

natural and logical procedural response to this allegation would be to *stay* the Section 271 proceeding entirely and thoroughly investigate the claim. Instead, to Qwest's benefit, the Administrative Law Judge is allowing the two dockets to proceed on parallel tracks, with a clear directive that all information uncovered in the Section 252(e) proceeding (Phase A) be available to the Commission in the Section 271 docket. This approach is logical and fair. To do otherwise would: (1) breach commitments made by Qwest, Staff and the Hearing Division to procedures that now allow information to flow between the two dockets; (2) substantially weaken the credibility of the Commission's decision in the Section 271 docket; and (3) not advance the true interests of Arizona consumers.

1. Commitments to Parallel Track Proceedings

The Section 252(e) docket (RT-00000F-02-0271) was opened on April 8, 2002. On April 18, 2002, the Administrative law Judge issued a Procedural Order in the Section 271 docket and in that order discussed the relationship between the two dockets. The following excerpt from that procedural order reflects both AT&T's concerns and the Administrative Law Judge's response:

AT&T asserts that what is important is that the determination of whether Qwest violated the Act be made in time to raise it in the public interest phase of the 271 proceeding. Second, AT&T is concerned that having the documents filed in a separate docket would complicate the use of evidence, findings and conclusions of a proprietary nature in that docket in the 271 proceeding . . . We agree that Qwest's compliance with the Act, including Section 252(e), is relevant to our deliberations with respect to Section 271. It is not material whether our investigation takes place in the 271 docket or a separate docket.

April 18, 2002 Order, p. 2. The ALJ concluded that the "investigation would not occur on any different time schedule if it were to be conducted under the aegis of the Section 271 docket" and ordered "that any evidence, findings or conclusions arising out of

Docket No. RT-00000F-02-0271, may be cited when relevant to our consideration of Qwest's compliance with Section 271 of the Act or any other relevant proceeding."

April 18, 2002 Order, p. 3. Following receipt of April 18, 2002 procedural order, participants in the two dockets clearly anticipated parallel proceedings with findings and disclosures in the Section 252(e) docket available for consideration and possible use in the public interest portion of the Section 271 proceeding.

On April 26, 2002, Qwest filed a Motion for an Extension of Procedural Schedule in the Section 252(e) docket, seeking additional time to negotiate a protective order with Staff and intervenors. A critical issue addressed in the negotiated Protective Order was whether confidential information used in the Section 252(e) proceeding could be used by parties subject to the Protective Order in the Section 271 proceeding. Qwest agreed to this condition, and the Protective order so stated:

Parties who are subject to and have complied with the terms of this Protective Order and who are subject to and have complied with the Protective Order on Docket T-00000A-97A-97-0238, or have executed a protective agreement in that docket, may refer to portions of the confidential agreements provided by Qwest to the Commission, or other confidential documents filed in this docket, in Docket T-00000A-97-0238, and any subsequent appeal or proceeding before the FCC consistent with the terms of this Protective Order.

May 8, 2002, Protective Order p. 2. The parties, the Administrative Law Judge, and even Qwest anticipated that information uncovered during the course of the Section 252(e) docket would be made available and used in the Section 271 docket. Qwest agreed to this arrangement. Parties relied on the Protective Order's assurance that the dockets would be separate but interconnected to the extent information could freely flow

from one to the other. Objections to a separate 252(e) docket were addressed, in part, by this “shared information” assurance.

Once the Protective Order was negotiated and issued, the Section 252(e) docket proceeded with Qwest filing the previously undisclosed interconnection agreements. Intervenors then commented on those agreements and Qwest responded to the intervenor comments. Staff filed its report on June 7, 2002. Throughout this process, AT&T continued to argue that the Section 271 public interest docket was the appropriate forum to conduct the investigation and that the record compiled in the two dockets should be consolidated.¹

The interconnected nature of these two dockets was again reaffirmed by the Administrative Law judge in the Procedural Order issued on July 9, 2002:

Based on the comments and arguments of the parties, a hearing in the Section 252 docket is required to address, at a minimum, the issues of the appropriateness of, and reasons for, Qwest’s failure to file the agreements and the appropriate amounts of any fines. Due to the inter-relationship between the Section 252 proceeding and the Section 271 issues, it may be beneficial to consolidate the two dockets for the purpose of hearing. Staff’s on-going investigation into the effect of the unfiled agreements, especially those containing prohibitions on participating in the 271 proceeding, will assist in the determination on whether the matters should be consolidated.

