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 Court Reporter

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1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 JUDGE RENDAHL: I'm Ann Rendahl the
3 administrative law judge presiding over this matter.
4 We are here before the Washington Utilities and
5 Transportation Commission on Wednesday, June 23rd, for
6 a status conference in Docket No. UT-033044, captioned,
7 In the matter of the petition of Qwest Corporation to
8 initiate a mass-market switching and direct transport
9 case pursuant to the Triennial Review Order, and the
10 status conference is convened pursuant to notice in
11 Order No. 15 in this proceeding, which was entered on
12 June 15th, 2004.

13 Let's take the appearances from the parties.
14 All of you have already made full appearances in this
15 docket, so if you could please just state your name and
16 the party you represent, and we'll start with Qwest.

17 MS. ANDERL: Lisa Anderl and Adam Sherr
18 representing Qwest.

19 JUDGE RENDAHL: For AT&T?

20 MS. DE COOK: Rebecca DeCook.

21 JUDGE RENDAHL: For MCI?

22 MS. SINGER NELSON: Michel Singer Nelson.

23 JUDGE RENDAHL: For Covad?

24 MS. FRAME: Karen Frame.

25 JUDGE RENDAHL: For the joint CLEC's?

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1 MR. KOPTA: Gregory J. Kopta with the law
2 firm Davis, Wright, Tremaine, LLP.

3 JUDGE RENDAHL: Mr. Kopta, if you would
4 identify which CLEC's are included under that joint
5 CLEC grouping, that would be helpful.

6 MR. KOPTA: Okay. It's Advanced Telecom,
7 Inc., Eschelon Telecom of Washington, Global Crossing
8 Local Services, Integra Telecom of Washington, Pac West
9 Telecom, Time Warner Telecom of Washington, and XO
10 Washington.

11 JUDGE RENDAHL: Thank you. For WebTEC?

12 MR. BUTLER: Arthur A. Butler from Ater
13 Wynne, LLP.

14 JUDGE RENDAHL: Mr. Butler, you are going to
15 have to speak up more the next time you speak. It's
16 coming through very faintly, and we have the volume all
17 the way up in here.

18 MR. BUTLER: Okay.

19 JUDGE RENDAHL: For the Coalition?

20 MR. RICE: This is David Rice with Miller
21 Nash.

22 JUDGE RENDAHL: For Commission staff?

23 MR. TRAUTMAN: Greg Trautman, assistant
24 attorney general.

25 JUDGE RENDAHL: For Public Counsel?

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1 MR. FFITCH: Simon ffitch, assistant attorney
2 general.

3 JUDGE RENDAHL: I will note that I received a
4 an e-mail from Mr. Melnikoff that he was not available
5 today, so he will not be on the call. As I stated off
6 the record, the purpose of this status conference is to
7 address the status of the proceeding since the mandate
8 in the USTA-II became effective on June 16th, to
9 discuss Qwest's motion to dismiss, and as the
10 Commission mentioned in this order suspending the
11 proceedings in March, how to handle or address the
12 evidentiary record, including the prefiled exhibits and
13 testimony in the proceeding which were not entered into
14 the official record.

15 In terms of the status, I think it's
16 incumbent on Qwest, given the motion to dismiss, to
17 start off that discussion on the status of the
18 proceeding.

19 MS. ANDERL: Thank you. Lisa Anderl
20 representing Qwest. We believe as we set forth briefly
21 in our motion that the legal underpinnings for this
22 docket no longer exist and that it is, therefore,
23 appropriate that the docket be dismissed or closed,
24 whatever terminology you would like to use.

25 There is really not too much more than that.

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1 The entire docket is founded on Qwest's petition that
2 the Commission consider the issues as mandated and
3 authorized in the TRO by the FCC. That delegation to
4 the states has now been found to be unlawful. There
5 may or may not be some further process on that, but we
6 believe that if -- and you may have to check me on
7 this, Your Honor, I think that the time for filing a
8 petition for certiorari is still open or that some of
9 the CLEC's are still going to seek review at the
10 Supreme Court, and for some reason, the TRO is revived.
11 I think we can reopen or open a new docket. I don't
12 believe that it's necessary though to maintain this
13 docket in an open status given the binding effect of
14 the DC Circuit Court of Appeals' decision.

