

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

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION OF)	ORDER GRANTING
ESSEX COMMUNICATIONS, INC. D/B/A ELEC)	CERTIFICATE OF
COMMUNICATIONS FOR A CERTIFICATE OF)	AUTHORITY
AUTHORITY TO PROVIDE INTEREXCHANGE)	
TELECOMMUNICATIONS SERVICES AND)	TC00-121
LOCAL EXCHANGE SERVICES IN SOUTH)	
DAKOTA)	

On August 9, 2000, the Public Utilities Commission (Commission) received an application for a certificate of authority from Essex Communications, Inc. d/b/a eLEC Communications (Essex).

Essex proposes to offer inbound and outbound resold long distance telecommunications service, as well as facilities-based local exchange services to residential and business customers in South Dakota. A proposed tariff was filed by Essex.

On August 10, 2000, the Commission electronically transmitted notice of the filing and the intervention deadline of August 25, 2000, to interested individuals and entities. No petitions to intervene or comments were filed and at its regularly scheduled January 4, 2001, meeting, the Commission considered Essex'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. Commission Staff further recommended a waiver of ARSD 20:10:24:02(10) and ARSD 20:10:32:03(14).

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 Essex has met the legal requirements established for the granting of a certificate of authority. Essex 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. Further, the Commission finds that there is good cause to waive subparagraph (10) of ARSD 20:10:24:02 and subparagraph (14) of ARSD 20:10:32:03.

The Commission approves Essex'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 Essex 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 Essex choose to provide local exchange services statewide, with respect to rural telephone companies, Essex 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 Essex'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 Essex shall file informational copies of tariff changes with the Commission as the changes occur; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that the Commission shall authorize Essex to offer its local exchange services in South Dakota, except in those areas served by a rural telephone company; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that the Commission finds good cause to waive subparagraph (10) of ARSD 20:10:24:02 and subparagraph (14) of ARSD 20:10:32:03.

Dated at Pierre, South Dakota, this 10th day of January, 2001.

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> Allaine Kalbo </u>
Date:	<u> 1/12/01 </u>
(OFFICIAL SEAL)	

BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION:

 James A. Burg
JAMES A. BURG, Chairman

 Pam Nelson
PAM NELSON, Commissioner

 Laska Schoenfelder
LASKA SCHOENFELDER, Commissioner