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STATE CORPORATION COMMISSION
DIVISION OF COMMUNICATIONS

June 28, 2000

To Participants &
Interested Parties

RE: Collaborative Committee
Case No. PUC000026

Dear Recipient:

The Virginia State Corporation Commission ("VSCC") has approved establishing a Collaborative Committee to consider further local telecommunications market opening measures. As the Director of the Division of Communications, I have been charged with forming this Committee.

In its March 2, 2000, Order in Case No. PUC000026, the Commission requested responses from interested parties on a number of questions to assist in organizing and assigning priorities to the efforts of the Committee.

After evaluating the comments, we have identified several preliminary actions that should be undertaken to more effectively begin the collaborative process.

1. First, by this letter, the Staff is requesting both Bell Atlantic - Virginia, Inc. ("BA-VA") and GTE South Incorporated ("GTE South") to submit proposed carrier performance standards by July 19, 2000, to be utilized as a vehicle for the discussion in the collaborative process. It is our expectation that BA-VA will submit the same performance standards that it is proposing for Operations Support System ("OSS") testing in Case No. PUC000035. However, we also expect BA-VA to update those measures once the Project Manager has adopted a set of performance metrics for the OSS test. GTE South should submit either its California Performance Standards or a more recent version submitted for use in another state (i.e. North Carolina) to be utilized as a vehicle for the discussions in the collaborative process.

2. The Staff is also requesting BA-VA and GTE South to submit proposed remedy plans by July 19, 2000, which provide for payments to CLECs for unsatisfactory performance. We recognize that a specific remedy plan will be tied to the actual performance standards adopted by the Committee and/or the Commission. However, the proposed remedy plan submitted at this time, at a minimum, should include a detailed description of how and when such a plan should be implemented. In addition, it should include a proposed method to determine total "at risk" penalty amounts.
3. Further, we believe one of the top priorities of the Collaborative Committee should be to develop dispute resolution procedures to resolve carrier-to-carrier disputes. Therefore, a subcommittee to develop such a proposed procedure will be organized at the initial meeting. This group may consider other state procedures as models, but we remind you that any proposal should take into account Virginia statutes as well as this Commission's established rules, practices, and procedures.
4. The Staff will establish and maintain a Collaborative Committee website, to be housed within the State Corporation Commission's webpage. It will be accessible through a link on the Division of Communications' page. This will be the primary source of information and updates regarding the activities of the Committee. It will include the proposed performance standards and remedy plans submitted by BA-VA and GTE South. The site will also include the schedule of any Committee or subcommittee meetings.
5. The Staff is actively exploring various options concerning collocation issues for BA-VA and GTE South, some of which are the subject of current proceedings before this Commission.
6. BA-VA and GTE South should be prepared to provide ongoing information which may be relevant to the Collaborative Committee concerning conditions attached to its merger approval by the Federal Communications Commission, including implementation plans and timetables.

The above actions are not intended to be all inclusive, but rather as a starting point for the Collaborative Committee. Other issues can and will be addressed by the Committee. Initially, the Collaborative Committee will **not** pursue establishing performance standards and/or remedies for any local exchange carrier other than BA-VA and GTE South. However, this does not preclude the Collaborative Committee from initiating such action in the future, and other Virginia carriers should keep informed of the activities of the Committee.

We expect that establishing and implementing performance standards and remedies (as well as testing Operation Support Systems for BA-VA) and adopting a dispute resolution process should result in significant improvements in resolving operational issues between the competitive carriers and BA-VA and GTE South in Virginia. However, we recognize that this effort will take some time and do not want to preclude considering potential improvements in any current operational interfaces, methods and/or procedures in the interim.

The Staff will continue to address both the increasing carrier-to-carrier and competitor-related customer complaints on an informal basis. However, we expect corrective action to be implemented by the carriers as repeated problems continue to arise. We recommend that any carrier wishing to file an informal complaint with the Division of Communications against another carrier do so by letter to my attention in accordance with Rule 5:4 of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure. The complaint should include a detailed explanation and documentation of the specific issues, as well as the desired relief. A copy of the complaint also should be sent to the other carrier against whom it is filed.

Further, the Staff would like the industry to consider whether forming a separate Virginia-specific carrier-to-carrier operational issue forum might be helpful. Such a group could be formed outside of the Collaborative Committee or Commission; however, we would be available to serve as a member or in an advisory capacity.

The first Collaborative Committee meeting will be held at the Commission on August 8, 2000, starting at 10:30 a.m. Further details on the agenda, location and designation of company representatives will be posted on the Commission's website in the near future.

We look forward to your company's participation in the Collaborative Committee.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "William Irby".

William Irby

WI:KC/js