

1000-053

1000-053

DOCKET NO.

In the Matter of — IN THE MATTER OF THE FILING BY SOUTH DAKOTA INDEPENDENT TELEPHONE COALITION FOR APPROVAL OF RECIPROCAL TRANSPORT AND TERMINATION AGREEMENT BETWEEN G.C.C. LICENSE L.L.C. AND VENTURE COMMUNICATIONS, INC.

Public Utilities Commission of the State of South Dakota

DATE	MEMORANDA
3/2 00	Filed and Docketed;
3/9 00	Weekly Filing
3/30 00	Staff Concludes and Recommendation;
4/4 00	Response of SDITC;
4/7 00	Staff's Report to SDITC's Response;
5/23 00	Order Approving Agreement;
5/23 00	Docket Closed.

Richard D. Coit
Executive Director
rcsditc@sd-cybermax.net

March 2, 2000

RECEIVED

MAR 02 2000

Mr. Bill Bullard, Executive Director
South Dakota Public Utilities Commission
500 East Capitol Ave.
State Capitol Building
Pierre, SD 57501

**SOUTH DAKOTA PUBLIC
UTILITIES COMMISSION**

RE: Reciprocal Transport and Termination Agreements

Dear Bill:

Enclosed for Commission review pursuant to 47 U.S.C. § 252(e) are true and correct copies of "Reciprocal Transport and Termination Agreements" negotiated and entered between GCC License L.L.C. (an affiliate of Western Wireless Corporation) and the independent local exchange carriers listed below:

Accent Communications Inc.
Armour Independent Telephone Company
Baltic Telecom Cooperative
Beresford Municipal Telephone Company
Bridgewater-Cassistota Independent Telephone Company
City of Faith Telephone
East Plains Telecom, Inc.
Fort Randall Telephone Company
Golden West Telecommunications Cooperative, Inc.
Hanson Communications, Inc.
Hanson County Telephone Company
Heartland Communications, Inc.
Interstate Telecommunications Cooperative, Inc.
James Valley Cooperative Telephone Company
Jefferson Telephone Company, Inc.
Kadoka Telephone Company
Kennebec Telephone Company, Inc.
McCook Cooperative Telephone Company
Midstate Telephone Company
Mt Rushmore Telephone Company

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RC Communications, Inc.
Roberts County Telephone Cooperative
Sanborn Telephone Cooperative
SANCOM, Inc.
Sioux Valley Telephone Company
Splitrock Properties, Inc.
Splitrock Telecom Cooperative, Inc.
StateLine Telecommunications, Inc.
Stockholm/Strandburg Telephone Company
Sully Buttes Telephone Cooperative, Inc.
Union Telephone Company
Valley Cable & Satellite Communications, Inc.
Valley Telecommunications Cooperative
Venture Communications, Inc.
Vivian Telephone Company
West River Telecommunications Cooperative (Bison)
Western Telephone Company

SDITC, on behalf of the above listed companies, and GCC License L.L.C. are requesting Commission approval of each of the negotiated agreements. All of the agreements are identical in their terms and conditions, and the rates agreed upon are reflected in "Exhibit A" attached to each agreement. The agreements have already been signed and carry a retroactive effective date agreed to by the parties.

Sincerely,



Richard D. Coit
Executive Director and General Counsel

RDC/ms
Encls.

cc: Gene DeJordy, Western Wireless Corporation

MAR 17 2000

1000-013

SOUTH DAKOTA PUBLIC
UTILITY COMMISSION

Reciprocal Transport and Termination Agreement

This Reciprocal Transport and Termination Agreement (the "Agreement") is entered into by and between G.C.C. License L.L.C. ("CMRS Provider") with offices at 3650 131st Ave., S.E., Bellevue, Washington 98006 and Venture Communications, Inc ("Carrier") with offices at PO Box 157; Highmore, SD 57345. CMRS Provider and Carrier are each individually a "Party" and are together the "Parties" to this Agreement. The "effective date" of this Agreement is January 1, 1999.

CMRS Provider is licensed by the Federal Communications Commission ("FCC") as a Commercial Mobile Radio Service provider. Carrier and CMRS Provider agree to exchange wireline to wireless and wireless to wireline traffic for the benefit of the Parties. Services provided by Carrier to CMRS Provider under this Agreement are provided pursuant to the receiving Party's status as a CMRS Provider.

WHEREAS, the Parties currently extend arrangements to one another allowing for the transport and termination of wireline to wireless and wireless to wireline traffic over each other's network facilities, between each other's subscribers; and

WHEREAS, the Parties wish to put in place an arrangement for the mutual exchange and reciprocal compensation of local telecommunications traffic in accord with the Telecommunications Act of 1996, and which is intended to supersede any previous arrangements between the parties relating to such traffic;

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the mutual provisions contained herein and other good and valuable consideration, the receipt and sufficiency of which are hereby acknowledged, CMRS Provider and Carrier hereby agree as follows:

1. Scope. This Agreement addresses the parties' reciprocal compensation obligations as described in § 251(b)(5) of the Telecommunications Act of 1996 (the "Act"). By this Agreement, neither Party waives any other rights it may have under the Act or rules of the FCC, under state statute, or pursuant to rules of the State Public Utilities Commission ("Commission"). Such rights may include CMRS Provider's right to request unbundled network elements and a review of Carrier's rural telephone company exemption provided for under § 251(f)(1)(A) of the Act and Carrier's right to seek to maintain the rural exemption.

