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Decision 96-02-001 February 7, 1996

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

In the Matter of the application of United Telecom of America, Inc. for a certificate of public convenience and necessity to provide telecommunications services within the State of California. Application 95-10-033 (Filed October 19, 1995)

OPINION ORIGINAL

United Telecom of America, Inc. (applicant) a Delaware corporation authorized to do business in California seeks a certificate of public convenience and necessity to provide interLATA and intraLATA long distance telephone services between various points within California.

Applicant asserts that it will operate as a nondominant interexchange carrier (NDIEC) offering long distance telephone service on a statewide basis to its subscribers using leased facilities. Applicant will operate as a "switchless reseller" as described in Decision 91-10-041. Applicant seeks to provide long distance service at competitive rates. Applicant will lease existing facilities and does not plan to construct or extend any facilities in California to implement and provide the service for which it seeks authority.

Applicant alleges that its employees represent many years of combined experience in the telecommunications industry. Applicant has provided a detailed description of its management's personnel's background and experience. Applicant's financial statements attached to the application indicate that applicant satisfies the financial showing required by the Commission.

Applicant's proposed service is designed to meet the long distance telephone service needs of subscribers who cannot currently realize similar cost savings in communications service. Applicant states that its proposed service will use existing communications facilities more efficiently while providing subscribers with cost advantages. Approval of this application will, in applicant's opinion, reaffirm the principal of competition in the intrastate communications market and benefit California telephone users by providing lower priced and better quality service; innovative telecommunications service and increased consumer choice; increased use of existing communications resources and increased diversification and reliability in the supply of communications service; and development and expansion of the telecommunications industry in California with attendant employment opportunities.

Applicant's underlying carriers require no deposits. None of applicant's management team have filed for bankruptcy, or been employed by companies engaged in providing telecommunications service to the public which have either filed for bankruptcy or gone out of business.

By Decision (D.) 84-01-037 (14 CPUC2d 317 (1984)) and later decisions, we authorized interLATA entry generally. However, we limited the authority conferred to interLATA service, and we subjected the applicants to the condition that they not hold themselves out to the public to provide intraLATA service. By D. 94-09-065, we authorized competitive intraLATA services effective January 1, 1995, for carriers meeting specified criteria.

The Commission has established criteria for determining whether a certificate of public convenience and necessity (CPCN)

should be granted. An applicant who is a switchless reseller¹ must demonstrate that it has a minimum of \$25,000 of cash or cash equivalent, (as described in D.91-10-041, Appendix A, Paragraph 5.1), reasonably liquid and readily available to meet the firm's start-up expenses. Such applicants shall also document any deposits required by LECs or interexchange carriers (IECs) and demonstrate that they have additional resources to cover all such deposits. (D.93-05-010.) In addition, an applicant is required to make a reasonable showing of technical expertise in telecommunications or a related business.

As part of its application, applicant provided financial information demonstrating that it satisfies our criteria for being reasonably liquid and has readily available funds to meet its needs.

We will authorize the interLATA and intraLATA service that applicant seeks to provide.

Findings of Fact

1. Applicant served a copy of the application upon telephone corporations with which it is likely to compete.

2. A notice of the filing of the application appeared in the Daily Calendar on October 27, 1995.

3. No protests have been filed.

¹ D.93-05-010 defines a switchless reseller, as a nondominant interexchange carrier (NDIEC) with the following characteristics: it uses the switch of another carrier, it usually, but not always, uses access circuits that the underlying carrier purchases from an LEC, it provides service in its own name, and its customers view it as their telephone company for interLATA and interstate calls. D.92-06-069 noted that it is possible to control, operate, or manage telephone lines without owning them. The decision also notes that resellers which do not own or directly operate their own telephone wires may still have plant which is owned, controlled, operated, and/or managed in order to facilitate communication by telephone.

4. A hearing is not required.
 5. By prior Commission decisions, we authorized competition in providing interLATA telecommunications service but generally barred those offering such service from holding out to the public the provision of intralATA service.
 6. By D.94-09-065, we authorized competitive intralATA services effective January 1, 1995, for carriers meeting specified criteria.
 7. Applicant has demonstrated that it has the required minimum of cash readily available to meet its start-up expenses.
 8. Applicant has submitted with its application a complete draft of applicant's initial tariff which complies with the requirements established by the Commission including prohibitions on unreasonable deposit requirements.
 9. Applicant has represented that no one associated with or employed by applicant was previously associated with an NDIEC that filed for bankruptcy or went out of business.
 10. Since no facilities are to be constructed, it can be seen with certainty that the proposed operation will not have a significant effect upon the environment.
 11. The Commission has routinely granted NDIECs, such as applicant, an exemption from Rule 18(b), where no construction is involved, to the extent that the rule requires applicant to serve a copy of its application on cities and counties in the proposed service area and to the extent that it requires applicant to provide a conformed copy of all exhibits attached to applicant's filed application to potential competitors.
 12. Exemption from the provisions of Public Utilities (PU) Code §§ 816-830, has been granted to other resellers. (See, e.g., D.86-10-007 and D.88-12-076.)
- Conclusions of Law**
1. Applicant has the financial ability to provide the proposed service.