July 9, 2002 Order, p. 4. At each step in the development of the separate Section 252(e) docket, parties and Staff received assurances that information discovered in the Section 252(e) docket will be equally available in the Section 271 docket. Consistent with this understanding, the Administrative Law Judge ordered the parties to file comments in the

¹ In a letter to Commissioner Marc Spitzer dated June 26, 2002, and copied to the docket service list, AT&T submitted the following: “The Section 271 proceeding is the proper forum to conduct such investigation. If an investigation i[s] conducted in the section 252(e) proceeding, the Commission must recognize the relationship between any evidence gathered in the section 252(e) proceeding and the section 271 proceeding. . . . Consolidation of the two proceedings may be appropriate going forward.”

Section 252(e) docket with their “recommendations for the scope of a hearing, the time needed to prepare, whether the Section 271 and Section 252 dockets should be consolidate for the purposes of a hearing and proposed hearing procedures.” July 9, 2002 Procedural Order. In those comments Staff, AT&T and other intervenors all agreed that as a result of the unfiled agreements “additional comment in the public interest phase of the 271 proceeding is also appropriate.” Supplemental Staff Report and Recommendation, p. 11. In other words, Staff and intervenors all generally agreed that the preliminary information gathered in the Section 252(e) docket was relevant to the public interest phase of the Section 271 proceeding.

The history of these parallel track proceedings demonstrates that specific commitments were made by the Commission and the parties regarding shared information and the interconnected nature of the dockets. Every step in the Section 252 docket has reflected concern for how relevant information developed in the Section 252 proceeding would be used in the Section 271 docket. Qwest now asks that the Commission act as if these commitments and procedural protections never existed. AT&T opposes this request. The procedural safeguards were negotiated in good faith by the parties, ordered by the Administrative Law Judge, and were critical to the parties concurrence in a separate Section 252 docket. These safeguards should not now be ignored in favor of a premature decision in the Section 271 docket.

2. The Integrity of the Section 271 Proceeding

Qwest submits in its motion that the Section 271 review in Arizona “has been extraordinary,” recounting four years of work, almost \$70 million dollars in vendor and facilitator fees, and countless workshops. If this is the case, which AT&T does not here

dispute, why – at the end of such an “extraordinary” effort – cut this corner. The Commission would be doing exactly that if it recommends Section 271 relief before all evidence concerning the integrity of the Section 271 process is taken and evaluated. This evidence includes the extent and nature of the unfiled/secret agreement arrangements promoted by Qwest. If the Commission fails to consider and address this evidence in advance of granting Qwest relief, the Section 271 decision will, on the date it is signed, be vulnerable to collateral attack. If, as Qwest asserts, no prejudice was caused by the unfiled agreements, then that finding should be made by the Commission and included as evidence supporting the final Section 271 decision.

Given the resources and time the Commission has already invested in reviewing Qwest’s 271 application, waiting until April or May (as Qwest submits) for the Section 252 proceeding to conclude is reasonable. Even without the Section 252 proceeding, it is likely that Qwest’s application would not be considered by the Commission until Spring of 2003. The public interest portion of the section 271 proceeding has been reopened to address the secret agreements and the integrity of the Arizona Section 271 process. Additionally, other issues are still pending in the Section 271 docket which include: alleged unlawful tariff preferences, indefeasible right of use (“IRUs”), section 272, OSS testing, issues raised by Eschelon Telecom, Inc. in the supplemental workshop (pending Staff report), and the adequacy of a number of performance measurements. Given what is yet to be finished in the Section 271 docket, and the historic change in Commission composition beginning in January 2003, it is unlikely the Section 252 proceeding will delay the Section 271 decision.