2. Interpretation and Construction. The terms and conditions of this Agreement shall be subject to any and all applicable laws, rules, regulations or guidelines that subsequently may be prescribed by any federal, state or local government authority. To the extent required by any such subsequently prescribed law, rule, regulation or guideline, the Parties agree to modify, in writing, the affected term(s) and condition(s) of this Agreement to bring them into compliance with such law, rule, regulation or guideline.

The Parties agree and understand that certain provisions in this Agreement are based on the FCC's First Report and Order, In the Matter of Implementation of the Local Competition Provisions of the Telecommunications Act of 1996, CC Docket No. 96-98, rel. Aug. 8, 1996 ("FCC 1st Order") and the Second Report and Order and Memorandum Opinion and Order, In the Matter of the Implementation of the Local Competition Provisions of the Telecommunications Act of 1996, CC Docket No. 96-98, rel. Aug. 8, 1996 ("FCC 2nd Order"). To the extent that certain of the rules contained in the FCC 1st Order and the FCC 2nd Order, or any other FCC Order adopted to implement the Telecommunications Act of 1996, are ultimately deemed by the courts to be not effective, this Agreement shall be modified to comport with the final court decisions and subsequent FCC rules adopted to comply with the court's decisions.

The Parties further agree and understand that the rates for local transport and termination agreed to, as set forth in Exhibit A hereto, have not been determined based on a specific costing methodology or company specific cost studies and that they may have to be adjusted when an appropriate costing methodology consistent with § 252(d)(2) of the Telecommunications Act is established and actual cost information or an acceptable cost proxy which reasonably reflects the actual costs of providing the local transport and termination services becomes available.

The Parties enter into this agreement without prejudice to any position they may take with respect to similar future agreements between the Parties or with respect to positions they may have taken previously, or may take in the future in any legislative, regulatory or other public forum addressing any matters, including matters related to the rates to be charged for transport and termination of local traffic or the types of arrangements prescribed by this agreement.

3. Definitions.

3.1 "Act" means the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 151 et. seq.), as amended by the Telecommunications Act of 1996, and as from time to time interpreted in the duly authorized rules and regulations of the FCC or the Commission within its state of jurisdiction.

3.2 "CMRS" or "Commercial Mobile Radio Service" is as defined in the Communications Act of 1934 as amended by the Telecommunications Act of 1996

3.3 "Commission" means the South Dakota Public Utilities Commission.

3.4 "Local Calling Area (LCA)" for purposes of this Agreement, is a geographic area defined by the Major Trading Area (MTA) within which CMRS Provider provides CMRS services where local transport and

termination rates apply as set forth in FCC 1st Order and 47 CFR 51.701(b)(2).

3.5 "Local Traffic" for purposes of this Agreement means traffic which originates and terminates, based on the location of the wireless subscriber and landline end user, within the same CMRS LCA.

3.6 "Major Trading Area (MTA) is a geographic area established in Rand McNally's Commercial Atlas and Marketing Guide and used by the FCC in defining CMRS license boundaries for CMRS providers for purposes of Sections 251 and 252 of the Communications Act of 1934 as amended.

3.7 "Non-Local Traffic" is the completion of interMTA calls based on the location of the wireless subscriber and the land line end user and the completion of that roaming traffic, as defined in FCC 1st Order, par. 1043, to which switched access charges are applicable.

3.8 "Reciprocal Compensation Credit" for purposes of this Agreement and based on current traffic trends is a monetary credit for wireline to wireless traffic which is originated by a landline subscriber of Carrier and terminates to a subscriber of CMRS Provider within the LCA. Should traffic patterns change so that more wireless traffic is terminated by CMRS Provider than Carrier within a prescribed billing period, the reciprocal compensation credit shall be changed to reflect such difference.

3.9 "Transit Traffic" is traffic that originates from one provider's network, transits another telecommunication carrier's network, substantially unchanged, and terminates to yet another provider's network.

3.10 "Wireless Traffic" for purposes of this Agreement, means all calls in either direction between a user of CMRS Provider's CMRS (where CMRS Provider provides the wireless equivalent of dial tone to the user) and an end user served by Carrier.

