

BEFORE THE NEBRASKA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

In the Matter of the Commission,) Application No. C-3049
on its own motion, to conduct an)
investigation into possible) ORDER OPENING DOCKET
solutions for extending the life)
of area codes 308 and 402.) Entered: November 13, 2003

BY THE COMMISSION:

Over the past several years, the Commission has taken measures to maximize use of numbering resources, in an effort to delay or avoid exhaustion of assignable numbers in the state. On June 8, 1999, the Commission opened Docket No. C-2057/PI-28, "In the Matter of the Commission, on its own motion, to conduct an Investigation into the Potential Exhaust of Assignable Telephone Numbers Within the 402 Area Code." In conjunction with C-2057, NeuStar forecasted the exhaust of the 402 area code during the fourth quarter of 2000. The Commission held a public workshop in that docket which identified three area code splits and one area code overlay as possible relief plans to implement upon the exhaust of adequate numbering resources in the 402 area code. Ultimately, the Commission sought and obtained authority from the Federal Communications Commission to implement thousands-block number pooling in the 402 numbering plan area (NPA.) On May 1, 2001, thousands-block number pooling began in the 402 NPA. Through number pooling in the Omaha Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), and other conservation efforts by the industry, the forecasted exhaust date for the 402 area code was recently updated to the second quarter of 2005.

In addition, the Commission opened docket C-2830/PI-66, "The Commission, on its own motion, to Review the Qwest Corporation Rate Center Consolidation Plan." Rate center consolidation helps delay exhaust of the 402 area code by reducing assignment of full prefixes, which minimizes unused or stranded numbers. Consolidating two or more rate centers makes all assigned prefixes viable throughout the new rate center.

By order entered March 11, 2003, the Commission approved Qwest Communication's (Qwest) plan to consolidate rate centers in the 402 area code. Pursuant to the Commission's order, Qwest has consolidated nine rate centers into four, without any changes to existing local calling areas for Qwest customers or changes to the Qwest network. Consolidation of the rate centers was completed in October of 2003.

The implementation of a new area code adopting either a split or overlay plan will have a significant impact on carriers, businesses, and the general public. Implementation is usually an 18- to 24-month process and requires the development

and implementation of detailed plans and procedures by all parties. Other states have demonstrated that thousands-block number pooling and rate center consolidation are viable options that can extend the life of existing number resources in an area code.

Therefore, the Commission opens the above-captioned docket in order to investigate further the potential use of thousands-block number pooling outside of the top 100 MSAs and rate center consolidation to return valuable number resources to the pool and further extend the life of both 402 and 308 area codes. To assist the Commission in evaluating the current technical capabilities of carriers, the Commission proposes the following inquiries to all certificated carriers and any other interested parties:

1. For each rate center in which your company has switch and numbering resources, provide the following information. The information should be provided in a MS Excel format with one hard copy submitted with the response and one electronic copy provided either in disk/CD format with the response or sent via email to dgray@mail.state.ne.us.
 - a. OCN (Operation Company Number);
 - b. NPANxx;
 - c. Rate Center;
 - d. Host or Remote;
 - e. If Remote switch, location of Host;
 - f. Switch Manufacture;
 - g. Switch Model;
 - h. Operating Software Version; and
 - i. Thousands-block pooling capable (Yes or No)
2. If the current switch/software is not pooling capable, does your company currently have plans to make the switch/software pooling capable?
3. If your company is going to make the switch/software pooling capable, what is the estimated implementation date?
4. What other measures beyond thousands-block pooling and rate center consolidation should the Commission consider to extend the life of the 402 and 308 area codes?

The Commission finds that all telecommunications carriers certificated in Nebraska having numbering resources in the 308 or 402 area codes must respond to the above inquiries, and that any interested party is welcome to respond as well. Upon review of all responses, the Commission anticipates setting a workshop or hearing in this matter to review the consolidated

information, evaluate the options for extending the life of the 308 and 402 area codes, and identify applicable cost recovery mechanisms.

O R D E R

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED by the Nebraska Public Service Commission that all telecommunications carriers certificated in Nebraska having numbering resources in the 308 or 402 area codes shall respond to the inquiries proposed in this order on or before 5:00 p.m., on December 12, 2003. The information should be provided in a MS Excel format with one hard copy submitted with the response and one electronic copy provided either in disk/CD format with the response or sent via email to dgray@mail.state.ne.us.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that any other interested parties seeking to respond to the inquiries may do so on or before 5:00 p.m., on December 12, 2003. The information should be provided in a MS Excel format with one hard copy submitted with the response and one electronic copy provided either in disk/CD format with the response or sent via email to dgray@mail.state.ne.us.

MADE AND ENTERED at Lincoln, Nebraska, this 13th day of November, 2003.

NEBRASKA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

COMMISSIONERS CONCURRING:

Chair

ATTEST:

Deputy Director