3. Consumers Will Not Benefit From A Premature § 271 Decision

Qwest submits that delaying the Section 271 docket by even six months “could cost Arizona consumers tens of millions of dollars.” Motion, p. 6. This is not an accurate portrayal of what Section 271 relief will bring to Arizona. It is Qwest, not consumers, that stands to suffer lost profits if early Section 271 approval is not granted. Local service competitors are on the brink of making a dent in Qwest’s monopoly hold over Arizona residential local service. However, if Qwest can – before competitors even enter the market – tie up the local, long distance, and internet business of its current local service customers, Qwest will reap enormous financial benefits.

Arizona consumers, in contrast, will not be well-served by this outcome. Qwest has publicly announced that it will offer in-state long distance for 10¢ per minute in Arizona once Section 271 approval is granted. That rate, however, is already available from a variety of in-state long distance providers. Consumers will not be greatly benefited by the addition of Qwest to a list of available long distance providers. In contrast, competition in local service will ultimately benefit consumers. Competition will drive price reductions, innovation, and improved customer service for years to come. If Arizona has no significant local service competition, consumers will suffer the harm. Qwest stands to gain much if immediate Section 271 approval is granted. Consumers, however, will suffer long-term harm if approval is granted before local service competition takes hold.

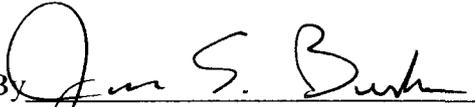
Conclusion

If, as alleged, Qwest has used its monopoly power to enter into secret, unfiled, interconnection agreements, and has through those contracts quieted opposition to its

Section 271 application, that conduct should be fully investigated before Section 271 approval is granted. To the extent this will cause a short delay in Commission consideration of Qwest's Section 271 application, that is the reasonable cost of protecting the integrity of the Commission's decision-making process. It is not, as Qwest has alleged, the Procedural Order that has caused this delay.

Dated this 2nd day of December, 2002.

OSBORN MALEDON, P.A.

By 

Joan S. Burke
2929 N. Central, Suite 2100
Phoenix, AZ 85012
(602) 640-9356
E-mail: jsburke@omlaw.com

AT&T COMMUNICATIONS OF THE
MOUNTAIN STATES, INC.

Richard S. Wolters
1875 Lawrence Street
Suite 1575
Denver, Colorado 80202
Telephone: 303-298-6471
Facsimile: 303-298-6301
E-mail: rwolters@att.com

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that the original and 15 copies of AT&T's Response to Qwest Corporation's Motion to Reconsider Procedural Order were filed this 2nd day of December 2002, with:

Arizona Corporation Commission
Docket Control – Utilities Division
1200 West Washington Street
Phoenix, AZ 85007

and that a copy of the foregoing was hand-delivered this 2nd day of December 2002 to the following:

Maureen A. Scott
Legal Division
ARIZONA CORPORATION COMMISSION
1200 W. Washington St.
Phoenix, AZ 85007

Ernest Johnson, Director
Utilities Division
ARIZONA CORPORATION COMMISSION
1200 West Washington St.
Phoenix, AZ 85007

Lyn Farmer, Chief Administrative Law Judge
Jane Rodda, Administrative Law Judge
Hearing Division
ARIZONA CORPORATION COMMISSION
1200 W. Washington St.
Phoenix, AZ 85007

Caroline Butler
Legal Division
ARIZONA CORPORATION COMMISSION
1200 W. Washington St.
Phoenix, AZ 85007

and that a copy of the foregoing was sent via United States Mail, postage prepaid, this 2nd day of December 2002 to the following:

Andrew D. Crain
QWEST CORPORATION
1081 California Street, Suite 4900
Denver, CO 80202

Mark Brown
QWEST CORPORATION
3033 North 3rd Street, 10th Floor
Phoenix, AZ 85012

Timothy Berg
Theresa Dwyer
FENNEMORE CRAIG
3003 North Central Avenue
Suite 2600
Phoenix, AZ 85012-2913

Eric S. Heath
SPRING COMMUNICATIONS CO.
100 Spear Street, Suite 930
San Francisco, CA 94105