4. Reciprocal Traffic Exchange. Each Party shall reciprocally terminate wireless local traffic originating on each other's network. Reciprocal traffic exchange addresses the exchange of wireless traffic between CMRS Provider subscribers and Carrier end users. Consistent with Carrier's current practice with CMRS Provider, either Party's wireless local traffic may be routed through an intermediary for interconnection with the other Party's system. Any such arrangement may be modified by a separate agreement if both Parties wish to provide for two-way direct interconnection. Reciprocal traffic exchange per this Agreement covers only transport and termination services provided for CMRS providers only in association with CMRS services. Other services, including any direct interconnect arrangement established between the parties, shall be covered by a separate contract, tariff or price list. The transport and termination services

provided hereunder are intended for wireless to wireline or wireline to wireless, but not wireline to wireline communications. Such services will not be used to terminate other types of traffic on Carrier's network (such as wireline originated traffic) and services used in violation hereof shall constitute a breach of this Agreement. In addition to any other remedies available, the Party whose services have been improperly used shall be entitled to recover the charges applicable to such traffic for the entire period of misuse. Any incidental services (e.g. directory assistance, operator services, etc.) will be billed at the standard rates for those services.

5. Local and Non-Local Traffic. This Agreement is intended to address the transport and termination of local wireless traffic between the Parties. Local wireless traffic is subject to only the local transport and termination charge(s) set forth below and is not subject to switched access charges. Non-local traffic is subject to either interstate or intrastate switched access charges, whichever is applicable.

Ancillary traffic which includes wireless traffic that is destined for ancillary services including, but not limited to, directory assistance, 911/E911, operator call termination (busy line interrupt and verify), 800/888, LIDB, and information services requiring special billing will be exchanged and charged in accordance with the appropriate tariffs, local or switched access.

CMRS Provider agrees that it shall not use the services provided by Carrier under this Agreement for the transport and termination of non-local wireless traffic. Any use of the services for non-local traffic shall constitute a breach of this Agreement and, with respect to such improper use, in addition to any other remedies available, Carrier shall be entitled to recover the charges applicable to such traffic for the entire period of misuse.

For billing purposes, if either Party is unable to classify on an automated basis traffic the local wireless traffic delivered by CMRS Provider as intrastate or interstate, CMRS Provider will provide Carrier with a Percent Interstate Use (PIU) factor, which represents the estimated interstate portion of intraMTA traffic delivered by CMRS Provider. The PIU factor will be provided and updated on a semi-annual basis to commence six (6) months after Commission approval of this Agreement.

6. Local Transport and Termination Rate. CMRS Provider and Carrier shall reciprocally and symmetrically compensate one another for wireless local traffic terminated to their end users. The rate(s) for the termination and transport of such traffic are as set forth in Exhibit A attached hereto. Carrier will be responsible for measuring the total monthly minutes of use terminating into its network from CMRS Provider's network. Measured usage begins when CMRS Provider's mobile switching office is signaled by the terminating end office that the call has been answered. Measured usage ends upon recognition by the mobile

switching office of disconnection by the earlier of the Carrier's customer or the disconnection signal from the terminating end office. Carrier will only charge CMRS Provider for actual minutes of use and/or fractions thereof of completed calls. Minutes of use will be aggregated at the end of the billing cycle and rounded to the nearest whole minute.

7. Transit Traffic Rates. For transiting local traffic, the applicable local transit rate applies to the originating Party per Exhibit A attached.

8. Reciprocal Compensation Credit. The monthly minutes of use terminated into CMRS Provider's network from Carrier's network for purposes of this Agreement, which will determine the reciprocal compensation credit due CMRS Provider, will be calculated using the formula set forth in Exhibit A.

The resulting number shall be multiplied by the local transport and termination rate to determine the monthly reciprocal compensation credit. The reciprocal compensation credit for the local transport and termination will appear on the monthly bill as a credit against amounts due and payable from CMRS Provider to Carrier.

9. Billing and Collection Fees. CMRS Provider will only bear the portion of billing and collecting fees that are associated with wireless traffic transport and termination to its subscribers. This will apply to billing and collection costs incurred by the Carrier directly or indirectly. For the purpose of this Agreement, CMRS Provider will bear cost for billing and collection services in order for the Carrier to render an accurate bill in an amount not to exceed the percentage used to calculate the reciprocal compensation credit to CMRS Provider per Exhibit A of total direct or indirect billing and collection costs incurred by the Carrier. Billing and collection arrangements entered into by CMRS Provider or the Carrier with any intermediaries will be addressed separately and are not part of this Agreement.

10. Term. Subject to the termination provisions contained in this Agreement, the term of this Agreement shall be one (1) year from the effective date and shall continue in effect for consecutive one (1) year terms until either Party gives the other Party at least sixty (60) days written notice of termination, which termination shall be effective at the end of the notice period.

11. Termination Upon Default. Either Party may terminate this Agreement in whole or in part in the event of a default by the other Party, provided however, that the non-defaulting Party notifies the defaulting Party in writing of the alleged default and that the defaulting Party does not cure the alleged default within thirty (30) calendar days of receipt of written notice thereof.

12. Liability Upon Termination. Termination of this Agreement, or any part hereof, for any cause shall not release either Party from any liability which at the time of termination had already accrued to the other Party or which thereafter accrues in any respect for any act or omission occurring prior to the termination relating to an obligation which is expressly stated in this Agreement. The Parties' obligations under this Agreement which by their nature are intended to continue beyond the termination or expiration of this Agreement shall survive the termination of this Agreement.