2. Applicant has made a reasonable showing of technical expertise in telecommunications or in a related business.

3. Public convenience and necessity require the interLATA and intraLATA service be offered by applicant.

4. Applicant is subject to the following conditions:

a. The current 3.2% surcharge applicable to all intrastate services, as modified by D.95-02-050, except for those excluded by D.94-09-065, to fund Universal Lifeline Telephone Service (PU Code § 879; Resolution T-15799);

b. The current 0.36% surcharge applicable to all intrastate services, except for those excluded by D.94-09-065, as modified by D.95-02-050, to fund the California Relay Service and Communications Devices Fund (PU Code § 2881; Resolution T-15801);

c. The user fee provided in PU Code §§ 431-435, which is 0.1% of gross intrastate revenue for the 1995-1996 fiscal year (Resolution 4778); and,

d. The current 0.27% surcharge applicable to all intrastate services, except for those excluded by D.94-09-065, as modified by D.95-02-050, to fund the California High Cost Fund (PU Code § 739.30; Resolution T-15826).

5. Applicant should be exempted from Rule 18(b)'s requirement of service of the application on cities and counties in the proposed service area and service of all exhibits attached to this application on potential competitors.

6. The application should be granted to the extent set forth below.

7. Because of the public interest in competitive interLATA and intraLATA service, the following order should be effective immediately.

- (1) no evidence should be
- (2) no evidence should be

...
... **O R D E R** ...
...
IT IS ORDERED that: ...

1. A certificate of public convenience and necessity (CPCN) is granted to United Telecom of America, Inc. (applicant) to operate as a reseller of InterLocal Access and Transport Area (interLATA) and, to the extent authorized by Decision (D.) 94-09-065, intraLocal Access and Transport Area (intraLATA) telecommunication service offered by communication common carriers in California.

2. Within 30 days after the effective date of this order, applicant shall file a written acceptance of the certificate granted in this proceeding.

3. a. Applicant is authorized to file with this Commission tariff schedules for the provision of interLATA and intraLATA service. Applicant may not offer interLATA and/or intraLATA service until tariffs are on file. Applicant's initial filing shall be made in accordance with General Order (GO) 96-A, excluding Sections IV, V, and VI, and shall be effective not less than 1 day after filing.

b. Applicant is a nondominant interexchange carrier (NDIEC). The effectiveness of its future tariffs is subject to the schedules set forth in Ordering Paragraph 5 of D.90-08-032, as modified by D.91-12-013 and D.92-06-034:

"5. All NDIECs are hereby placed on notice that their California tariff filings will be processed in accordance with the following effectiveness schedule:

"a. Inclusion of FCC-approved rates for interstate services in California public utilities tariff schedules shall become effective on one (1) day's notice.

"b. Uniform rate reductions for existing services shall become effective on five (5) days' notice.

"c. Uniform rate increases, except for minor rate increases, for existing services shall become effective on thirty (30) days' notice, and shall require bill inserts, a message on the bill itself, or first class mail notice to customers of the pending increased rates.

"d. Uniform minor rate increases, as defined in D.90-11-029 for existing services shall become effective not less than 5 working days' notice. Customer notifications not required for such minor rate increases.

"e. Advice letter filings for new services and for all other types of tariff revisions, except changes in text not affecting rates or relocations of text in the tariff, shall become effective on forty (40) days' notice.

"f. Advice letter filings merely revising the text or location of text material which do not cause an increase in any rate or charge shall become effective on not less than five (5) days' notice."

4. Applicant may deviate from the following provisions of GO 96-A: (a) paragraph II.C. (1)(b) which requires consecutive sheet numbering and prohibits the reuse of sheet numbers; and (b) paragraph II.C. (4), which requires that "a separate sheet or series of sheets should be used for each rule." Tariff filings incorporating these deviations shall be subject to the approval of the Commission Advisory and Compliance Division's (CACD) Telecommunications Branch. Tariff filings shall reflect all fees

and surcharges to which applicant is subject, as reflected in Conclusion of Law 4.

