

BEFORE THE NEBRASKA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

In the Matter of the Commission,) Application No. C-3745/
on its own motion, seeking to) PI-126
investigate time release)
intervals for participants of) ORDER OPENING DOCKET AND
telephone calls once a) SETTING WORKSHOP
disconnect signal or on-hook)
signal is detected.)
) January 17, 2007

BY THE COMMISSION:

O P I N I O N A N D F I N D I N G S

The Nebraska Public Service Commission (Commission), on its own motion, opens this docket to investigate time release intervals for participants of telephone calls once a disconnect signal or on-hook signal is detected.

The Commission has received reports from consumers concerning their inability to end a telephone call they received in a reasonable time thereby allowing the called party to receive dial tone and place a subsequent outgoing telephone call. According to consumer complaints received by Commissioners and staff, parties on the receiving end of phone calls were unable to get a dial tone to place an outgoing call for several seconds. In one case, the called party was attempting to place a subsequent call to emergency services by dialing 911. Consumers reported various time intervals between placing the handset on-hook and getting the dial tone necessary to place an outgoing call ranging from several seconds to minutes.

Informal inquiries by the Commission revealed that time release intervals after an on-hook signal is received are primarily a function of the telecommunications switch. A data request to certificated carriers seeking information on time release intervals for their specific switches was issued by the Commission on December 21, 2006. Carriers were asked to respond to the following scenarios:

1. Scenario 1 - Calling Party places a call to the Called Party and both parties go on-hook at approximately the same time. How long before either party can come off hook and gain dial tone to place a new call.
2. Scenario 2 - Calling Party places a call to the Called Party and the Calling Party goes on-hook while the Called Party remains off-hook. How long before the Calling Party could gain dial tone to place a new call.

3. Scenario 3 - Calling Party places a call to the Called Party and the Called Party goes on-hook while the Calling Party remains off-hook. How long before the Called Party can come off hook and gain dial tone to place a new call.
4. If, under any of the above scenarios, the release interval is greater than five seconds provide the supporting technical information and narrative that explains the need for a release time longer than five seconds. Indicate whether the disconnect interval can be decreased to five seconds or less.
5. Are there any calling features that a customer could have on his line (3-way, call waiting, etc) that would affect the disconnect timing?
6. Provide the manufacture, model, and software version of your switch(s).

The responses to the data request received by the Commission showed a disparity between disconnection times from carrier to carrier. Several carriers reported the release times were different in each of the scenarios depending on the relationship of the calling party, called party, and the switching functionality necessary to complete the call. In general the release time for the called party was longer when the calling party originated the call from a switch foreign to the one serving the called party and the call arrived at the terminating switch on a trunk or toll facility as compared to the release times when the calling party was served by the same switch as the called party.

To further investigate the issues raised by the consumer complaints received by the Commission, the Commission finds that a workshop should be scheduled for **Monday, February 26, 2007, at 1:30 p.m.** in the Commission Hearing Room, 300 The Atrium, 1200 N Street, Lincoln, Nebraska, to allow all interested parties an opportunity to further discuss the issues surrounding switch functionality as it relates to the release of telephone lines after a disconnect or on-hook signal is received by the switch.

The Commission hereby opens this investigation to determine if further Commission action in the form of a rulemaking is needed or appropriate and to further inquire into the switch functionality of facilities based telecommunications providers in the State of Nebraska.

O R D E R

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED by the Nebraska Public Service Commission that a public investigation is hereby opened as captioned above.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that a workshop in the above-captioned docket be, and it is hereby, scheduled for **February 26, 2007, at 1:30 p.m.** in the Commission Hearing Room, 300 The Atrium, 1200 N Street, Lincoln, Nebraska to investigate release times, factors which affect release times, the basis for current release times, and the possibility of standardizing release times.

MADE AND ENTERED at Lincoln, Nebraska, this 17th day of January, 2007.

NEBRASKA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

COMMISSIONERS CONCURRING:

Chairman

ATTEST:

Executive Director