13. General Responsibilities of Parties. Each Party is responsible to provide facilities within its network which are necessary for routing and terminating traffic from the other Party's network.

14. Assignments, Successors and Assignees. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary contained herein, this Agreement shall be binding upon and inure to the benefit of the Parties hereto, and their successors and assignees.

15. Force Majeure. Neither Party shall be liable for any delay or failure in performance of any part of this Agreement from any cause beyond its control, including, without limitation, acts of nature, acts of civil or military authority, government regulations, embargoes, epidemics, terrorist acts, riots, insurrections, fires, explosions, earthquakes, nuclear accidents, floods, power blackouts, other major environmental disturbances or unusually severe weather conditions (collectively, a "Force Majeure Event").

16. No Third Party Beneficiaries. This Agreement does not provide and shall not be construed to provide third parties with any remedy, claim, liability, reimbursement, cause of action, or other privilege.

17. Notices. Notices given by one Party to the other Party under this Agreement shall be in writing to the addresses of the Parties set forth above and shall be (i) delivered personally; (ii) delivered by express delivery service; (iii) mailed, certified mail or first class U.S. mail postage prepaid, return receipt requested; or (iv) delivered by telecopy.

18. Governing Law. For all claims under this Agreement that are based upon issues within the jurisdiction of the FCC, the Parties agree that remedies for such claims shall be governed by the FCC and the Communications Act of 1934, as amended. For all claims under this Agreement that are based upon issues within the jurisdiction of the State Public Utilities Commission, the parties agree that the jurisdiction for all such claims shall be with such Commission, and the remedy for such claims shall be as provided for by such Commission. In all other respects, this Agreement shall be governed by the domestic laws of the state of South Dakota without reference to conflict of law provisions.

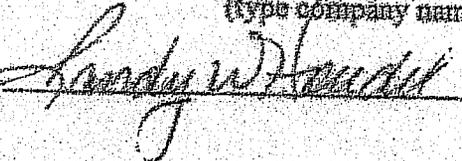
19. Entire Agreement. This Agreement constitutes the entire agreement between the Parties and supersedes all prior oral or written agreements, representations, statements, negotiations, understandings, proposals and undertakings with respect to the subject matter hereof.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Parties hereto have caused this Agreement to be executed as of this 14th day of December, 1999.

"CMRS Provider" Globe License L.L.C.
(type company name)

By: 

"Carrier" Venture Communications, Inc.
(type company name)

By: 

Exchange Lines	MOU Rate
Accent Communications	1,933 \$0.028
Amour Telephone Company	692 \$0.038
Bain Telecom Cooperative	1,577 \$0.028
Barstow Municipal Telephone Company	1,190 \$0.033
Brookwater Camistota Independent	965 \$0.033
Brookings Telephone	14,424 \$0.028
Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe Tele. Authority	2,824 \$0.028
East Plains Telecom, Inc.	1,127 \$0.033
Fair Municipal Telephone	368 \$0.050
Fort Randall Telephone	5,865 \$0.028
Golden West Telecom. Cooperative, Inc.	14,403 \$0.028
Hanson Communications, Inc.	1,019 \$0.033
Hanson County Telephone Company	519 \$0.038
Husband Communications	1,610 \$0.028
Interstate Telecommunications Cooperative	14,764 \$0.028
James Valley Cooperative Telephone	2,126 \$0.028
Jellison Telephone Company	525 \$0.038
Kadoka Telephone Company	600 \$0.028
Kennecott Telephone Company	750 \$0.038
McCook Cooperative Telephone Company	615 \$0.033
Mustate Telephone Company	2,981 \$0.028
Nebraska Telecommunications Company	2,482 \$0.028
McCook Telephone Company	546 \$0.038
Roberts County Telephone Coop.	448 \$0.050
RC Communications	1,428 \$0.033
Saffron Telephone Cooperative	2,613 \$0.028
Saffron, Inc.	2,449 \$0.028
Sage Valley Telephone Company	5,586 \$0.028
Sage Valley Telecom Cooperative, Inc.	4,385 \$0.028
Sandwich Properties, Inc.	1,560 \$0.028
Sandwich Telecom, Inc.	2,301 \$0.028
Stoughton-Grandburg Telephone Company	714 \$0.038
Stony Buttes Telephone Cooperative, Inc.	4,082 \$0.028
Ta County Mutual Telephone Company	443 \$0.050
Union Telephone Company	1,575 \$0.028
Union Telecommunications Coop. Assn.	1,385 \$0.028
Utter Cable & Satellite	1,601 \$0.028
Venture Communications, Inc.	7,106 \$0.028
Winn Telephone Company	17,919 \$0.028
West River Cooperative-Discn	1,589 \$0.028
West River Telecom-Hazan	724 \$0.038
Western Telephone Company	1,102 \$0.033

"Exhibit A"

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-TRANSIT TRAFFIC RATE

\$0.0005 per MOU per route mile

- RECIPROCAL COMPENSATION CREDIT - CALCULATION

Multiply the total monthly local minutes of use of wireless traffic delivered from CMRS Provider's network for termination into Carrier's network by a factor of 0.17.

