

ORIGINALDecision No. 49615

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

In the Matter of the Application of)
 INTERSTATE TELEGRAPH COMPANY, a)
 corporation, for authority to)
 establish, maintain and operate a)
 telephone exchange at Benton Station,)
 Mono County, California, and provide)
 telephone exchange service in the)
 Benton Station Exchange Area, and to)
 file and make effective rates for)
 telephone and telegraph service in)
 said Exchange Area.)

Application No. 35016

OPINION AND ORDER

By this application filed on January 2, 1954, Interstate Telegraph Company seeks authority to establish telephone exchange service westerly of and in the vicinity of Benton Station, Mono County, and to file and make effective rates for exchange, message toll, and telegraph services.

The proposed Benton Station exchange area consists of unassigned territory located between applicant's Bishop exchange on the south and the California-Nevada state boundary line on the north as shown on a map attached to the application as Exhibit "B." A proposed base rate area of approximately one-third of a square mile at the intersection of the county road to Benton and State Highway-U. S. No. 6 is set forth on a map as Exhibit "C" to the application. Also, applicant proposes to expand its Bishop exchange boundary to the north to make such boundary common with the southerly boundary of the proposed Benton Station exchange.

Applicant alleges that for many years it has been furnishing toll telephone service in the area proposed to be included in the Benton Station and Bishop exchange areas. Present service in

the area consists of 15 toll stations segregated as follows: one inactive station, three unattended public pay stations, and seven semipublic stations which are proposed to be included within Benton Station exchange; and four semipublic stations which are proposed to be included within Bishop exchange area.

Applicant states that increased travel and other activities along U. S. Highway No. 6 are resulting in a greater demand for telephone service and that the furnishing of toll station telephone service within the Benton Station area becomes increasingly inefficient and costly because the addition of new stations requires construction of toll circuits from the City of Bishop, a circuit distance of about 40 miles.

As a means of better serving the area, applicant proposes to:

1. Expand its Bishop exchange area to provide Bishop exchange service to four existing toll stations, and
2. Establish a dial exchange to be located in a concrete building at the proposed toll rate center of the Benton Station exchange,⁽¹⁾

On and after the establishment of the proposed Benton Station dial exchange and the proposed expansion of Bishop exchange, the applicant plans to:

1. Cancel rates for the inactive toll station:
2. Substitute exchange pay station service for the toll station service now being provided at the sites of the three public toll stations.
3. Offer Benton Station exchange service on an optional basis to the agents or operators of the seven semi-public toll stations located within the proposed Benton Station exchange area.

(1) Exhibit "A" of the application shows the proposed toll rate center of the Benton Station exchange to be in the southwest quarter of Section 32, Township 1 South, Range 32 East, Mount Diablo Base and Meridian.

4. Offer Bishop exchange service on an optional basis to the agents or operators of the four semipublic toll stations located within the proposed expanded portion of the Bishop exchange area.
5. Cease to establish any additional toll stations within the areas proposed to be included in the Benton Station or Bishop exchange areas.

Applicant requests authority to make effective in the proposed Benton Station exchange its presently effective lowest level of rates for exchange service and its basic schedules of rates for toll telephone and telegraph services. The requested basic exchange rates are as follows:

	Each Primary Station Monthly Rate	
	<u>Residence Service</u>	<u>Business Service</u>
Individual Line	\$4.40	\$6.75
2-Party Line	3.80	5.60
4-Party Line	2.95	4.70
Suburban 10-Party Line (1st Zone)	2.95	4.70

The establishment of a single toll rate center for the proposed Benton Station exchange would result in increases in toll charges over certain routes and reductions over other routes for present toll station subscribers. Based on a study of originating calls, applicant estimates that the over-all effect on toll charges of existing toll station subscribers in the area would be a reduction of \$170 on an annual basis assuming all toll stations are converted to exchange service. Toll charges will not apply to telephone messages between stations in the same exchange which subscribe to exchange service. Toll charges will apply between toll stations, between exchange stations in separate exchanges, and between toll stations and exchange stations.

It appears from the application that the establishment of the proposed exchange will increase applicant's investment in plant approximately \$18,500.

Applicant states there is no public utility, corporation, or person with whom the proposed exchange and service will compete, and that it will proceed with its plan to establish the Benton Station exchange and expand the Bishop exchange, as proposed, promptly after receipt of authorization from the Commission.

The Commission is of the opinion that establishment of the Benton Station exchange and expansion of the Bishop exchange as proposed will result in improved telephone service and will not be adverse to the public interest.

Interstate Telegraph Company having applied to this Commission for an order authorizing it to establish an exchange at Benton Station and to file rates for service, and to expand Bishop exchange, the Commission having considered applicant's request and being of the opinion that a public hearing thereon is not necessary and that the application should be granted as herein provided,

IT IS HEREBY FOUND AS A FACT that the increases in rates and charges herein authorized are justified and that present rates, in so far as they differ from those herein authorized, are for the future unjust and unreasonable, therefore,

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED as follows:

1. Applicant is authorized to file in quadruplicate with this Commission, after the effective date of this order and on or before June 30, 1955, in conformance with the provisions of General Order No. 96, the maps of Benton Station exchange and base rate areas as set forth in Exhibits "B" and "C" of the application and the preliminary statement as set forth in Exhibit "E" of the application, and after not less than ten days' notice to the Commission and to the public to make said maps and preliminary statement and the rates for exchange, toll telephone, and telegraph service as discussed above effective for service in the Benton Station exchange on and after the establishment of the dial exchange.

- 2. Applicant is further authorized to enlarge its Bishop exchange area as shown in Exhibit "D" of the application, and to make said map effective on not less than ten days' notice to this Commission and to the public.

The effective date of this order shall be twenty days after the date hereof.

Dated at San Francisco, California, this 26th day of January, 1954.

Henrietta Pottel
~~President~~
Edw. Mitchell
Deane Burgess
Commissioners