

-BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF UTAH-

In the Matter of the Miscellaneous Annual)
Telecommunications Competitive Report)
to Legislature)

DOCKET NO. 03-999-02
NOTICE OF TECHNICAL CONFERENCE

ISSUED: March 31, 2003

Please take notice that a Technical Conference in this matter has been scheduled for Tuesday, April 8, 2003 commencing at 9:00 a.m. in Room 427, Heber M. Wells Office Building 160 East 300 South, Salt Lake City, Utah. The purpose of the technical conference is to discuss the eleven issues and recommendations discussed in the Division of Public Utilities March 17th, 2003 memo filed with the Commission. **(Attached)** Any party wishing to participate in the conference by telephone should notify Julie Orchard, Commission Secretary at (801) 530-6713 at least one working day prior to the conference.

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, individuals needing special accommodations (including auxiliary communicative aids and services) during Commission hearings should notify Julie Orchard, Commission Secretary, at 160 East 300 South, Salt Lake City, Utah, 84111, (801) 530-6713, at least three working days prior to the hearing.

DATED at Salt Lake City, Utah, this 31st day of March, 2003.

/s/Julie Orchard
Commission Secretary

GW#33159

-ATTACHMENT-

Memorandum

To: Utah Public Service Commission
From: Division of Public Utilities
Lowell Alt, Director
Ingo Henningsen, Telecommunications Manager
Joni Zenger, Utility Analyst

Date: March 17, 2003

Re: Request for Technical Conference/Annual Report to Legislature

As you are aware, the Division has noted many problems during the past few years in collecting and analyzing data from Utah's telecommunications service providers in preparation of the draft of the Annual Competition Report for the Commission. Many of the problems arise as part of the continually changing environment in the industry. However, other problems arise from improper reporting, unclear definitions, changing boundaries, and a myriad of other issues. The Division has found that, in order to accomplish the ultimate goal of reporting on the state of competition in Utah, a fill-in-the-blank type of Data Request form works best. Our ultimate goal is to refine the definitions and forms to continue to

work for all types of carriers in Utah as changing competition emerges. The Division has listed the primary issues that have either been a problem in the past, or have arisen due to new technologies, Commission orders, etc.

- Boundaries. With new residential pricing flexibility, Qwest has agreed to use AT&T Comcast serving boundaries in those areas that were granted pricing flexibility. Will the companies report line counts by these new boundaries, by the old Qwest wire center boundaries, by political divisions city, county, etc., by zip code, or some other means? There have been many past problems in gathering uniform data and in trying to convert customers by NXX code into a Qwest wire center or county.
- Definitions. We need to agree on a uniform definition for each topic so that the parties understand completely what they are reporting, i.e., DS0s vs. DS1s, T-1s, how much of the pipe is used, special exchange vs. private exchange, etc. Attached to this memo please find last year's data request that was sent to all parties. Our desire is to clarify these definitions so that there is no ambiguity in the request sent to telecommunications corporations.
- Revenues. There have been several changes in the way companies report revenues--not separating intrastate from interstate, what is grouped in the category of "Other," restating revenues, Qwest's different form of revenues. We need a uniform methodology. Part of this problem is the timing of the report. The Division must provide current data to the Commission including revenues from the period of January 1 through June 30 of each year. The responses need to be back to the Division by July 15 in order for the Division to analyze and compile the data and present the draft report to the Commission by August. Most companies are aware of the tight time frame, but knowing this occurs each and every year, the person responsible for answering this part of the data request, needs to be reminded and needs to use the same accounting methods.
- UNE and UNE-P. In the past, companies have primarily only reported retail level lines. To provide a clear picture of the extent and type of competition, the report needs to contain counts of retail, resold/wholesale, UNE-P, and line sharing lines, as well as a count of the non-UNE-P UNEs that are leased. We need to begin gathering this type of data, now that the regulatory environment has changed.
- Changes in company contact information. Each year it is an immense task trying to track down the new contact person, address, email, etc. for each company. Many times the person that reported lines last year is no longer with the company. A new person is unaware of the same reporting methodology or definitions. In addition, there is often a separate person reporting line counts and a different person reporting revenues and capital expenditures. Is there a way for the companies to notify the Division of changes each year? When we are under tight deadlines, by the time the response is returned undeliverable and we track down the new contact, there is limited time to get us the data.
- Broadband. We need to start collecting data on broadband. For example, how many customers subscribe to broadband? How many have broadband available to them?
- Wireless. As wireless competition with wireline services increases, we need to ask wireless carriers to report numbers served to determine wireless' impact on the market.
- Incorrect responses. The Division usually has to make a second data request, as almost always, some companies report a gross mistake somewhere in their response. If even one large company errs, this distorts the entire analysis. We need to find a way for each company to review their response by several people and verify all information that appears irregular or significantly different from the previous year (before it is sent to the Division).
- Uniformity. It is difficult to make a three-year comparison of data when we have apples and oranges to compare. In all aspects of the report, we need uniform responses that can be compared to previous years' data.
- Timeliness. I previously mentioned the difficulty of obtaining information through June, analyzing it, and writing the report by August. Many companies do not provide their data responses on time, and the Division is continually scrambling to change entire total number sets and calculations the day before the draft is due. We need to remind companies to have their responses on time, not in August!
- Other items to report. There may be several other items to include in the 2003 Report that we need to consider or that others may have thought of that we have overlooked.

Recommendation:

The Division believes that a Technical Conference should be held to discuss the issues above related to the upcoming 2003 report, uniform reporting methods, and other items of concern. The Division recommends the Technical Conference include all CLECs, DLECs, rural ILECs, and Qwest and that it involve all parties involved in the reporting process

(including attorneys and the person/s who prepare the data responses). This will afford the parties an opportunity to adhere to a uniform methodology, according to the Commission's requirements, and will alleviate future problems.