South Dakota Public Utilities Commission
WEEKLY FILINGS
For the Period of March 2, 2000 through March 8, 2000

If you need a complete copy of a filing faxed, overnight expressed, or mailed to you, please contact
Delaine Kolbo within five business days of this filing.
Phone: 605-773-3705 Fax: 605-773-3809

CONSUMER COMPLAINTS

CT00-045 In the Matter of the Complaint filed by Ralph C. Campbell, Watertown, South Dakota, against OLS, Inc. Regarding Switching Telecommunications Services Through Deceptive Tactics.

On February 22, 2000, a formal complaint was received from Ralph C. Campbell indicating that he received a deceptive telemarketing call. As a result of this call, the Complainant's telecommunications service was switched to OLS. As a resolution the Complainant is seeking \$1000 on behalf of all parties who were slammed.

Staff Analyst: Leni Healy
Staff Attorney: Karen Cremer
Date Docketed: 03/07/00
Intervention Date: NA

ELECTRIC

EL00-006 In the Matter of the Application of MidAmerican Energy Company for Determinations Pursuant to Section 32(k)(2)(A) of the Public Utility Holding Company Act.

Under Section 32(k)(1) of Public Utilities Holding Company Act, an electric utility may not enter into a contract to purchase electric energy at wholesale from an exempt wholesale generator if that exempt wholesale generator is an affiliate or associated company of the electric utility unless the South Dakota Public Utilities Commission makes certain determinations as required by the Act. MidAmerican Energy Company seeks such a determination from the Commission with regard to its proposal to purchase power from Cordova Energy Center, an affiliate of MidAmerican.

Staff Analyst: Michele Farris
Staff Attorney: Camron Hoseck
Date Docketed: 03/02/00
Intervention deadline: 03/24/00

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

- TC00-020 In the Matter of the Filing by South Dakota Independent Telephone Coalition for Approval of Reciprocal Transport and Termination Agreement between G.C.C. License L.L.C. and Accent Communications, Inc.
- TC00-021 In the Matter of the Filing by South Dakota Independent Telephone Coalition for Approval of Reciprocal Transport and Termination Agreement between G.C.C. License L.L.C. and Armour Independent Telephone Company.
- TC00-022 In the Matter of the Filing by South Dakota Independent Telephone Coalition for Approval of Reciprocal Transport and Termination Agreement between G.C.C. License L.L.C. and Baltic Telecom Cooperative.
- TC00-023 In the Matter of the Filing by South Dakota Independent Telephone Coalition for Approval of Reciprocal Transport and Termination Agreement between G.C.C. License L.L.C. and Beresford Municipal Telephone Company.
- TC00-024 In the Matter of the Filing by South Dakota Independent Telephone Coalition for Approval of Reciprocal Transport and Termination Agreement between G.C.C. License L.L.C. and Bridgewater-Canistota Independent Telephone Company.
- TC00-025 In the Matter of the Filing by South Dakota Independent Telephone Coalition for Approval of Reciprocal Transport and Termination Agreement between G.C.C. License L.L.C. and City of Faith Telephone Company.
- TC00-026 In the Matter of the Filing by South Dakota Independent Telephone Coalition for Approval of Reciprocal Transport and Termination Agreement between G.C.C. License L.L.C. and East Plains Telecom, Inc.
- TC00-027 In the Matter of the Filing by South Dakota Independent Telephone Coalition for Approval of Reciprocal Transport and Termination Agreement between G.C.C. License L.L.C. and Fort Randall Telephone Company.
- TC00-028 In the Matter of the Filing by South Dakota Independent Telephone Coalition for Approval of Reciprocal Transport and Termination Agreement between G.C.C. License L.L.C. and Golden West Telecommunications Cooperative, Inc.
- TC00-029 In the Matter of the Filing by South Dakota Independent Telephone Coalition for Approval of Reciprocal Transport and Termination Agreement between G.C.C. License L.L.C. and Hanson Communications, Inc.