Thomas Campbell
LEWIS & ROCA
40 N. Central Avenue
Phoenix, AZ 85004

Thomas F Dixon
WORLD COM, INC.
707 N. 17th Street #3900
Denver, CO 80202

Scott S. Wakefield
RUCO
1110 West Washington, Suite 220
Phoenix, AZ 85007

Michael Patten
ROSHKA, HEYMAN & DEWULF
400 E. Van Buren, Ste. 900
Phoenix, AZ 85004-3906

Daniel Waggoner
DAVIS, WRIGHT & TREMAINE
2600 Century Square
1501 Fourth Avenue
Seattle, WA 98101

David Kaufman
E.SPIRE COMMUNICATIONS, INC.
343 W. Manhattan Street
Santa Fe, NM 87501

Philip A. Doherty
545 S. Prospect Street, Ste. 22
Burlington, VT 05401

Joyce Hundley
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
Antitrust Division
1401 H Street N.W. #8000
Washington, DC 20530

Raymond S. Heyman
ROSHKA, HEYMAN & DEWULF
400 N. Van Buren, Ste. 800
Phoenix, AZ 85004-3906

Charles Kallenbach
AMERICAN COMMUNICATIONS SVCS,
INC.
131 National Business Parkway
Annapolis Junction, MD 20701

Michael M. Grant
Todd C. Wiley
GALLAGHER & KENNEDY
2575 E. Camelback Road
Phoenix, AZ 85016-9225

Bradley S. Carroll
COX COMMUNICATIONS
20402 North 29th Avenue
Phoenix, AZ 85027-3148

Traci Grundon
DAVIS, WRIGHT & TREMAINE
1300 S.W. Fifth Avenue
Portland, OR 97201

Gregory Hoffman
AT&T
795 Folsom Street, Room 2159
San Francisco, CA 94107-1243

Diane Bacon, Legislative Director
COMMUNICATIONS WORKERS OF
AMERICA
5818 N. 7th St., Ste. 206
Phoenix, AZ 85014-5811

W. Hagood Bellinger
5312 Trowbridge Drive
Dunwoody, GA 30338

Andrew O. Isar
TELECOMMUNICATIONS RESELLERS
ASSOC.
4312 92nd Avenue, NW
Gig Harbor, WA 98335

Thomas L. Mumaw
SNELL & WILMER
One Arizona Center
Phoenix, AZ 85004-0001

Andrea Harris, Senior Manager
ALLEGIANCE TELECOM INC OF
ARIZONA
2101 Webster, Ste. 1580
Oakland, CA 94612

Kevin Chapman
SBC TELECOM, INC.
300 Convent Street, Room 13-Q-40
San Antonio, TX 78205

Richard Sampson
Z-TEL COMMUNICATIONS, INC.
601 S. Harbour Island, Ste. 220
Tampa, FL 33602

Richard P. Kolb
Vice President of Regulatory Affairs
ONE POINT COMMUNICATIONS
Two Conway Park
150 Field Drive, Ste. 300
Lake Forest, IL 60045

Steven J. Duffy
RIDGE & ISAACSON, P.C.
3101 North Central Ave., Ste. 1090
Phoenix, AZ 85012

Karen Clauson
ESCHELON TELECOM
730 Second Avenue South, Ste. 1200
Minneapolis, MN 55402

Brian Thomas
Time Warner Telecom, Inc.
223 Taylor Avenue North
Seattle, WA 98109

Harry Pliskin
Senior Counsel
Covad Communications Company
7901 Lowry Boulevard
Denver, CO 80230

Brenda Wendt

Mike Allentoff
GLOBAL CROSSINGS SERVICES, INC.
1080 Pittsford Victor Road
Pittsford, NY 14534

Gary L. Lane, Esq.
6902 East 1st Street, Suite 201
Scottsdale, AZ 85251

M. Andrew Andrade
TESS COMMUNICATIONS, INC.
5261 S. Quebec Street, Ste. 150
Greenwood Village, CO 80111

Megan Doberneck
COVAD COMMUNICATIONS COMPANY
7901 Lowry Boulevard
Denver, CO 80230

Janet Napolitano, Attorney General
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
1275 West Washington
Phoenix, AZ 85007

Teresa Tan
WorldCom, Inc.
201 Spear Street, 9th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94105

Curt Huttzell
State Government Affairs
Electric Lightwave, Inc.
4 Triad Center, Suite 200
Salt Lake City, UT 84180

