

BEFORE THE WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

In the Matter of)	
)	
Area Code Relief for the 206, 253, 425)	DOCKET NO. UT-991535
and 360 Number Plan Areas Filed)	
by Neustar, for the Washington State)	ORDER APPROVING
Telecommunications Industry in the form)	EXPENDITURES AND REFUNDS
of an Overlay; and Creation of the 564)	OF EDUCATION PLAN
Number Plan Area for All of Western)	FUNDS
Washington)	
)	
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BACKGROUND

- 1 This matter arises from the telecommunications industry's request to implement new area codes in western Washington. The WUTC approved a plan to use a single overlay area code, 564, over all four western Washington area codes: 206, 253, 360, and 425.
- 2 Federal rules provide that, when an area code overlay is used, all local calls must be dialed with the area code, i.e., ten-digit dialing. To explain this new dialing pattern to customers, the telecommunications industry proposed a joint public education program of \$1.2 million, and the WUTC accepted this program.
- 3 On March 2, 2001, the WUTC approved a recommendation by its staff to allocate the cost of the education program based on the number of prefixes assigned to each company. On April 11, 2001, at the request of Electric Lightwave, Inc., the WUTC revised the allocation formula, based on an updated report of prefix assignments. The WUTC also approved a proposal that WITA serve as administrator of the public education program fund.
- 4 The WUTC on August 28, 2001, suspended implementation of the area code relief plan until at least October 1, 2002. The WUTC took this action after determining that the demand for new telephone prefixes had dropped sharply and that companies were using their existing prefixes more efficiently.
- 5 On October 19, 2001, the Washington Independent Telephone Association (WITA), on behalf of the telecommunications industry, filed a petition for approval to reimburse various expenditures related to the public education program and to refund unexpended money to companies. According to the petition, the industry ceased public education and information activities on July 17, 2001. At that point the industry had expended \$521,561.91 for electronic and print mass media activities related to the 564 overlay and ten-digit dialing. The industry's 564 Education Committee has reviewed the invoices submitted for the funded education and information activities and believes all expenditures comport with the Commission's orders in this matter.

ORDER

THE COMMISSION ORDERS:

- 6 (1) the expenditures per the invoices submitted by Washington Independent Telephone Association (WITA) be approved as consistent with Commission orders to the industry to undertake public education and information activities regarding the 564 overlay;
- 7 (2) the cost of the public education and information program be reallocated to individual companies according to the revised allocation formula approved by the Commission;
- 8 (3) monies collected from individual companies, over and above the expended amounts approved by the Commission, be refunded;
- 9 (4) each company required to contribute to the education fund be assessed a pro-rata share of the \$5,000 fee authorized by the Commission for Washington Independent Telephone Association's administration of the 564 education fund.

DATED at Olympia, Washington and effective this 31st day of October, 2001.

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

RICHARD HEMSTAD, Commissioner

PATRICK J. OSHIE, Commissioner