- TC00-030** In the Matter of the Filing by South Dakota Independent Telephone Coalition for Approval of Reciprocal Transport and Termination Agreement between G.C.C. License L.L.C. and Hanson County Telephone Company.
- TC00-031** In the Matter of the Filing by South Dakota Independent Telephone Coalition for Approval of Reciprocal Transport and Termination Agreement between G.C.C. License L.L.C. and Heartland Communications, Inc.
- TC00-032** In the Matter of the Filing by South Dakota Independent Telephone Coalition for Approval of Reciprocal Transport and Termination Agreement between G.C.C. License L.L.C. and Interstate Telecommunications Cooperative, Inc.
- TC00-033** In the Matter of the Filing by South Dakota Independent Telephone Coalition for Approval of Reciprocal Transport and Termination Agreement between G.C.C. License L.L.C. and James Valley Cooperative Telephone Company.
- TC00-034** In the Matter of the Filing by South Dakota Independent Telephone Coalition for Approval of Reciprocal Transport and Termination Agreement between G.C.C. License L.L.C. and Jefferson Telephone Company.
- TC00-035** In the Matter of the Filing by South Dakota Independent Telephone Coalition for Approval of Reciprocal Transport and Termination Agreement between G.C.C. License L.L.C. and Kadoka Telephone Company.
- TC00-036** In the Matter of the Filing by South Dakota Independent Telephone Coalition for Approval of Reciprocal Transport and Termination Agreement between G.C.C. License L.L.C. and Kennebec Telephone Company.
- TC00-037** In the Matter of the Filing by South Dakota Independent Telephone Coalition for Approval of Reciprocal Transport and Termination Agreement between G.C.C. License L.L.C. and McCook Cooperative Telephone Company.
- TC00-038** In the Matter of the Filing by South Dakota Independent Telephone Coalition for Approval of Reciprocal Transport and Termination Agreement between G.C.C. License L.L.C. and Midstate Telephone Company.
- TC00-039** In the Matter of the Filing by South Dakota Independent Telephone Coalition for Approval of Reciprocal Transport and Termination Agreement between G.C.C. License L.L.C. and Mount Rushmore Telephone Company.

- TC00-040 In the Matter of the Filing by South Dakota Independent Telephone Coalition for Approval of Reciprocal Transport and Termination Agreement between G.C.C. License L.L.C. and RC Communications, Inc.
- TC00-041 In the Matter of the Filing by South Dakota Independent Telephone Coalition for Approval of Reciprocal Transport and Termination Agreement between G.C.C. License L.L.C. and Roberts County Telephone Cooperative Association.
- TC00-042 In the Matter of the Filing by South Dakota Independent Telephone Coalition for Approval of Reciprocal Transport and Termination Agreement between G.C.C. License L.L.C. and Sanborn Telephone Cooperative.
- TC00-043 In the Matter of the Filing by South Dakota Independent Telephone Coalition for Approval of Reciprocal Transport and Termination Agreement between G.C.C. License L.L.C. and Sancom, Inc.
- TC00-044 In the Matter of the Filing by South Dakota Independent Telephone Coalition for Approval of Reciprocal Transport and Termination Agreement between G.C.C. License L.L.C. and Sioux Valley Telephone Company.
- TC00-045 In the Matter of the Filing by South Dakota Independent Telephone Coalition for Approval of Reciprocal Transport and Termination Agreement between G.C.C. License L.L.C. and Splitrock Properties, Inc.
- TC00-046 In the Matter of the Filing by South Dakota Independent Telephone Coalition for Approval of Reciprocal Transport and Termination Agreement between G.C.C. License L.L.C. and Splitrock Telecom Cooperative, Inc.
- TC00-047 In the Matter of the Filing by South Dakota Independent Telephone Coalition for Approval of Reciprocal Transport and Termination Agreement between G.C.C. License L.L.C. and Stateline Telecommunications, Inc.
- TC00-048 In the Matter of the Filing by South Dakota Independent Telephone Coalition for Approval of Reciprocal Transport and Termination Agreement between G.C.C. License L.L.C. and Stockholm-Strandburg Telephone Company.
- TC00-049 In the Matter of the Filing by South Dakota Independent Telephone Coalition for Approval of Reciprocal Transport and Termination Agreement between G.C.C. License L.L.C. and Sully Buttes Telephone Cooperative, Inc.

- TC00-050** In the Matter of the Filing by South Dakota Independent Telephone Coalition for Approval of Reciprocal Transport and Termination Agreement between G.C.C. License L.L.C. and Union Telephone Company.
- TC00-051** In the Matter of the Filing by South Dakota Independent Telephone Coalition for Approval of Reciprocal Transport and Termination Agreement between G.C.C. License L.L.C. and Valley Cable & Satellite Communications, Inc.
- TC00-052** In the Matter of the Filing by South Dakota Independent Telephone Coalition for Approval of Reciprocal Transport and Termination Agreement between G.C.C. License L.L.C. and Valley Telecommunications Cooperative Association.
- TC00-053** In the Matter of the Filing by South Dakota Independent Telephone Coalition for Approval of Reciprocal Transport and Termination Agreement between G.C.C. License L.L.C. and Venture Communications, Inc.
- TC00-054** In the Matter of the Filing by South Dakota Independent Telephone Coalition for Approval of Reciprocal Transport and Termination Agreement between G.C.C. License L.L.C. and Vivian Telephone Company d/b/a Golden West Communications, Inc.
- TC00-055** In the Matter of the Filing by South Dakota Independent Telephone Coalition for Approval of Reciprocal Transport and Termination Agreement between G.C.C. License L.L.C. and West River Cooperative Telephone Company.
- TC00-056** In the Matter of the Filing by South Dakota Independent Telephone Coalition for Approval of Reciprocal Transport and Termination Agreement between G.C.C. License L.L.C. and Western Telephone Company.