1. Background

The testimony filing for which Staff seeks an extension is scheduled to be filed in the proceeding the Commission has established for evaluating the nature and extent of any Qwest violations of Section 252(e) of the Federal Act. This proceeding will also determine what, if any, enforcement penalties should be imposed by the Commission as a result. As Qwest has emphasized repeatedly, prompt resolution of all pending proceedings deemed necessary for the Commission to conclude the 271 process is essential, not only for Qwest, but for Arizona consumers to enjoy the substantial benefits of increased competition in Arizona's intrastate long-distance market. In its November 7th Order, the Commission determined that the 252(e) enforcement proceeding must be resolved prior to any Commission resolution of Qwest's 271 application.¹ Given this linkage, any delay caused by Staff's extension request will lead to substantial, and unnecessary, additional delay in the Commission's final evaluation of Qwest's 271 application.

2. Staff Provides No Basis For Its Untimely Motion

Staff provides no rationale whatsoever in its Motion for an extension, merely stating that "Staff requires additional time to prepare" its testimony in this proceeding. Staff's Motion was filed almost three weeks after the November 7th Order, and prior to Qwest's filing of its initial testimony on December 2nd. Staff's requested extension would delay the filing of Responsive testimony for Staff (and presumably other interveners) until January 17th, the date originally set in the procedural Order for Qwest to file its Rebuttal testimony. Were the Commission to move back proportionately all other

¹ Qwest's Motion for Reconsideration of this Commission decision is scheduled for oral argument on December 13, 2002. The Commission will also consider Staff's Motion for an Extension and RUCO's Motion to Compel and Motion for an Extension.

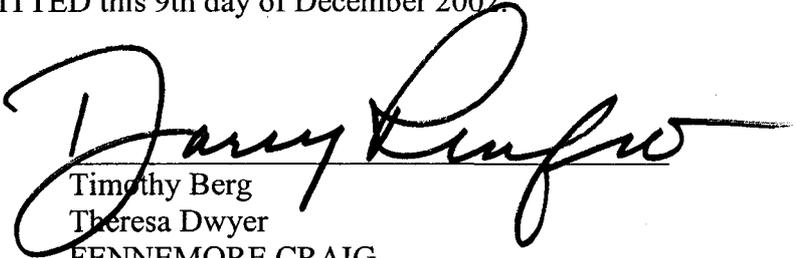
relevant procedural dates, Qwest's Rebuttal testimony would be filed on January 31, 2003, with the Procedural Conference slipping to February 6th, 2003. Hearings in this proceeding would not commence until February 12th, 2003 at the earliest.

The Commission commenced its inquiry into Qwest's compliance activities related to Section 252(e) of the Act on March 8, 2002. Staff's unsupported extension request would probably push back resolution of this Commission proceeding until Mid-May 2003. Unless the Commission reconsiders its decision to defer resolution of Qwest's 271 application until after the 252(e) proceeding is closed, this Commission would not vote on Qwest's 271 application until June 2003, almost 3 ½ years after the application was filed and fifteen months after the Commission began its investigation into Qwest 252(e) agreements. This schedule assumes further delays are not sought for any reason by other parties, and that RUCO's recent Motion seeking an extension of time in this proceeding beyond that requested by Staff is not granted. Quite simply, judicial economy dictates that at some point reasonable boundaries be placed on the ability of parties to unnecessarily delay Commission resolution of this proceeding. Rejection of the instant motion would be an appropriate step toward such a result.

For all of the forgoing reasons, Qwest respectfully requests that Staff's Motion for an Extension of Time to comply with the Commission Procedural Order of November 7, 2002 be denied, unless the Commission determines after oral argument that it will allow

the 252(e) proceed to proceed separately from Qwest's 271 application.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED this 9th day of December 2002.



