

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 From the Big Falls and Littlefork
Exchanges to the International Falls Exchange

ISSUE DATE: March 14, 2002

DOCKET NO. P-407/CP-01-196

ORDER DENYING PETITION AND
CLOSING DOCKET

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

On February 9, 2001, the Commission received a petition from the telephone subscribers in the Big Falls and Littlefork exchanges requesting extended area service (EAS) to the International Falls exchange. All three exchanges are served by Citizens Telecommunications Company of Minnesota, Inc. (Citizens).

On March 26, 2001, Citizens filed a traffic study for the months of September, 2000 through January, 2001.

On April 3, 2001, the Department of Commerce (DOC) filed comments. The DOC indicated that the traffic study revealed that less than 30 percent of Big Falls subscribers and less than 10 percent of Littlefork subscribers made one or more calls per month to the International Falls exchange. Although the traffic data showed the percentage of subscribers placing one or more calls per month, rather than the three or more calls per month required by the Commission, the DOC felt it was clear that the petition would not meet the 50 percent required by the Commission. Therefore, the DOC felt a revised traffic study was not necessary and recommended the petition be dismissed and the docket be closed.

On June 8, 2001, Citizens filed a request to submit revised traffic studies. The first study covered the period of September, 2000 through January, 2001. The revised study would cover a more recent period of time.

On October 12, 2001, Citizens filed revised traffic studies covering May, 2001 through July, 2001. The traffic study revealed that less than 20 percent of Big Falls subscribers and less than 30 percent of Littlefork subscribers made three or more calls per month to the International Falls exchange.

No comments have been received regarding the revised traffic study.

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 revised traffic studies filed in this matter on October 12, 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 Big Falls and Littlefork exchanges and the International Falls exchange 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

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