Description for TC00-020 thru TC00-056

The above companies have each filed a reciprocal transport and termination agreement which was negotiated and entered into between them and GCC License L.L.C. which is an affiliate of Western Wireless Corporation. Commission approval is sought pursuant to 46 U.S.C. Section 252(e).

Staff Attorney: Camron Hoseck
Date Filed: 03/02/00
Intervention Deadline: 03/24/00

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You may subscribe or unsubscribe to the PUC mailing lists at <http://www.state.sd.us/puc/>

South Dakota Public Utilities Commission

State Capitol Building, 500 East Capitol Avenue, Pierre, South Dakota 57501-5070



March 30, 2000

William Bullard, Jr.
Executive Director
Public Utilities Commission
500 E. Capitol Avenue
Pierre, SD 57501

RE: In the Matter of the Reciprocal Transport and Termination Agreements
TC00-020 through TC00-056, Inclusive

Dear Mr. Bullard:

Please consider this to be the Staff analysis and recommendation in the filing of these reciprocal transport and termination agreements.

Based upon the representation of Richard Coit on behalf of SDITC, that all the agreements are identical in their terms and conditions, I will therefore direct my comments to these agreements in such a manner.

It is to be noted that the effective date of the agreement is January 1, 1999. These were not tendered to this Commission until March 2, 2000, approximately a year and two months after the effective date. It is submitted that giving the agreements a retroactive effect would be contrary to the public interest for a couple of reasons. First, under the provisions of 47 U.S.C. § 252 (e) (1) the agreement is subject to approval or rejection by this Commission. Therefore, it cannot have any effect until this Commission approves it. Secondly, the agreements themselves bear signature dates of September, October, November or December 1999. On page 2, the second full paragraph, the agreement recites that exhibit A sets the rates for the local transport and termination. To adopt the agreements whether effective on the "effective date" of January 1, 1999, or the signature date of either September or December of 1999, would be to effect retroactive rate making. The public interest is not served when parties enter into agreements that seek to impose rates during a time period in which a valid contract setting those rates does not exist.

It should further be pointed out that the agreement with Ft. Randall Telephone Company TC00-027, is incomplete and appears to have a copying error. My position is based upon the assumption that a valid contract exists here and that it is the same as the others which were filed.

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William Bullard, Jr.

March 30, 2000

Page 2

Accordingly, Staff would make the following recommendation, I would recommend that the agreements be approved in their totality but that there be an effective date as of the date of the order approving them pursuant to 47 U.S.C. § 252 (e) (1).

Please be advised, the standard of care exercised in reviewing these agreements is that, from this point of view, they are entered into by two parties who are amply equipped to look out for their own interests and enter into arms-length transactions.

Very truly yours,



Cameron Hoseck
Staff Attorney

CH/mrg
cc: Rich Colt, SDITC
Gene DeJordy, Western Wireless Corporation

Richard D. Coit
Executive Director
rcoit@sd.cybernet.net

April 4, 2000

RECEIVED

APR 04 2000

William Bullard, Jr., Executive Director
South Dakota Public Utilities Commission
500 East Capitol Ave.
State Capitol Building
Pierre, SD 57501

SOUTH DAKOTA PUBLIC
UTILITIES COMMISSION

RE: In the Matter of the Reciprocal Transport and Termination Agreements
Dockets TC00-020 through TC00-056

Dear Mr. Bullard:

This letter is filed by SDITC on behalf of its member companies as a response to the letter of Staff Attorney Cameron Hoseck filed in this matter, dated March 30, 2000.

Mr. Hoseck first raises as a concern the fact that the Reciprocal Transport and Termination Agreements as filed reference an effective date of January 1, 1999. In response, SDITC notes that this is merely considered the effective date agreed upon between the parties and should not be interpreted to mean that the parties at this time consider the agreements legally effective and binding, prior to PUC approval. The parties understand that these agreements are subject to the Commission review and approval process prescribed under 47 U.S.C. § 252(e).

SDITC does not agree with Mr. Hoseck's claim that the Commission cannot permit the parties to make these agreements effective, upon approval, back to January 1, 1999. The earlier effective date is necessary because for several years no reciprocal compensation agreements have been in place to allow for any compensation between the parties relating to terminated wireless traffic. The earlier date allows for payment of at least a portion of the compensation due for past terminated traffic. It should also be noted that the parties actually commenced the negotiations leading to these filed agreements in the spring of 1998. The parties were unable to resolve all issues until the fall of 1999. These prolonged negotiations also made it necessary to pre-date the agreements.

Mr. Hoseck suggests that if the Commission approves these agreements with the effective date of January 1, 1999, that it will engage itself in retroactive ratemaking. SDITC disagrees. The Commission is charged under 47 U.S.C. § 252(e)(2)(A) with reviewing negotiated agreements only to determine whether they are nondiscriminatory and whether they are consistent with the

public interest, convenience and necessity. The review process established for state commissions under this section does not rise to the level of an actual ratemaking proceeding and accordingly, there should be no concerns about retroactive ratemaking. Contrary to what is suggested by Mr. Hoseck, the Commission is under no legal obligation to reject the effective date of January 1, 1999.