5. Applicant shall file as part of its initial tariff, after the effective date of this order and consistent with Ordering Paragraph 3, a service area map.

6. Applicant shall notify this Commission in writing of the date interLATA service is first rendered to the public within 5 days after service begins and again within 5 days of when intraLATA service begins.

7. Applicant shall keep its books and records in accordance with the Uniform System of Accounts specified in Title 47, Code of Federal Regulations, part 32.

8. In the event the books and records of the applicant are required for inspection by the Commission or its staff, applicant shall either produce such records at the Commission's offices or reimburse the Commission for the reasonable costs incurred in having Commission staff travel to applicant's office.

9. Applicant shall file an annual report, in compliance with GO 104-A, on a calendar-year basis using the information request form developed by the CACD Auditing and Compliance Branch and contained in Attachment A.

10. Applicant shall ensure that its employees comply with the provisions of Public Utilities Code (PU) Code § 2889.5 regarding solicitation of customers.

11. The certificate granted and the authority to render service under the rates, charges, and rules authorized will expire if not exercised within 12 months after the effective date of this order.

12. The corporate identification number assigned to applicant is U#5559-C which shall be included in the caption of all original filings with this Commission, and in the titles of other pleadings filed in existing cases.

13. Within 60 days of the effective date of this order, applicant shall comply with PU Code § 708, Employee Identification Cards, and notify the Chief of CACD's Telecommunications Branch in writing of its compliance.

14. Applicant is exempted from the provisions of PU Code §§ 816-830.

15. In response to the applicant's request for waiver, applicant is exempted from Rule 18(b) of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure to the extent that the rule requires applicant to serve a copy of its application on the cities and counties it proposes to operate in and to the extent that the rule requires applicant to serve a copy of all exhibits attached to its application on potential competitors.

16. If applicant is 90 days or more late in filing an annual report or in remitting the fees listed in Conclusion of Law 4, CACD shall prepare for Commission consideration a resolution that revokes the applicant's CPCN, unless applicant has received the written permission of CACD to file or remit late.

17. The application is granted, as set forth above.

18. Application 95-10-033 is closed.

This order is effective today.

Dated February 7, 1996, at San Francisco, California.

DANIEL Wm. FESSLER
President
P. GREGORY CONLON
JESSIE J. KNIGHT, JR.
HENRY M. DUQUE
JOSIAH L. NEPPER
Commissioners

A.95-10-033 ALJ/RAB/tcg

TO: ALL INTEREXCHANGE TELEPHONE UTILITIES

Article 5 of the Public Utilities Code grants authority to the California Public Utilities Commission to require all public utilities doing business in California to file reports as specified by the Commission on the utilities' California operations.

A specific annual report form has not yet been prescribed for the California interexchange telephone utilities. However, you are hereby directed to submit an original and two copies of the information requested in Attachment A no later than March 31st of the year following the calendar year for which the annual report is submitted.

Address your report to:

California Public Utilities Commission
Auditing and Compliance Branch, Room 3251
505 Van Ness Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94102-3298

Failure to file this information on time may result in a penalty as provided for in §§ 2107 and 2108 of the Public Utilities Code.

If you have any question concerning this matter, please call (415) 703-1961.

ATTACHMENT A

Information Requested of California Interexchange Telephone Utilities.

To be filed with the California Public Utilities Commission, 505 Van Ness Avenue, Room 3251, San Francisco, CA 94102-3298, no later than March 31st of the year following the calendar year for which the annual report is submitted.

1. Exact legal name and U # of reporting utility.
2. Address.
3. Name, title, address, and telephone number of the person to be contacted concerning the reported information.
4. Name and title of the officer having custody of the general books of account and the address of the office where such books are kept.
5. Type of organization (e.g., corporation, partnership, sole proprietorship, etc.).
If incorporated, specify:
 - a. Date of filing articles of incorporation with the Secretary of State.
 - b. State in which incorporated.
6. Commission decision number granting operating authority and the date of that decision.
7. Date operations were begun.
8. Description of other business activities in which the utility is engaged.
9. A list of all affiliated companies and their relationship to the utility. State if affiliate is a:
 - a. Regulated public utility.
 - b. Publicly held corporation.
10. Balance sheet as of December 31st of the year for which information is submitted.
11. Income statement for California operations for the calendar year for which information is submitted.

(END OF ATTACHMENT A)