

BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF WYOMING

In the Matter of RT)
Communications, Inc.’s 2023) Docket No. 70015-
Wyoming Eligible Telecommunications) Record No.
Carrier Certification Application)

**RT COMMUNICATIONS, INC.’s 2023 APPLICATION FOR ELIGIBLE
TELECOMMUNICATIONS CARRIER CERTIFICATION**

I. INTRODUCTION

In accordance with Chapter 4, Section 14 of the Rules and Regulations of the Wyoming Public Service Commission (“WPSC Rules”), RT Communications, Inc. (“RT”), herein submits its 2023 Annual Eligible Telecommunications Carrier (“ETC”) Certification Application (“Application”). RT respectfully requests that the Commission find that RT has complied with WPSC Rule Chapter 4, Section 14, and further requests that the Commission certify to the Federal Communications Commission (“FCC”), RT’s eligibility for federal universal service fund (“USF”) support for the calendar year 2023.

II. BACKGROUND

RT is a rural, rate of return telecommunications carrier organized under the laws of the State of Wyoming, with its principal place of business located in Worland, Wyoming. RT holds a Wyoming Public Service Commission issued certificate to provide local exchange services in various exchanges in Wyoming. RT

provides USF federally supported local exchange services in Study Area(s) #512251. (Same study area as Range Telephone Cooperative, Inc.).

WPSC Rule Chapter 4, Section 14 requires all Wyoming ETCs to satisfy specific subcategories of criteria and submit specific information. In addition, the Commission has issued an ETC Certification Letter (June 7, 2023), which describes in more detail information which would satisfy the requirements of WPSC Rule Chapter 4, Section 14.

III. RT SATISFIES EACH OF THE COMMISSION'S ETC CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS AS SET FORTH IN WPSC RULE CHAPTER 4, SECTION 14

WPSC Rule Chapter 4, Section 14(b) provides:

Each ETC receiving any “high cost support” defined at 47 C.F.R. § 54.5 or any Lifeline “low income support” as defined at 47 C.F.R. § 54.400 *et seq.* shall file an unredacted copy of the federal annual ETC report with supporting documentation.

RT has provided a copy of this year’s FCC Form 481 with supporting documentation as **APPENDIX 1**.

1. 2022 Outages.

WPSC Rule Chapter 4, Section 14(b)(i) provides:

Detailed information on a local exchange basis of any outage, as that term is defined in 47 C.F.R. § 4.5, of at least 30 minutes in duration for each service area in which an ETC is designated for any facilities it owns, operates, leases, or otherwise utilizes that potentially affect: at least 10% percent of the end users served in a designated service area; or, a 911 special facility, as defined in 47 C.F.R. § 4.5(e). Specifically, the ETC’s annual report must include information

detailing: (A) The date and time of onset of the outage; (B) A brief description of the outage and its resolution; (C) The particular services affected; (D) The geographic areas affected by the outage; (E) Steps taken to prevent a similar situation in the future; and (F) The number of customers affected.

Please see **APPENDIX 2** for information on outages previously reported to the Commission.

2. Unfulfilled Service Requests.

WPSC Rule Chapter 4, Section 14(b)(ii) provides:

For high cost support recipients only, documentation detailing the number of service requests for service from potential customers within the ETC 's service areas that were unfulfilled, including how it attempted to provide service to those potential customers, as set forth in Rules 13(b)(iii) and (iv).

RT has no unfulfilled service requests to report for 2022.

3. Complaints per 1000 Handsets.

WPSC Rule Chapter 4, Section 14(b)(iii) provides:

Documentation detailing the number of complaints per 1,000 connections (fixed or mobile).

RT has no complaints to report for 2022.

4. Compliance with the Wyoming Quality of Service Rules.

WPSC Rule Chapter 4, Section 14(b)(iv) provides:

Documentation detailing how the carrier is complying with applicable consumer protection and service quality standards, or for wireless carriers, the Cellular Telecommunications and Internet Association's (CTIA) Consumer Code.

Please see RT's Tariff No. 3 on file with the Commission. Based upon information and belief none of RT's customers filed a quality of service complaint about RT with the Commission in 2022.

5. Functionality in Emergency Situations.

WPSC Rule Chapter 4, Section 14(b)(v) provides:

Documentation detailing how the carrier is able to function in emergency situations as set forth in Rule 13(b)(vi).

Please the Business Continuity and Disaster Preparedness Plan in **APPENDIX 1** (beginning at p. 27).

6. Ownership.

WPSC Rule Chapter 4, Section 14(b)(vi) provides:

Documentation detailing the carrier's holding Company, operating Companies, affiliates that are designated ETC's and/or provide retail broadband service, and any branding (a "d/b/a" or brand designation), as well as universal service identifiers. "Affiliates" is defined as "a person that (directly or indirectly) owns or controls, is owned or controlled by, or is under common ownership or control with, another person." "Own" means to own an equity interest (or the equivalent thereof) of more than 10 %.

Range Telephone Cooperative, Inc. (SAC 482251, 489007, 512251) owns the affiliated companies RT Communications, Inc. (SAC 512251), Dubois Telephone Exchange, Inc. (SAC 512291), and Advanced Communications Technology, Inc. (SAC 519004). All four companies use a d/b/a of "Range".

7. Tribal Outreach.

WPSC Rule Chapter 4, Section 14(b)(vii) provides:

For high cost support recipients only, to the extent the carrier serves federal recognized Tribal lands, documentation demonstrating the ETC had discussions with Tribal governments that, at a minimum, included: (A) A needs assessment and deployment planning with a focus on Tribal community anchor institutions; (B) Feasibility and sustainability planning; (C) Marketing services in a culturally sensitive manner; (D) Rights of way processes, land use permitting, facilities siting, environmental and cultural preservation review processes; and, (E) Compliance with Tribal business and licensing requirements. Tribal business and licensing requirements include business practice licenses that Tribal and Non-Tribal business entities, whether located on or off Tribal lands, must obtain upon application to the relevant Tribal government office or division to conduct any business or trade, or deliver any goods or services to the tribes, Tribal members or Tribal lands.