15 JUDGE RENDAHL: Thank you. I think the date
16 is the 30th of June for petitions for certiorari. I
17 think there was that 15-day gap between the mandate
18 becoming effective and the petitions being filed.

19 MS. ANDERL: That's my recollection too. To
20 add to that, Your Honor, I just learned this morning, I
21 think Washington is kind of at the forefront in terms
22 of states wrestling with what to do with these open
23 dockets region, but I did just learn that the Texas
24 Commission has decided to abate its TRO proceeding.
25 I'm not sure what that means, but I think it means

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1 either dismiss them or close the dockets, and I think
2 we will start to see a lot more activity in the states
3 as these issues get teed up by the RBOC's in those
4 states, but that's the only relevant status I'm aware
5 of in other jurisdictions.

6 JUDGE RENDAHL: Thank you. As we go to other
7 parties, I would like you all to also address whether
8 you would like an opportunity to respond to Qwest's
9 motion in writing or whether you will just be
10 responding verbally this morning. Having just received
11 the motion electronically yesterday, I have not set out
12 a notice asking for responses in writing, so I would
13 want you to contemplate that in your responses to
14 Ms. Anderl's statement just now. So let's start with
15 AT&T; Ms. DeCook?

16 MS. DE COOK: Thank you, Your Honor. AT&T's
17 position on the motion to dismiss is that we think it's
18 premature for several reasons. The first being that
19 Qwest argues that USTA-II found that a state delegation
20 was inappropriate, but USTA-II courts also indicated
21 that the states may legitimately play a fact-finding
22 role in providing information to the FCC, and we don't
23 know yet whether the FCC is going to ask for the state
24 commissions to act as a fact-finder and provide them
25 information, either what they already had in their

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1 records or additional information on top of that, so we
2 think it's premature for that reason.

3 The second reason we think it's premature is
4 the one referenced already, which is that there is at
5 least a possibility that appeals will be filed and will
6 be accepted by the Supreme Court. So until we know
7 that, it seems to me that this is still a live issue,
8 potentially, and could come back to the state
9 commission if the Supreme Court accepts the rules in
10 the favor of the FCC TRO.

11 And just to correct one thing Ms. Anderl
12 said, the Texas Commission did abate, but what that
13 means is that they are going to hold the docket open
14 but not continue the proceeding at this point, and in
15 addition, the California commission has held the docket
16 open, the TRO docket there, for the express purpose of
17 preserving the record that was put in the proceeding in
18 California. So for those reasons, we think it's
19 premature and the docket ought to be kept open for the
20 time being.

21 JUDGE RENDAHL: And would you like an
22 opportunity to provide a response in writing, or do you
23 consider your argument this afternoon to be sufficient?

24 MS. DE COOK: Your Honor, we will go either
25 way. If other parties want a chance to respond, we

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1 would provide additional -- if there is additional
2 argument we want to make, we would provide it at that
3 time.

4 JUDGE RENDAHL: Thank you. Ms. Singer
5 Nelson?

6 MS. SINGER NELSON: Thank you, Your Honor,
7 MCI doesn't have a position in response to Qwest's
8 motion to dismiss, and I do not need any time to put
9 together a written response.

10 JUDGE RENDAHL: Thank you. For Covad,
11 Ms. Frame?

12 MS. FRAME: Covad doesn't need to file a
13 written response, and we are in agreement with AT&T.
14 We believe the motion to dismiss is a little premature
15 in light of the fact that the FCC is proposing new
16 rules or trying to get together the new rules, and the
17 latest we heard is that there will be new rules, I
18 believe, put out in about two weeks. So we suggest we
19 have another status call at least in a month to see
20 where we are again, and the abatement of the Texas UTC
21 is probably the more appropriate route to go at this
22 point.

