

News Release
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First Preliminary Final Report Sections Issued on ROC 13-State OSS Test

The testing of Qwest's operational support systems reached another important milestone with the issuance of the first two sections of the ROC 13-State OSS Test Final Report.

According to Montana Public Service Commissioner Bob Rowe, Chairman of the commissioners' executive committee leading the thirteen state collaborative, "The sequential release of completed portions of the preliminary final report is important as we move into the final stages of the testing process. This allows everyone to better understand the test process and results. Our project management team estimates that the test is approximately eighty percent complete at this time and all parties are working toward our target of January 16th for a draft final report."

The test administrator, KPMG Consulting, distributed draft results for Master Test Plan (MTP) Sections 17 and 19.6 to the Technical Advisory Group on September 27, 2001. Section 17 deals with the functional and performance evaluation of Qwest's Maintenance & Repair Trouble Interface (MEDIACC) for wholesale customers, while Section 19.6 provides results on the Daily Usage Feed Returns, Production and Distribution Process evaluation.

Results from the ROC OSS test will be released on a progressive basis, as Discrete Reports, at the completion of testing for specific sections of the Master Test Plan. Current plans call for 15 additional Discrete Reports to be released between now and December 3, 2001. These reports are considered preliminary until they are published in the Final Report. The benefit of this approach is that it allows all parties involved in the ROC test to spread the review and assimilation of the test results over a longer period of time rather than a short timeframe at the end of the testing effort.

Current target dates for the ROC Final Report include publication of the draft Final Report on January 16, 2002 and issuance of the Final Report on February 7th, 2002 after a TAG comment period. This comment period will be focused on statements of fact, suggestions for clarification and errors in the text. Advocacy related comments by parties will be handled in the various 13 state 271 proceedings into which the report will flow, and at the Federal Communications Commission.

Rowe explained, “We utilize a ‘zero-defect’ scheduling approach, coupled with a ‘military style’ testing philosophy, which means we test until Qwest passes. When we encounter issues, the schedule may change to accommodate retesting. In parallel with testing efforts, a data reconciliation process is underway that allows Competitive Local Exchange Carriers (CLECs) to identify discrepancies they believe exist between their internal data and Qwest published results. The data reconciliation process means that performance measure issues can be addressed as testing is completed.”

Section 271 of the federal Telecommunications Act of 1996 sets out a procedure through which Bell Operating Companies such as Qwest could be allowed to provide long-distance service within their own regions in exchange for opening their systems to local competition. Section 271 sets out a "fourteen point checklist," and requires that allowing the Bell Operating Company into in-region long distance be determined to be in the public interest. The Federal Communications Commission makes determinations, state-by-state, based on consultation with the federal Department of Justice and state public utility commissions. State commissions play a key role in developing a factual record, and resolving the entire range of problems associated with opening local phone systems to competition.

The Regional OSS Collaborative was established by 13 of the 14 states served by Qwest. It is an open, web-based process, providing a forum for all interested parties to resolve issues. States involved in the project are: Montana, Idaho, Utah, Washington, Oregon, New Mexico, Colorado, Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wyoming, Iowa and Nebraska. Information about the ROC-OSS Collaborative is available at <http://www.nri.ohio-state.edu/oss.htm>. All reports including the recently published Performance Measures Audit Report and the above mentioned Discrete Reports are available on the web site.