

**BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA**

**IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION OF
COMTEL TELCOM ASSETS LP FOR A
CERTIFICATE OF AUTHORITY TO PROVIDE
INTEREXCHANGE TELECOMMUNICATIONS
SERVICES AND LOCAL EXCHANGE
SERVICES IN SOUTH DAKOTA**

**ORDER GRANTING
CERTIFICATE OF
AUTHORITY**

TC05-221

On December 22, 2005, the Public Utilities Commission (Commission) received an application for a certificate of authority from Comtel Telcom Assets LP (Comtel).

On December 29, 2005, the Commission electronically transmitted notice of the filing and the intervention deadline of January 13, 2006, to interested individuals and entities. No petitions to intervene or comments were filed and at its regularly scheduled April 11, 2006, meeting, the Commission considered Comtel's request for a certificate of authority. Commission Staff recommended granting a certificate of authority, subject to a continuous \$25,000 surety bond, and subject to rural safeguards.

The Commission finds that it has jurisdiction over this matter pursuant to SDCL Chapter 49-31, specifically 49-31-3 and 49-31-69 and ARSD 20:10:24:02, 20:10:24:03 and 20:10:32:03. The Commission finds that Comtel has met the legal requirements established for the granting of a certificate of authority. Comtel has, in accordance with SDCL 49-31-3 and 49-31-71, demonstrated sufficient technical, financial and managerial capabilities to offer telecommunications services in South Dakota.

The Commission approves Comtel's application for a certificate of authority, subject to a continuous \$25,000 surety bond, and subject to rural safeguards. The certificate of authority for Comtel shall authorize it to offer local exchange services in South Dakota, except in those areas served by a rural telephone company. In the future, should Comtel choose to provide local exchange services statewide, with respect to rural telephone companies, Comtel will have to come before the Commission in another proceeding before being able to provide local service in that rural service area pursuant to 47 U.S.C. § 253(f) which allows the Commission to require a company that seeks to provide service in a rural service area to meet the requirements in 47 U.S.C. § 214(e)(1) for designation as an eligible telecommunications carrier. In addition, the granting of statewide certification will not affect the exemptions, suspensions, and modifications for rural telephone companies found in 47 U.S.C. § 251(f). It is therefore

ORDERED, that Comtel's application for a certificate of authority to provide interexchange telecommunications services and local exchange services is granted, subject to a continuous \$25,000 surety bond; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that Comtel shall file informational copies of tariff changes with the Commission as the changes occur; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that the Commission shall authorize Comtel to offer its local exchange services in South Dakota, except in those areas served by a rural telephone company.


Dated at Pierre, South Dakota, this 3rd day of May, 2006.

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE
The undersigned hereby certifies that this document has been served today upon all parties of record in this docket, as listed on the docket service list, by facsimile or by first class mail, in properly addressed envelopes, with charges prepaid thereon.
By: <u>Tina Douglas</u>
Date: <u>5-3-06</u>
(OFFICIAL SEAL)

BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION:



ROBERT K. SAHR, Chairman



DUSTIN M. JOHNSON, Commissioner



GARY HANSON, Commissioner