23 JUDGE RENDAHL: Thank you. How about
24 Mr. Kopta.

25 MR. KOPTA: Thank you, Your Honor. We also

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1 agree with the points that Ms. DeCook made on behalf of
2 AT&T and would add a couple of other ones. First, the
3 Commission has requested comments on various issues
4 surrounding the impact of USTA-II, and it's uncertain
5 that the point what would happen with those issues or
6 the Commission's consideration of those issues if this
7 docket were closed. That may be an administrative thing
8 that there needs to be some other docket open to
9 address those issues, but for now, those issues remain
10 open, and certainly, the issuance of a mandate of
11 USTA-III rather than counseling we no longer need this
12 docket, rather it counsels that it would be appropriate
13 to maintain this docket open to address those
14 particular issues that the Commission has already
15 indicated an interest in pursuing.

16 The second point is that in Order No. 15, the
17 Commission issued an order to Qwest to maintain the
18 status quo for a period of time, and if the docket were
19 closed, it is uncertain how that order would continue
20 to be enforced, or as it references, modified, given
21 that the docket would no longer be open and it would
22 become a final order, and therefore, there would need
23 to be some separate proceeding that would be initiated
24 to enforce the order or make any modifications to it,
25 which we think would be a rather cumbersome process

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1 when it really is not that big a deal from our
2 standpoint to simply maintain this docket as an open
3 one whether or not there are active proceedings going
4 on. Although, as I just indicated, there very well may
5 be active proceedings with respect to the impact of
6 USTA-II, subject, of course, to the interim rules that
7 are entered by the FCC, and we also do not need any
8 additional opportunity to respond but consider this
9 oral response as sufficient to Qwest's motion.

10 JUDGE RENDAHL: Thank you, Mr. Kopta,
11 Mr. Butler?

12 MR. BUTLER: Yes. WebTEC concurs with the
13 comments of Mr. Kopta, and we don't need an additional
14 response on it.

15 JUDGE RENDAHL: Thank you, Mr. Butler.
16 Mr. Rice?

17 MR. RICE: Your Honor, the coalition takes no
18 position, and it has no need to submit written comments
19 on this issue.

20 JUDGE RENDAHL: Thank you, Mr. Rice. For
21 Commission staff?

22 MR. TRAUTMAN: Thank you, Your Honor.
23 Commission staff concurs with the comments that have
24 been made, particularly those of AT&T, and namely that
25 there is a possibility that the states could act in the

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1 fact-finding role for the FCC. We don't know exactly
2 what the parameters of that may be, but there may be a
3 need to preserve the record. There is also a
4 possibility that certiorari could be granted in the
5 case, and there is also the possibility that there
6 could be FCC interim rules that could impact what
7 happens in this case.

8 Staff agrees that it would be premature to
9 close the docket now. On the other hand, taking the
10 position that's apparently been taken in Texas to hold
11 the docket open but not continue at this point, that
12 would seem to be a prudent course of action, and Staff
13 does not need to make an additional written statement
14 in response to the motion.

15 JUDGE RENDAHL: Thank you, Mr. Trautman. Mr.
16 Ffitch?

17 MR. FFITCH: Thank, you, Your Honor. Public
18 Counsel agrees with the comments of the staff, AT&T,
19 and Mr. Kopta, and I'll just underline that we share
20 Mr. Kopta's concern about the existence of the
21 standstill order in relation to the motion to dismiss.
22 We think that's another reason why the motion to
23 dismiss is premature at this point.

24 JUDGE RENDAHL: Thank you, Mr. Ffitch.
25 Ms. Anderl?

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1 MS. ANDERL: Just a brief response. All of
2 the parties have discussed why they think it is
3 premature to dismiss this matter, but they haven't
4 addressed why they think it's appropriate to continue
5 operating under a delegated authority that's been held
6 to be invalid when the court's mandate had been issued
7 and is effective. The state commission simply has no
8 legal authority to conduct this proceeding, and that
9 is, I think, reason enough to close the docket.

