

BEFORE THE NEBRASKA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

In the Matter of the Nebraska) Application No. C-4767/
Public Service Commission, on) 911-062/PI-195
its Own Motion, to investigate)
the status of direct access to)
emergency services.) ORDER CLOSING INVESTIGATION
)
)
) Entered: December 15, 2015

BY THE COMMISSION:

The Nebraska Public Service Commission (Commission) opened the above-captioned investigation, on its own motion, to examine the status of direct access to emergency services from Multi-line Telephone Systems (MLTS). The Commission sought comment to examine the current status of direct access to 9-1-1 for multi-line telephone systems, promote awareness of the issue, and to determine what role the Commission could play in ensuring direct access to emergency services.

The Commission sought and received comments from Citizens Telecommunications Company of Nebraska d/b/a Frontier Communications of Nebraska; Qwest Corporation d/b/a CenturyLink QC; United Telephone Company of the West d/b/a CenturyLink; and Cox Nebraska Telecom, LLC. On June 30, 2015, the Commission held a workshop at the University of Nebraska Innovation Campus to facilitate discussion regarding the issues related to MLTS and direct access to 9-1-1.

Written comments and discussion at the workshop by interested parties expressed the opinion that the Commission does not have authority to require direct 9-1-1 access to emergency services. Private businesses with MLTS systems usually notify employees or residents of how to dial 9-1-1, but there is no notice obligation. Several states have passed what is referred to as "Kari's Law" requiring direct access to emergency services when dialing from a MLTS location. Additionally, commenters noted that any costs associated with direct 9-1-1 access would depend upon factors such as the age of equipment and maintenance contracts.

Upon consideration of the written comments filed and those received at the workshop, the Commission is of the opinion and finds that the Commission lacks authority to require direct access to emergency services from MLTS. The Commission, however, strongly encourages telecommunications services providers, vendors, and end users to continue to establish partnerships to address MLTS issues. The Commission

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will also provide support in increasing public awareness and education relative to dialing 911 service in Nebraska. The Commission is also aware of the recent introduction of "Kari's Law Act of 2015," HR 4167, in Congress by Rep. Louie Gohmert (R., Texas), which would amend the 1934 Communications Act to require direct dial access to 9-1-1 from multi-line telephone systems. The Commission is supportive of legislation which addresses this critical public safety issue.

Based on the above, the Commission finds that this investigation should be closed.

O R D E R

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED by the Nebraska Public Service Commission that the above-captioned investigation be, and is hereby, closed.

ENTERED AND MADE EFFECTIVE at Lincoln, Nebraska, this 15th day of December, 2015.

NEBRASKA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

COMMISSIONERS CONCURRING:

Tim Schram
Crystal Knoder
Dee Johnson

Chairman

Gerald L. Vap

ATTEST:

Jeffrey L. Puley

Executive Director

//s//Frank E. Landis
//s//Gerald L. Vap