Timothy Berg
Theresa Dwyer
FENNEMORE CRAIG
3003 North Central Avenue
Suite 2600
Phoenix, AZ 85012-2913

Mark Brown
QWEST CORPORATION
3033 North 3rd Street, 10th Floor
Phoenix, AZ 85012

ATTORNEYS FOR QWEST CORPORATION

ORIGINAL +15 copies filed this 9th day of
December, 2002:

Docket Control
ARIZONA CORPORATION COMMISSION
1200 West Washington
Phoenix, AZ

COPY delivered this 9th day of December, 2002:

Lyn Farmer, Chief Administrative Law Judge
Jane Rodda, Administrative Law Judge
ARIZONA CORPORATION COMMISSION
Legal Division
1200 West Washington
Phoenix, Arizona 85007

Chris Kempley, Chief Counsel
Maureen Scott, Counsel
ARIZONA CORPORATION COMMISSION
Legal Division
1200 West Washington
Phoenix, Arizona 85007

Ernest G. Johnson
Director, Utilities Division
ARIZONA CORPORATION COMMISSION
1200 West Washington
Phoenix, Arizona 85007

Caroline Butler
Legal Division
ARIZONA CORPORATION COMMISSION
1200 W. Washington
Phoenix, AZ 85007

COPY mailed this _____ day of December, 2002:

Eric S. Heath
SPRINT COMMUNICATIONS CO.
100 Spear Street, Suite 930
San Francisco, CA 94105

Thomas Campbell
LEWIS & ROCA
40 N. Central Avenue
Phoenix, AZ 85004

Joan S. Burke
OSBORN MALEDON, P.A.
2929 N. Central Ave., 21st Floor
PO Box 36379
Phoenix, AZ 85067-6379

Thomas F. Dixon
WORLD COM, INC.
707 N. 17th Street #3900
Denver, CO 80202

Scott S. Wakefield
RUCO
1110 West Washington #220
Phoenix, AZ 85007

Michael M. Grant
Todd C. Wiley
GALLAGHER & KENNEDY
2575 E. Camelback Road
Phoenix, AZ 85016-9225

Raymond Heyman
Michael Patten
ROSHKA, HEYMAN & DEWULF
400 E. Van Buren, Ste. 900
Phoenix, AZ 85004-3906

Regulatory Affairs
COX COMMUNICATIONS
20402 North 29th Avenue
Phoenix, AZ 85027-3148

Daniel Waggoner
Greg Kopta
Mary Steele
DAVIS, WRIGHT & TREMAINE
2600 Century Square
1501 Fourth Avenue
Seattle, WA 98101

Traci Grundon
Mark P. Trinchero
DAVIS, WRIGHT & TREMAINE
1300 S.W. Fifth Avenue
Portland, OR 97201

Richard S. Wolters
AT&T LAW DEPARTMENT
1875 Lawrence Street, #1575
Denver, CO 80202

Teresa Ono
Gregory Hoffman
AT&T
795 Folsom Street, Room 2159
San Francisco, CA 94107-1243

David Kaufman
E.SPIRE COMMUNICATIONS, INC.
343 W. Manhattan Street
Santa Fe, NM 87501

Diane Bacon, Legislative Director
COMMUNICATIONS WORKERS OF AMERICA
5818 N. 7th St., Ste. 206
Phoenix, AZ 85014-5811

Philip A. Doherty
545 S. Prospect Street, Ste. 22
Burlington, VT 05401

W. Hagood Bellinger
5312 Trowbridge Drive
Dunwoody, GA 30338

Joyce Hundley
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
Antitrust Division
1401 H Street N.W. #8000
Washington, DC 20530

Andrew O. Isar
TELECOMMUNICATIONS RESELLERS ASSOC.
4312 92nd Avenue, NW
Gig Harbor, WA 98335

Jeffrey W. Crockett
Thomas L. Mumaw
SNELL & WILMER
One Arizona Center
Phoenix, AZ 85004-0001

Charles Kallenbach
AMERICAN COMMUNICATIONS SVCS, INC.
131 National Business Parkway
Annapolis Junction, MD 20701

Gena Doyscher
GLOBAL CROSSING SERVICES, INC.
1221 Nicollet Mall
Minneapolis, MN 55403-2420

Andrea Harris, Senior Manager
ALLEGIANCE TELECOM INC OF ARIZONA
2101 Webster, Ste. 1580
Oakland, CA 94612