10 The fact that the FCC might issue interim
11 rules while certainly possible and interesting is not
12 necessarily relevant to this docket. It's unclear what
13 those rules are going to say. It's unclear whether
14 those rules, if they are indeed an issue this year or
15 this quarter or this month, whatever the most
16 optimistic hope is, it's unclear whether they will have
17 any relevance to the record that had been created in
18 this docket or whether the record that's created in
19 this docket will be helpful in implementing those
20 rules.

21 With regard to whether the Supreme Court may
22 accept certiorari, it may, it may not. Again, that
23 fact has no bearing on the effectiveness of the mandate
24 from the DC Circuit Court of Appeals, which says, state
25 commissions, you don't have an authority to conduct a

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1 TRO proceeding.

2 Finally, with regard to the concerns raised
3 about the 15th Supplemental Order, I think those are
4 unfounded. Any Commission order is enforceable by the
5 Commission and is subject to a modification, if
6 necessary, by the Commission with due and proper
7 notice. No one would suggest that dockets that come to
8 a natural conclusion be a final order or have
9 unenforceable orders simply because the docket is closed.
10 I don't see anything about closing this docket that
11 would impinge upon the validity of orders entered in
12 the docket. Closing the docket or dismissing it does
13 not evaporate all of the process or all of the orders
14 out of the docket. Those still stand in force and
15 effect. That would be my belief.

16 So in sum, we think that the appropriate
17 thing to do is to dismiss. We would also point out
18 that all of the parties who are now claiming it is
19 premature to dismiss the docket actually suggested on
20 March 2nd, the day the DC Circuit Court of Appeals
21 entered its order invalidating the rules suggested the
22 appropriate thing to do would be not make Qwest
23 withdraw its petition. We thought that was premature
24 at the time, but it seems as though those parties would
25 have been happy to have us withdraw the petition three

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1 months ago. It's a little bit unclear why closing the
2 docket at this point is now somehow premature. That
3 concludes my remarks.

4 JUDGE RENDAHL: Thank you. Well, many of you
5 did touch on the issue of what we should do with the
6 record in this proceeding. I'll ask, beginning with
7 Qwest, if there is anything else you would like to add
8 if the Commission were to -- I guess for the Commission
9 in considering how to rule on Qwest's motion, what are
10 the options for what to do with the record if the
11 Commission were to close it and the alternative along
12 the Texas option of abating it, keeping it open but not
13 pursuing the matter further.

14 MS. ANDERL: Your Honor, I think the only
15 time an official record ever -- well, let me strike
16 that and say, in my experience and with my familiarity
17 with administrative law in Washington, the only time an
18 official record really becomes an issue is when a
19 reviewing court is looking at Commission action.

20 I don't think if we stop the docket at this
21 point we are going to have an issue of the reviewing
22 court looking at Commission action in this docket.
23 Therefore, the matters that were filed or the documents
24 that were filed in this case will all remain on file
25 with the Commission as documents in this docket. I

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1 don't know that there is any legal significance to
2 whether they are admitted into the record, the
3 evidentiary record, the administrative proceeding, or
4 simply on file with the Commission in this docket. I
5 think that would only have legal significance or
6 relevance if there was going to be a substantive order
7 by the Commission that some party would challenge.

8 JUDGE RENDAHL: The reason why I ask, there
9 is the potential that the FCC may ask the states for
10 their records in the cases that were ongoing. That's
11 one option. If we close the docket and they ask for
12 the record, the official record in some minds may be
13 just those exhibits that were admitted as opposed to
14 the file, which would contain all of the prefiled
15 exhibits, many of which have confidential and highly
16 confidential information. The protective order has
17 specific guidelines for how the Commission and the
18 parties should be treating that information. If we
19 close the docket, that might trigger the time lines for
20 returning the confidential and highly confidential
21 information, which might make it unavailable to the
22 FCC. So that's maybe giving you some more information
23 as to why I need comments on what we do with the
24 record.