Not applicable. RT does not provide service on federal recognized Tribal lands.

8. 2023 Lifeline Services.

WPSC Rule Chapter 4, Section 14(b)(viii) provides:

For low income only recipients, documentation describing the terms and conditions of any voice telephony service plans offered to Lifeline subscribers, including details on the number of minutes provided as part of the plan, any additional charges for toll calls, and rates for each such plan.

The terms and conditions for RT's universal service offerings are set forth in its RT's Tariff No. 3, which is on file with the Commission and also available at its business office in Worland, Wyoming. RT offers Lifeline discounts on its residential phone service to qualifying subscribers. Residential telephone service costs vary by

zone and include unlimited local minutes. Toll charges are assessed by the long distance provider selected by the subscriber. RT provides toll blocking service to Lifeline eligible subscribers at no charge. Lifeline eligible subscribers that choose toll blocking service are not required to pay a deposit for their service.

9. Documentation Advertising the Prices and Availability of Lifeline and Linkup.

WPSC Rule Chapter 4, Section 14(b)(ix) provides:

Documentation detailing how the carrier offers and advertises the prices and availability of the Lifeline and Tribal Linkup programs in a manner designed to reach those likely to qualify for these programs, throughout the service areas for which the carrier has been designated an ETC.

The ETC Certification Letter provides the following additional requirements for ETC's in receipt of "low-income" Lifeline or Tribal Link-up support as defined in 47 C.F.R. § 54.400 *et seq.*:

- a) *The number of Lifeline customers that your company served as of July 1, 2023.*
- b) *A detailed calculation of the discounted Lifeline rate that your Lifeline customers pay.*
- c) *Whether the ETC is meeting the minimum service requirements set forth in FCC Order 16-38.*

RT provides the terms, conditions, prices and availability of Lifeline in RT's Tariff No. 3, which is on file with the Commission and at its business office in Worland, Wyoming. Further, RT provides the terms, conditions, prices and availability of Lifeline on its website at <https://www.range.net/assistance-programs/>

In addition, please see COMMISSION FORM 4 in **APPENDIX 3** as well as **APPENDIX 4**, which contains documentation of publications of availability of lifeline services, as well as.

a) As of 07/01/2023 RT served 26 Lifeline customers in Wyoming.

b) The calculation for Lifeline discount for RT is:

Basic Local Service	\$23.99
Federal Lifeline Reduction	<u>(\$5.25)</u>
Discounted Local Service Rate	\$18.74

c) Yes. Please see COMMISSION FORM 4 in **APPENDIX 3**.

10. Map of Service Areas.

WPSC Rule Chapter 4, Section 14(c)(i) provides:

If not already on file, a current detailed map of the service areas for which the carrier has been designated an ETC, including the location and the effective coverage area of each cellular tower, if applicable. The Commission may require such maps be submitted in a designated electronic format.

RT supplied detailed maps of RT's service designation area in a prior ETC certification filing. The Service designation area has not changed. RT does not deploy cell towers.

11. Current Year USF Receipts.

WPSC Rule Chapter 4, Section 14(c)(ii) provides:

Documentation detailing the total amount of all federal "high cost" and "low income" support received in the previous calendar year, and in the current year to date, categorized by "support mechanism."

Please see COMMISSION FORMS 1 and 4 in **APPENDIX 3**.

12. Current Year Expenditures and Budget for Supported Services.

WPSC Rule Chapter 4, Section 14(c)(iii) provides:

For high cost support recipients only, documentation detailing on a local exchange area basis, if available, expenditures for the previous calendar year and the current year to date, for the provision, maintenance, and upgrading of facilities and services for which the support is intended where the carrier has been designated an ETC.

Please see COMMISSION FORMS 2 and 3 in **APPENDIX 3**.

13. Price Schedule Reference.

WPSC Rule Chapter 4, Section 14(c)(iv) provides:

Documentation, or reference to approved price schedule, detailing how the carrier offers the supported services, listed below, throughout the service areas in Wyoming where the carrier has been designated an ETC. (A) Voice grade access to the public switched network or its functional equivalent; (B) Minutes of use for local service provided at no additional charge to end users; (C) Access to the emergency services provided by local government or other public safety organizations, such as 911 and enhanced 911 to the extent these systems have been implemented; (D) Toll limitation services to qualifying low income consumers.

RT provides the supported services throughout its service area in which it has been designated as an ETC. Please see RT's Tariff No. 3 on file with the Commission.

14. Service Agreement.

WPSC Rule Chapter 4, Section 14(c)(v) provides: *If not already on file, a copy of the current service agreement the carrier offers to its universal service customers, including all terms and conditions.*

RT's terms and conditions of its universal service offerings are set forth in RT's Tariff No. 3 on file with the Commission.


15. Certification.

Pursuant to the ETC Certification Letter, RT attaches as **APPENDIX 5**, the signed, notarized Certification Form for this Application.

IV. CONCLUSION

RT respectfully requests that by virtue of this Application, and the Appendices submitted with this Application, the Commission find that RT has complied with WPSC Rule Chapter 4, Section 14 and certifies to USAC and the FCC its continued eligibility to receive federal universal service support in Study Area Code #512251. (Same study area as Range Telephone Cooperative, Inc.)

Respectfully submitted this 14th day of July, 2023.



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