Lyndall Nipps
ALLEGIANCE TELECOM, INC
845 Camino Sure
Palm Springs, CA 92262

Gary L. Lane, Esq.
6902 East 1st Street, Suite 201
Scottsdale, AZ 85251

Kevin Chapman
SBC TELECOM, INC.
300 Convent Street, Room 13-Q-40
San Antonio, TX 78205

Steven Strickland
Jon Loehman
SBC TELECOM, INC.
5800 Northwest Parkway, Room 1T40
San Antonio, TX 78249

M. Andrew Andrade
TESS COMMUNICATIONS, INC.
5261 S. Quebec Street, Ste. 150
Greenwood Village, CO 80111

Richard Sampson
Z-TEL COMMUNICATIONS, INC.
601 S. Harbour Island, Ste. 220
Tampa, FL 33602

Megan Doberneck
COVAD COMMUNICATIONS COMPANY
7901 Lowry Boulevard
Denver, CO 80230

Richard P. Kolb
Vice President of Regulatory Affairs
ONE POINT COMMUNICATIONS
Two Conway Park
150 Field Drive, Ste. 300
Lake Forest, IL 60045

Steven J. Duffy
RIDGE & ISAACSON, P.C.
3101 North Central Ave., Ste. 1090
Phoenix, AZ 85012

Teresa Tan
WORLD COM, INC.
201 Spear Street, 9th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94105

Dennis D. Ahlers
ESCHELON TELECOM
730 Second Avenue South, Ste. 1200
Minneapolis, MN 55402

Rodney Joyce
SHOOK, HARDY & BACON, LLP
Hamilton Square
600 14th Street, NW, Ste. 800
Washington, DC 20005-2004

Dennis Doyle
ARCH COMMUNICATIONS GROUP
1800 West Park Drive, Suite 250
Westborough, MA 01581-3912

David Conn
Law Group
MCLEODUSA INCORPORATED
6400 C. Street SW
PO Box 3177
Cedar Rapids, IA 52406-3177

Diane Peters
GLOBAL CROSSING
180 South Clinton Avenue
Rochester, NY 14646

Gerry Morrison
MAP MOBILE COMMUNICATIONS, INC.
840 Greenbrier Circle
Chesapeake, VA 23320

Frederick Joyce
ALSTON & BIRD, LLP
601 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20004-2601

METROCALL, INC.
6677 Richmond Highway
Alexandria, VA 22306

John E. Munger
MUNGER CHADWICK
National Bank Plaza
333 North Wilmot, #300
Tucson, AZ 85711

Brian Thomas
TIME WARNER TELECOM, INC.
520 SW 6th Avenue, Suite 300
Portland, OR 97204

Deborah Harwood
INTEGRA TELECOM OF ARIZONA, INC.
19545 NW Von Newmann Drive, Suite 200
Beaverton, OR 97006

Paul Masters
ERNEST COMMUNICATIONS INC.
6475 Jimmy Carter Blvd., Ste. 300
Norcross, GA 30071

Bob McCoy
WILLIAM LOCAL NETWORK, INC.
4100 One Williams Center
Tulsa, OK 74172

Mark Dioguardi
TIFFANY AND BOSCO, P.A.
1850 North Central, Suite 500
Phoenix, AZ 85004

Nigel Bates
ELECTRIC LIGHTWAVE, INC.
4400 NE 77th Avenue
Vancouver, WA 98862

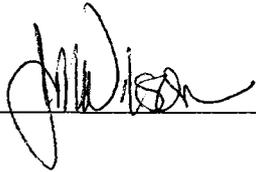
Richard M. Rindler
Morton J. Posner
SWIDER & BERLIN
3000 K. Street NW, Ste. 300
Washington, DC 20007

Douglas Hsiao
Jim Scheltema
BLUMENFELD & COHEN
1625 Massachusetts Ave. NW, Ste. 300
Washington, DC 20036

Mark N. Rogers
EXCELL AGENT SERVICES, LLC
PO Box 52092
Phoenix, AZ 85072-2092

Rex Knowles
XO
111 E. Broadway, Suite 100
Salt Lake City, Utah 84111

Penny Bewick
New Edge Networks, Inc.
PO Box 5159
Vancouver, WA 98668



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