25 MS. ANDERL: I understand, and I would like

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1 to have a moment to consult with Mr. Sherr, if I could,
2 but I'm not sure that the guidelines for the rate of
3 return or destroying confidential information apply to
4 the documents that are resident at the Commission. I
5 think they only apply to documents that the parties
6 have exchanged among each other. So I don't think that
7 any filings that contain confidential or highly
8 confidential information that any party made with the
9 Commission would be removed from the Commission's
10 records.

11 JUDGE RENDAHL: Let's be off the record while
12 you consult with Mr. Sherr and I will review the
13 protective order and we will go back on the record in
14 about five minutes.

15 (Discussion off the record.)

16 JUDGE RENDAHL: Let's be back on the record.
17 I'm taken a look at Protective Order No. 2 in this
18 proceeding. Paragraph 31 addresses confidential
19 information and the return of confidential information
20 and provides that a complete record, and I would
21 interpret that to be everything in the proceeding, not
22 just the exhibits, would be maintained and kept by the
23 Commission, which is standard for all of our
24 proceedings.

25 As for highly confidential information, I

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1 believe that section would apply to highly confidential
2 information because there is no other provision
3 relating to highly confidential information in that
4 section. So the Commission would retain one copy and
5 counsel may retain exhibits, but other than that, if we
6 were to close the proceeding, in my mind, that would
7 trigger the conclusion of the proceeding and the
8 requirement to return information. So that's my piece
9 of it, and what did you and Mr. Sherr come up with?

10 MS. ANDERL: So I agree with you on that,
11 Your Honor. I think the timing of our proceeding here
12 in Washington, because that's kind of a unique set of
13 problems for the Commission because we were two days
14 into the hearing when we had the DC Circuit Court of
15 Appeals order and stopped. There are a few pieces of
16 evidence in the record, and what would be the official
17 record, but certainly not all of the parties' evidence
18 and certainly not even all of Qwest's evidence, and I
19 don't really feel as though I can sit here and say to
20 you, Well, only those things that were officially
21 admitted into the record ought to be sent to the FCC
22 and no other parties' proposed prefile testimony or
23 exhibits ought to be sent. That doesn't make any
24 sense, and it would just be driven by the unique
25 circumstances of the timing of the hearing.

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1 But I do think that it would be inappropriate
2 to say that all of the proposed prefiled testimony and
3 exhibits ought to be included in as a part of the
4 record and sent to the FCC if requested because those
5 matters are simply not part of the official record.
6 They have not been admitted into evidence. There has
7 not been an opportunity for objection or
8 cross-examination on any of those documents. So we
9 think that from a number of legal and just basic
10 fairness issues that would be the wrong result. It
11 would just be a bare record of each parties' proposed
12 direct testimony not clarified or illuminated in any
13 way by cross-examination and would not be appropriate.

14 So under the circumstances, we would say that
15 the best result we could come up with that seems fair
16 is there be no official record if the docket was
17 closed, and if the FCC needs information, they can
18 obtain that from affected carriers. I don't think the
19 FCC needs to go to states. If the FCC asks states to
20 operate in a consultative role, the states then have
21 the authority to either reopen a proceeding or open a
22 new proceeding and gather evidence as appropriate.

23 JUDGE RENDAHL: Thank you. Ms. DeCook?

24 MS. DE COOK: Thank you, Your Honor. If you
25 follow Qwest's logic, I guess that speaks even more as

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1 to why you should keep the proceeding open, because
2 that would have you close the proceeding and
3 essentially deprive the Commission and parties of any
4 records that could be provided to the FCC if that's
5 what the FCC asks for, and instead, we have to open
6 another proceeding and solicit new evidence and undergo
7 the time-consuming aspects of that.

8 I think another problem I see with closing
9 the proceeding is that while the Commission may have
10 access to copies of the confidential and highly
11 confidential information, under the protective order,
12 the remaining parties do not. We have to return it,
13 and we would have no ability then to play any role
14 using Washington evidence in whatever FCC proceeding
15 occurs based upon the record that is sent up to the FCC
16 from the Washington commission.

