

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 Hitterdal to the Glyndon and Moorhead Exchanges in Minnesota and the Fargo Exchange in North Dakota

ISSUE DATE: June 6, 2002

DOCKET NO. P-504, 420, 421/CP-96-313

ORDER CERTIFYING POLLING RESULTS AND DENYING PETITION

**PROCEDURAL HISTORY**

On March 26, 1996, telephone subscribers in the Hitterdal exchange filed a petition for extended area service (EAS) to the neighboring Minnesota exchanges of Glyndon and Moorhead and to the neighboring North Dakota exchange of Fargo.

On July 14, 1999, the Commission issued an Order denying the proposed Hitterdal-Fargo EAS route for failure to meet the standards set by the North Dakota Commission. The Order also found that the proposed Hitterdal-Glyndon and Hitterdal-Moorhead routes met Minnesota's threshold requirements of adjacency and traffic volume. The Commission therefore directed the incumbent local exchange carriers serving the three exchanges<sup>1</sup> to determine the cost of installing and operating the proposed routes and to develop proposed rates to recover those costs. The Commission would then poll Hitterdal subscribers to determine whether they wanted EAS at those rates.

The companies duly filed their cost studies and proposed rates, but the Commission did not proceed directly to polling. Instead, in a series of Orders issued between November 1998 and May 2001, the Commission addressed a series of new issues posed by the need to adapt EAS to the competitive telecommunications market mandated by state and federal law. With these issues largely settled, the Commission met on October 30, 2001 to again consider the Hitterdal EAS petition.

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<sup>1</sup> The Hitterdal exchange is served by Felton Telephone Company. The Glyndon exchange is served by Loretel Systems, and the Moorhead exchange is served by Qwest Corporation.

On November 16, 2001, the Commission issued its ORDER SETTING EAS RATE ADDITIVES AND REQUIRING POLLING and telephone subscribers in the Hitterdal exchange were polled between February 6 and March 25, 2002.

On May 2, 2002, the Commission met to consider the polling results for the EAS route proposed between the Hitterdal exchange and the Glyndon and Moorhead exchanges.

**FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS**

The final criterion for an EAS petition is whether there is adequate customer support for the proposed EAS route. If a majority of customers vote in favor of installing the proposed EAS, the Commission is authorized and directed to order the relevant local telephone company to install the service. If not, the petition must be denied.

The Commission has reviewed the results of the polling of Hitterdal customers and will certify the following results. With 61.5 percent participation, the results were:

**Polling results for Hitterdal**

Voting Exchange	Petitioned Exchange(s)	Res. EAS Rate	Bus. EAS Rate	% Voting	Yes		No	
					#	%	#	%
Hitterdal	Glyndon and Moorhead	\$10.55	\$16.66	61.5	54	34.8	101	65.2

Since less than a majority of the Hitterdal customers responding to the poll voted in favor of installing the proposed EAS between Hitterdal and the Glyndon and Moorhead exchanges, the Commission will deny this petition and direct Felton, the local telephone company serving the Hitterdal exchange, to notify its customers, as set forth in more detail in the Ordering Paragraphs.

**ORDER**

1. The polling results for the Hitterdal exchange in this matter are hereby certified as set forth above.
2. In accord with the results of that polling, the Commission hereby denies the petition for EAS between Hitterdal and the Glyndon and Moorhead exchanges.

3. Within 10 days of this Order, Felton Telephone Company (Felton or the Company) shall file proposed customer notices for approval by Commission Staff. The notices should list the results of the polling. After approval, the Company shall serve notices in the first possible billing cycle in their respective exchanges.
4. At the time the notices referred to in Ordering Paragraph 3 have been served, the Company shall file copies of the final notices with the Minnesota Department of Public Service and the Commission. Thereupon, this docket will be closed.
5. This Order shall become effective immediately.

BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION

Burl W. Haar  
Executive Secretary

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