, 520, 407, 426,
421, 430, 405/CP-93-160

ORDER SCHEDULING THE FILING OF
COST STUDIES AND PROPOSED RATES

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

On March 4, 1993, customers in the Big Lake exchange of Sherburne County Rural Telephone Company (SCRTC) filed a petition requesting EAS to the Minneapolis/St. Paul metropolitan calling area (MCA).

By letter dated March 10, 1993, the Department of Public Service (the Department) requested traffic information from SCRTC.

On March 30, 1993, SCRTC filed the requested traffic data with the Commission.

On May 4, 1993, the Commission met to consider this matter.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

The EAS statute provides that the Commission shall grant a request to install EAS when the following three criteria have been met:

1. the petitioning exchange is contiguous to an exchange or local calling area to which extended area service is requested in the petition;
2. at least 50 percent of the customers in the petitioning exchange make one or more calls per month to the exchange or local calling area to which extended area service is requested, as determined by a traffic study;

and

3. polling by the Commission shows that a majority of the customers responding to a poll in the petitioning exchange favor its installation, unless all parties and the Commission agree that no polling is necessary. Minn. Stat. § 237.161, subd. 1(a)(1-3) (1990).

Adjacency and Traffic

The petitioning Big Lake exchange shares a common border with the Minneapolis/St. Paul metropolitan calling area and is, hence, contiguous to the area to which it seeks EAS. This satisfies the statute's first requirement, adjacency. Minn. Stat. § 237.161, subd. 1 (a)(1) (1990).

In addition, traffic data filed by SCRTC shows that more than 50 percent of Big Lake subscribers make one or more calls to the Minneapolis/St. Paul metropolitan calling area (MCA). Therefore, the Big Lake petition also meets the second statutory requirement (adequate traffic). Minn. Stat. § 237.161, subd. 1 (a)(1) (1990). Accordingly, the Commission will continue to process this petition.

Ratepayer Support

Before proceeding to poll Big Lake subscribers to determine whether the third requirement (adequate ratepayer support) will be met, the Commission will adopt EAS rates for the proposed route to give Big Lake subscribers a clearer picture regarding the rate impact of implementing EAS before the poll is taken. To assist it in establishing fair EAS rates for polling purposes, the Commission will require the telephone companies serving the petitioning exchange (SCRTC) and the exchanges constituting the current MCA to file sound cost studies and proposed rates.

Timing of Cost Studies and Proposed Rates

Cost studies and proposed rates have recently been filed regarding a petition for EAS between the Zimmerman exchange (also served by SCRTC) and the MCA. Docket No. P-427, 421/CP-85-652. The Department's report and recommendations on those cost studies and proposed rates, as well as the reply comments from interested parties are due to be filed with the Commission approximately on May 10, 1993 and May 20, respectively. Since Commission resolution of disputed cost study, routing, and lower priced alternatives issues would provide direction for the filing of cost studies and proposed rates in the Big Lake docket, the Commission will set a due date for the Big Lake cost studies and proposed rates that will allow the parties to take the Zimmerman findings into consideration.

ORDER

1. Within 60 days after the Order setting rates for polling (or Order After Reconsideration of that Order, if any) in the Zimmerman EAS matter (Docket No. P-427, 421/CP-85-652), Sherburne County Rural Telephone Company, Scott-Rice Rural Telephone Company, U S West Communications, Inc., Eckles Telephone Company, GTE Minnesota, United Telephone Company, and Vista Telephone Company shall file cost studies and proposed rates for the proposed Big Lake - Minneapolis/St. Paul calling area EAS route.
2. The cost studies and proposed rates filed in response to Ordering Paragraph 1 shall be based upon all the requirements of Minn. Stat. § 237.161 (1992).
3. Forty-five days following the filing of cost studies and proposed rates by the companies, the Department shall file a report and recommendation concerning those cost studies and proposed rates.
4. Parties wishing to respond to the report and recommendations of the Department shall do so within 20 days following the Department's filing.
5. This Order shall become effective immediately.

BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION

Richard R. Lancaster
Executive Secretary

(S E A L)