

BEFORE THE NEBRASKA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

In the Matter of the Application of the)Application No. C-1128/
Nebraska Public Service Commission on)Progression Order No. 5
its own Motion to Conduct an Investi-)
gation into Establishing Service)
Quality Standards Between Competitive)Request For Comments
Local Exchange Carriers and Incumbent)
Local Exchange Companies.)Entered: July 28, 1997

BY THE COMMISSION:

The passage of the Telecommunications Act of 1996 (the Act) placed several new obligations on this Commission regarding the implementation of competition. Accordingly, the Commission has issued a series of progression orders in Docket C-1128 to address the effects of local competition in Nebraska. The progression orders entered in C-1128 have enabled immediate and uniform implementation of our responsibilities and have provided the opportunity to resolve problems expeditiously.

We now seek public comment to assist the Commission in its effort to establish a policy regarding the levels of service quality and technical standards that should exist in a competitive environment. It is our intention to establish a uniform policy so as to prevent the possibility of discrimination between competitive local exchange carriers (CLECs) and to deter wasteful investment that may be incurred by incumbent local exchange carriers (ILECs). Comments should at a minimum, address the following issues:

I. Service Standards

The Act requires ILECs to resell their services and offer unbundled network elements to CLECs. The level of service quality afforded CLECs is important, as it will directly correlate to the level of service CLEC customers receive. Accordingly, new standards of service quality must be established to ensure that CLEC customers receive adequate telecommunications services. Furthermore, to be competitively neutral, a uniform level of service quality should be made available to all CLECs from an ILEC so as to prevent one CLEC from gaining a competitive advantage over another.

While the Commission has rules that designate the level of service quality ILECs must offer end-users, our rules do not address service quality standards that ILECs owe CLECs. We therefore seek comment on appropriate service standards that should exist between CLECs and ILECs. Recommendations for standards should be supported by factual and legal justification wherever possible.

II. Timing of Provisioning

Implicit in the issue of service quality standards are the time intervals needed to reasonably achieve interconnection be-

tween competitive companies. For example, what is the appropriate length of time needed to complete cage construction when physical collocation is requested? Numerous other reasonable timing intervals should be established so that an ILEC offers similar services to all CLECs on a uniform basis. To establish consistent, reasonable and non-discriminatory time intervals, we seek suggestions from all parties interested in this issue.

III. Technical Standards

We find that the technical standards that ILECs must follow in providing services should be uniform. We believe it would be inefficient to require an ILEC to follow different technical standards for each CLEC that has requested interconnection. Some interconnection agreements might require the adoption of technical standards set forth by Bell Core. Other agreements might set higher levels of technical competency on the ILEC. We suggest that it is reasonable, as well as efficient, to establish uniform technical standards. We therefore seek comment on the technical standards that are appropriate in a competitive environment. We request that parties provide factual and legal support wherever possible.

O R D E R

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED by the Nebraska Public Service Commission that comments on the issues set forth herein be submitted on or before September 12, 1997.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that reply comments be submitted on or before October 3, 1997.

MADE AND ENTERED at Lincoln, Nebraska this 28th day of July.

NEBRASKA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

COMMISSIONERS CONCURRING:

Chairman

ATTEST:

Executive Director

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