

**BEFORE THE WASHINGTON STATE
UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND)	
TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION,)	DOCKET NO. UT-040788
)	
Complainant,)	ORDER NO. 06
)	
v.)	
)	PREHEARING CONFERENCE
VERIZON NORTHWEST INC.,)	ORDER ESTABLISHING
)	PROCEDURAL SCHEDULE
Respondent.)	
)	
.....)	

1 **NATURE OF PROCEEDING.** Docket No. UT-040788 relates to a filing by Verizon Northwest, Inc. (“Verizon” or “the Company”) seeking approval of “interim” tariffs plus a request to address of the Company’s asserted need for general rate relief. The Commission denied Verizon’s petition to consider Verizon’s general rate needs without the prior filing of tariffs. Following the denial, the Commission convened a prehearing conference to address scheduling implications of the decision. The conference was held at Olympia, Washington on July 1, 2004, before Administrative Law Judge C. Robert Wallis.

2 **APPEARANCES.** The following representatives appeared: Judith A. Endejan, Graham and Dunn, Seattle, WA, and Charles Carrathers, Irving, TX, representing Verizon. Arthur A. Butler, attorney, Ater Wynne LLP, Seattle, WA, representing WeBTEC. Ronald L. Roseman, attorney, Seattle, WA, representing AARP, Simon J. ffitich, Assistant Attorney General, Seattle, WA, Public Counsel, and Christopher G. Swanson, Assistant Attorney General, Olympia, WA, representing Commission Staff. In addition, the following counsel indicated that they would be unable to appear but stated no objection to the conference: John O’Rourke, representing Citizens' Utility Alliance of Washington, Stephen S.

Melnikoff, representing The United States Department of Defense, and David L. Rice, representing NPCC.

- 3 **PROCEDURAL SCHEDULE.** Commission Staff and Verizon came to the conference with a tentative agreement on a proposed schedule, and Public Counsel also came prepared with a proposal. After discussion, the parties reached tentative agreement. The following schedule is adopted, based on the parties' agreed proposal and Commission scheduling needs:

Verizon files tariffs	July 23, 2004
Suspension (tentative)	August 11, 2004
Verizon files rate design testimony	August 23, 2004
Other parties file revenue requirements testimony	November 15, 2004
Other parties file rate design testimony	December 8, 2004
Verizon files rebuttal testimony	January 26, 2005
Prehearing for marking exhibits	February 23, 2005
Evidentiary hearings, as needed/during the weeks of	February 28-March 4, 2005 March 7-11, 2005
Simultaneous opening briefs	March 31, 2005
Simultaneous answering briefs	April 15, 2005
Anticipated order date, approximately	Mid to latter May 2005.

- 4 **UNCERTAINTIES AFFECTING SCHEDULING:** Two parties indicated that they still had not selected experts to assist them with the proceeding, and conditioned their assent to the schedule on the availability of the expert

witnesses to be chosen. Parties are urged to make selections expeditiously, as scheduling options often diminish as time passes.

5 **HEARINGS FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.** Public Counsel asked that the Commission schedule three hearings to receive testimony from members of the public: one in Everett, one in Mount Vernon, and a third in eastern Washington at Richland/Kennewick, Pullman, or Wenatchee. The Commission will continue to work with Public Counsel and other parties to explore the feasibility and the schedule of one or more hearings to receive public comment.

6 **ELECTRONIC FILING.** The proposed schedule includes no short deadlines for which we anticipate the need for electronic distribution of filings to gain a day for filing paper copies. If such deadlines arise (for motion or discovery issues, for example) parties may request leave to provide materials only in electronic format on the day of the deadline pursuant to WAC 480-07-145(6).

7 **NOTICES OF PREHEARING CONFERENCE AND HEARING.** The Commission will serve notices of prehearing conference and hearing following suspension of the tariffs that Verizon has agreed to file on July 23.

8 **NOTICE TO PARTIES: Any objection to the provisions of this Order must be filed within ten (10) days after the service date of this Order, pursuant to WAC 480-07-430 and WAC 480-07-810. Absent such objection, this Order will control further proceedings in this matter, subject to Commission review.**

Dated at Olympia, Washington, and effective this 7th day of July, 2004

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

C. ROBERT WALLIS
Administrative Law Judge