The parties have agreed between themselves, for compensation purposes, to consider the agreements effective as of an earlier date than they were signed. Why should the Commission be prevented from honoring this understanding between the parties? SDITC member companies consider the January 1, 1999 effective date to be an important issue and disapproval of such effective date by this Commission will throw the agreements back into the negotiation process. SDITC urges the Commission to accept the effective date established by the parties.

In his letter, Mr. Hoseck also references the agreement filed in Docket TC00-027, involving Ft. Randall Telephone Company, noting that it is incomplete and contains a copying error. To address these concerns, a new copy that is true and correct is enclosed herewith.

Sincerely,



Richard D. Coit
Executive Director and General Counsel

cc: Staff Attorney Cameron Hoseck

RDC/ma
encs.

South Dakota Public Utilities Commission

State Capitol Building, 500 East Capitol Avenue, Pierre, South Dakota 57501-5070



April 7, 2000

Mr. William Bullard, Jr.
Executive Director
South Dakota Public Utilities Commission
500 East Capitol
Pierre, SD 57501

Re: In the Matter of the Reciprocal Transport
and Termination Agreements
Dockets TC00-020 through TC00-056, inclusive

Dear Mr. Bullard:

Please consider this to be Staff's Rebuttal to SDITC's response of April 4, 2000, to the Staff Analysis and Recommendation in these dockets.

SDITC takes the position with regard to the retroactive rate making objection that:

"The earlier date allows for payment of at least a portion of the compensation due for past terminated traffic." (emphasis supplied).

This rationale falls within the classic definition of retroactive rate making:

Generally, retroactive rate making occurs when a utility is permitted to recover an additional charge for past losses, or when a utility is required to refund revenues collected pursuant to its lawfully established rates.

South Central Bell Telephone Company v. Louisiana Public Service Commission,
585 So 2d 1258 (LA 1992) (decision without published opinions) CCH Utilities Law
Reports - State ¶ 26, 169.

By approving the agreements, the Commission is permitting the implementation of rates and in that sense is involved in the rate making process. The corollary is that without Commission approval of the agreed-upon rates, they would not be charged.

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Kerith Stronge
Robynne Sue Wood

Retrospective rate making is not consistent with the public interest. It can reflect takings, arbitrary and capricious acts, discrimination and a frustration of the basic notice requirements of due process of law.

Staff adheres to its position in this matter and its suggested effective date for the agreement and all that it entails.

Very truly yours,



Cameron Hoseck
Staff Attorney

CH:dk

cc: Mr. Richard D. Colt
Mr. Gene DeJordy

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

IN THE MATTER OF THE FILING BY SOUTH)	ORDER APPROVING
DAKOTA INDEPENDENT TELEPHONE)	AGREEMENT
COALITION FOR APPROVAL OF A)	
RECIPROCAL TRANSPORT AND)	TC00-053
TERMINATION AGREEMENT BETWEEN G.C.C)	
LICENSE L.L.C. AND VENTURE)	
COMMUNICATIONS, INC.)	

On March 2, 2000, the South Dakota Independent Telephone Coalition on behalf of Venture Communications, Inc. (Venture) filed for approval by the South Dakota Public Utilities Commission (Commission) a reciprocal transport and termination agreement between G.C.C. License L.L.C. (GCC) and Venture. The agreement had an effective date of January 1, 1999.

On March 9, 2000, the Commission electronically transmitted notice of this filing to interested individuals and entities. The notice stated that any person wishing to intervene had until March 24, 2000, to do so. No intervention was sought. Commission Staff filed comments.

At its duly noticed May 17, 2000, meeting, the Commission considered whether to approve the agreement between GCC and Venture. Commission Staff recommended approval with an effective date as of the date of an Order approving the agreement.

The Commission has jurisdiction over this matter pursuant to SDCL Chapter 49-31, and the Federal Telecommunications Act of 1996. In accordance with 47 U.S.C. § 252(e)(2), the Commission found that the agreement does not discriminate against a telecommunications carrier that is not a party to the agreement and the agreement is consistent with the public interest, convenience, and necessity. The Commission unanimously voted to approve the agreement with an effective date as of the date of this Order. It is therefore

ORDERED, that the Commission approves the agreement effective as of the date of this Order

Dated at Pierre, South Dakota, this 17th day of May, 2000.

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE	
The undersigned hereby certifies that this document has been served today upon all parties of record in this matter as listed on the docket service list, by facsimile or by first class mail, in properly addressed envelopes with charges prepaid thereon.	
By	<u>William K. Kelle</u>
Date	<u>5/17/00</u>
OFFICIAL SEAL	

BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION:

James A. Burg
JAMES A. BURG, Chairman

Pam Nelson
PAM NELSON, Commissioner

Laska Schoenfeldee
LASKA SCHOENFELDEE, Commissioner