

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 SEEKING COMMENTS
solutions for extending the life) FOR WORKSHOP
of area codes 308 and 402.)

Entered: May 11, 2004

BY THE COMMISSION:

A hearing was held on May 5, 2004, for the purpose of discussing comments received from industry representatives regarding the use of thousands-block number pooling and rate center consolidation in order to extend the life of existing numbering resources in the 402 and 308 area codes.

Comments filed in response to the March 30, 2004 order and testimony solicited during the May 5, 2004 hearing demonstrate that the cooperative effort between the Commission and the industry can result in the conservation of numbering resources. Such cooperative effort by Qwest in implementing Rate Center Consolidation and by Alltel in utilizing thousands block number pooling were contributing factors in the adjustment of the projected exhaust date for the 402 area code from 2Q2005 to 2Q2006 by NeuStar on May 5, 2004. While this adjustment only moves the project exhaust date to the outer edge of the industry recommended implementation time frame for a relief plan, it demonstrated that a proactive approach is effective and will ensure adequate numbering resources throughout the state.

Local exchange carriers responding, which have or could implement thousands block number pooling after June 1, 2004, and in general agree with a revenue neutral approach to rate center consolidation, represent 45% of the exchanges and 77% of the total wireline access lines in Nebraska. These local exchange carriers also represent all but 17 of the exchanges in the two Metropolitan Statistical Areas in Nebraska.

Other local exchange carriers responding indicated thousands block number pooling in urban areas was of benefit, but questioned thousands block number pooling in rural areas and the value of rate center consolidation throughout the state. These local exchange carriers represent 40% of the exchanges and 10% of the wireline access lines in Nebraska. They also represent the other 17 exchanges in the two Metropolitan Statistic Areas and a significant portion of the eleven micro-statistical areas in Nebraska.

Wireline Carriers representing 7% of the exchanges and 1.7% of the wireline access lines in Nebraska have requested

additional workshops to clarify their understanding of the request made by the Commission. Only three wireline carriers representing 8% of the exchanges and 11% of the wireline access lines in Nebraska did not file comments.

Based upon historical results, and the comments filed, the Commission is still of the opinion that thousands block number pooling and rate center consolidation are effective tools in conserving valuable numbering resources.

Several issues were raised during the hearing and in the filled written comments including but not limited to the most cost effective and feasible method available for the implementation of thousands-block number pooling and the identification of areas where rate center consolidation would provide additional resources. In order to further the Commission's stated goals, all effected parties must have a common understanding of the various methods of implementing thousands-block number pooling and rate center consolidation and the attendant changes in business practices, necessary modifications in operational support systems, and other technical issues.

Based upon the written comments received and those comments offered during the May 5, 2004 hearing, the Commission finds that a workshop to identify how existing numbering resources are made available for pooling, how carriers obtain numbering resources in the pooling environment, and the technical issues related to the implementation of thousands-block number pooling and rate center consolidation is appropriate.

Written comments received identified two methods of implementing thousands block number pooling; switch software upgrades which utilize local number pooling and local routing number software or, modification of existing switch translation tables to route calls. The Commission believes that the implementation of a switch software upgrade solution is both carrier and switch vendor specific and does not lend itself to a workshop discussion. However, a switch translation approach is a more generic approach, which may be a cost effective method many carriers may utilize to implement thousands block number pooling.

The Commission invites all interested parties to submit specific technical issues on implementing thousands block number pooling, including those specific to using a switch translation approach for thousand block number pooling, to be addressed at the workshop so that appropriate expertise can be available during the workshop. The workshop will also provide a forum for

discussing the situations where rate center consolidation would provide the opportunity to conserve numbering resources.

Issues to be addressed at the workshop should be filed in writing by interested parties on or before May 25, 2004. All parties filing comments should file one original, five paper copies and one electronic copy in MS Word or PDF format.

A workshop will then be scheduled at a later date, by hearing officer order, based upon the availability of necessary technical personnel and interested parties.

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 or any other interested parties are asked to provide agenda items regarding technical issues related to the implementation of thousands-block number pooling and rate center consolidation as described herein on or before 5:00 p.m., on May 25, 2004. The information should be provided in a MS Excel or Microsoft Word 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 jraffety@mail.state.ne.us and amelton@mail.state.ne.us.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that a workshop will be scheduled by hearing officer order at a later date based upon the availability of necessary technical personnel and interested parties to address the technical issues related to the implementation of thousands-block number pooling and rate center consolidation.

MADE AND ENTERED at Lincoln, Nebraska, this 11th day of May, 2004.

NEBRASKA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

COMMISSIONERS CONCURRING:

Chairman

ATTEST:

Executive Director