17 So I think fairness really dictates that the
18 proceeding be kept open, that the information remain in
19 the hands of the parties, and if we are called upon by
20 the FCC to present facts and deal with those facts that
21 the FCC would have the information from which to do
22 that.

23 JUDGE RENDAHL: Thank you. Ms. Singer
24 Nelson?

25 MS. SINGER NELSON: Your Honor, I have

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1 nothing to add to this issue.

2 JUDGE RENDAHL: Thank you. Ms. Frame?

3 MS. FRAME: Neither does Covad.

4 JUDGE RENDAHL: Mr. Kopta?

5 MR. KOPTA: We also concur with AT&T's

6 comments.

7 JUDGE RENDAHL: Mr. Butler?

8 MR. BUTLER: WebTEC concurs with AT&T's

9 comments.

10 JUDGE RENDAHL: Mr. Rice?

11 MR. RICE: The Coalition has no position.

12 JUDGE RENDAHL: Mr. Trautman?

13 MR. TRAUTMAN: Staff concurs with the

14 comments of AT&T and believes they made a very good

15 point that the record that could be entered would be

16 very, very incomplete as it was described by Qwest

17 because much of the evidence would not be subject to

18 sufficient cross-examination to meet their evidentiary

19 standards. So the result if we close the docket is

20 that we would have almost no record for the FCC should

21 they want to look at what the state commission has

22 done, so we concur with the comments of AT&T.

23 JUDGE RENDAHL: Mr. Ffitch?

24 MR. FFITCH: We concur with Staff and AT&T,

25 Your Honor.

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1 JUDGE RENDAHL: Ms. Anderl?

2 MS. ANDERL: I'm a little puzzled, I guess,
3 as to how AT&T and Staff can raise a concern about
4 there not being a record if we close the docket. The
5 state of the record is the same whether the docket is
6 opened or closed.

7 The question is simply what would be
8 appropriate to consider as part of the official record
9 or file if, based on the speculation of these parties,
10 the FCC asks for information, and the existing record
11 in this docket would be responsive to the FCC's
12 request. It just seems like we are talking first very
13 speculatively about whether the FCC is even going to
14 ask the states for information, and on top of that,
15 whether the information in this docket would be
16 relevant or responsive or even up-to-date enough to be
17 worth sending.

18 So first, I think that if the parties are
19 protesting that the docket shouldn't be closed because
20 of all those reasons that that's pure speculation. If
21 the parties are protesting that closing the docket
22 somehow alters the state of the record in this case, I
23 think that they are wrong. The record is what the
24 record is. Right now, the Commission's official record
25 has some of Qwest's documents admitted and maybe some

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1 cross-examination exhibits, and that's it, and the
2 question is simply what would the Commission provide to
3 the FCC if asked?

4 That's an entirely different question, and
5 even if the docket remains open in some sort of
6 indefinite suspension, there still needs to be an
7 answer to that question of is it appropriate to provide
8 to the FCC documents that were not admitted into
9 evidence that were not cross-examined upon which no
10 objection has been heard, and that's why we made the
11 proposal we made, and that is since none of this
12 evidence has been tested through the evidentiary
13 process and the parties have not agreed that this
14 matter is appropriate to proceed on a paper record, we
15 think the better result is that none of the documents
16 are considered.

17 JUDGE RENDAHL: Okay. What I plan to do is
18 take all of your comments under consideration, and I'm
19 not even going to contemplate at what time I would
20 enter a decision on it but will take it under
21 consideration.

22 Are there any other comments or issues we
23 need to take into consideration in determining Qwest's
24 motion and the record in the proceeding? Okay.
25 Hearing nothing, I think we are ready to conclude, but

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1 before we do that I would ask, particularly those on
2 the bridge line, if anyone would like a copy of the
3 transcript of this afternoon's proceeding.

4 MS. DE COOK: AT&T would.

5 JUDGE RENDAHL: Any other takers? Is there
6 anything else we need to address? Thank you all for
7 attending in person and over the phone this afternoon.
8 This status conference is adjourned

9 (Status conference concluded at 2:10 p.m.)

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