

BEFORE THE MINNESOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

Gregory Scott	Chair
Edward A. Garvey	Commissioner
Marshall Johnson	Commissioner
LeRoy Koppendrayner	Commissioner
Phyllis A. Reha	Commissioner

In the Matter of a Petition for Extended Area  
Service Between the Blooming Prairie  
Exchange and the Austin Exchange

ISSUE DATE: March 14, 2002

DOCKET NO. P-407, 421/CP-00-1336

ORDER DENYING PETITION AND  
CLOSING DOCKET

**PROCEDURAL HISTORY**

On October 5, 2000, the Commission received a petition from the telephone subscribers in the Blooming Prairie telephone exchange requesting extended area service (EAS) to the Austin exchange. Blooming Prairie is served by Citizens Telecommunications Company of Minnesota, Inc. (Citizens) and Austin is served by Qwest Corporation (Qwest).

On November 17, 2000, Citizens filed a traffic study. The results of the traffic study showed that from August 1999 through August 2000, more than 50 percent of all subscribers in the Blooming Prairie exchange made three or more calls per month to the Austin exchange.

On November 21, 2000, the Department of Commerce (the Department) filed comments. The Department verified that more than 15 percent of Citizens' subscribers in the Blooming Prairie exchange had signed the petition and that there was no protest concerning the validity of the petition. The Department recommended that the commission direct the affected telephone companies to file cost studies and proposed rates.

On June 5, 2001, Staff briefing papers indicated that the petition met the initial requirements for EAS and recommended that the Commission direct the affected telephone companies to file cost studies and proposed rates.

On June 8, 2001, the Commission issued an order requiring the submission of cost studies and proposed rates by Citizens and Qwest within 90 days.

On September 5, 2001, Citizens filed their cost study and proposed rates along with a corrected traffic study. The corrected traffic study shows that the proposed route does not satisfy the traffic requirements.

On September 20, 2001, the Department filed comments recommending that since the traffic requirements were not met, the petition should be dismissed and the docket be closed.

The Commission met to consider this matter on February 26, 2002.

## **FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS**

### **I. BACKGROUND**

The Commission's February 23, 1996 Order in Docket No. P-999/CI-94-296 states three criteria that, if met, require the installation of EAS. These criteria are:

- First:           The petitioning exchange is adjacent to an exchange or local calling area to which EAS is requested in the petition.
  
- Second:         At least 50 percent of the customers in the petitioning exchange make three or more calls per month to the exchange or local calling area to which EAS is requested, as determined by a traffic study; and
  
- Third:          Polling by the Commission shows that a majority of the customers responding to a poll in the petitioning exchange favor the installation, unless all parties and the Commission agree that no polling is necessary.

### **II. ANALYSIS**

The petitioning exchange and the petitioned exchange share a common border and are, therefore, adjacent as required to meet the first criterion: adjacency.

The corrected traffic information filed in this matter on September 5, 2001, however, showed that fewer than the required 50 percent of the petitioning exchange customers made three or more calls per month to the petitioned exchange, on average, thereby failing to meet the second criterion: adequate traffic.

### **III. ACTION**

The Commission will, therefore, accept the Department's recommendation and deny the petition and close this docket.

**ORDER**

1. The petition for EAS between the Blooming Prairie and Austin exchanges is denied.
2. The docket is hereby closed.
3. This Order shall become effective immediately.

BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION

Burl W. Haar  
Executive Secretary

(S E A L)

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