Docket No. TE-170879 - Vol. I

In the Matter of Michael Brown d/b/a Dlux Limos LLC

April 11, 2018



206.287.9066 I 800.846.6989

1325 Fourth Avenue, Suite 1840, Seattle, Washington 98101 <u>www.buellrealtime.com</u>

email: info@buellrealtime.com



Page 1	Page 3
BEFORE THE WASHINGTON	1 OLYMPIA, WASHINGTON; APRIL 11, 2018
UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION	2 1:30 P.M.
In the Matter of Determining)DOCKET NO. TE-170879 the Proper Carrier Classification)VOLUME I	3000
of, and Complaint for Penalties)	4 PROCEEDINGS
Against:)	5
3	6 JUDGE CHARTOFF: So let's be on the record.
MICHAEL BROWN d/b/a DLUX LIMOS) LLC)	Good afternoon. My name is Laura Chartoff, and I am the
,	8 administrative law judge with the Washington Utilities
	9 and Transportation Commission. I am the presiding
MOVER'S COURT	officer for today's hearing being conducted at the
Pages 1-27	11 Commission's headquarters in Olympia.
ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE LAURA CHARTOFF	Today is Wednesday, April 11th, 2018, and
	the time is approximately 1:30 p.m. Today's hearing
April 11, 2018	involves a total of four charter party or excursion
1:30 P.M.	services carriers. So the first thing we will do is
	take a roll call to determine which companies are
Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission 1300 South Evergreen Park Drive SW	present. As you can see, there is a court reporter
Olympia, Washington 98504	18 creating a record of today's proceedings. So when I
	call your name, please raise your hand to identify
DEPONTED DV. TAVI ED CARLINGHOLIGE CON 2250	yourself and also give a verbal response to the roll
REPORTED BY: TAYLER GARLINGHOUSE, CCR 3358 Buell Realtime Reporting, LLC	21 call like "here" or "present."
1325 Fourth Avenue, Suite 1840 Seattle, Washington 98101	So the first docket is TE-180219, Tiger
(206) 287-9066 Seattle	23 Express Shipping Corporation, doing business as Tiger
(360) 534-9066 Olympia (800) 846-6989 National	24 Travel. 25 MS. NGUYEN: Present.
(655) 6.6 6666 [25 MG. INGUTEN. Plesell.
Page 2	Page 4
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1 APPEARANCES	
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date

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to shut down your business either completely or partially to avoid further enforcement action by the Commission. The Commission is going to want to see sufficient proof that you are no longer performing unlawful services, for example, you will need to provide proof that you have taken down or changed your website

or other online advertisements for your business.

The second option is to ask for a formal classification hearing to show why you don't need a permit. If you choose this option, you are contesting the allegations in the complaint and claim not to be conducting charter party or excursion services. For this option, we will schedule a formal hearing for a date in the near future with a deadline two to three weeks from now for both your company and the Commission Staff to declare all witnesses and file all exhibits.

Each of you has a right to be heard by the Commission, and I will call you up to do that individually. Commission Staff also has a right to be heard, and the Commission compliance investigator will be seated at the table to my right.

Now that we've gone over the general options for each of your companies, let me explain the rest of today's procedures. In a few minutes, I'll call each of your companies forward to make your choice on how to

Finally, if you choose to contest the allegations in the complaint, we will schedule another hearing for the Commission to present the necessary evidence to prove its case. If we're going to set a hearing, it would help if you know your schedule for the next month or so when we review calendars to choose a

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After I hear from each of your companies, we will take a break to provide Commission Staff time to meet with each of you and prepare a final disposition of your case.

So I will start calling the companies now. First company is Tiger Express Shipping Corporation, d/b/a Tiger Travel and Zhongxiang Ye.

Oh, please sit right there and turn on the microphone.

So let's start with Staff. Can you please state your name and job title for the record?

MR. RAUB: My name is Justin Raub. I'm a compliance investigator for consumer protection. My name is Justin Raub. I'm a compliance -- or compliance investigator for consumer protection.

JUDGE CHARTOFF: Can you spell your last name?

MR. RAUB: R-a-u-b.

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proceed. At that time, I will swear you in so that anything you tell the Court will be under oath and can be considered as sworn testimony. Once you are sworn in, I will ask if you understand your options for today's hearing and then ask you to state your preference. If there's anything else you want to explain to me, you can do so at that time.

In each of the complaints, Commission Staff has not only alleged that you are providing charter or excursion services without a permit, they are also seeking to have a penalty imposed. The law sets the maximum penalty for each violation at \$5,000. Staff will be making a penalty recommendation as part of any agreed order. Staff will be explaining that recommendation, but the Commission will be making the final decision about the amount of penalty to be imposed.

If you choose to testify about how you are getting out of the charter and excursion carrier business, I will allow you to make a statement explaining how you plan to do that. Depending on what proof you can provide, you should be able to reach an agreed order resolving this matter with Commission Staff, and you can speak to Staff about that during the recess.

JUDGE CHARTOFF: Thank you.

2 And you?

MS. NGUYEN: Good afternoon, my name is Trang Nguyen, N-g-u-y-e-n. I am making an appearance on behalf of Patrick Feldman, who is seeking a continuance of the hearing for this afternoon if that's possible.

JUDGE CHARTOFF: Can you repeat your first name?

MS. NGUYEN: Yes, it's Trang, T-r-a-n-g.
JUDGE CHARTOFF: And the firm you are with?

MS. NGUYEN: I'm with Feldman & Lee.

JUDGE CHARTOFF: And how do you want to

proceed this morning?

MS. NGUYEN: I don't know. I'm just here to seek a continuance. Honestly, this is my third week on the job. I got a call yesterday saying can you cover a hearing? Just go in there and ask for a continuance.

JUDGE CHARTOFF: Okay. Okay. Because your firm was just retained?

MS. NGUYEN: I have no idea. I mean, I think I was told Patrick has a conflict and couldn't attend the meeting today.

JUDGE CHARTOFF: Okay.

MS. NGUYEN: So my only job is to come down and get another date. I apologize.

	Page 9		Page 11
1	JUDGE CHARTOFF: Do you I think you we	1	JUDGE CHARTOFF: And do you understand
2	previously mentioned May 18th in the afternoon as a	2	your the options I presented earlier?
3	possible	3	MS. GARZA: Yes.
4	MS. NGUYEN: I believe Mr. Feldman will be	4	JUDGE CHARTOFF: And do you know which way
5	out of the country from May 1st to May 18th, and they	5	you want to proceed?
6	are hopefully requesting for any date after May 28th.	6	MS. GARZA: Yes.
7	JUDGE CHARTOFF: Okay. I have several dates	7	JUDGE CHARTOFF: And how would you like to
8	in the first week of June.	8	proceed?
9	MS. NGUYEN: Okay.	9	MS. GARZA: We close the company, but I have
10	JUDGE CHARTOFF: June 1, June 4. Do you	10	to explain that Garza Tours didn't have any vehicles,
11	have access to his calendar?	11	and they were using the vehicles for A Plus Taxi. So
12	MS. NGUYEN: I let's just go with the	12	then now A Plus Taxi is in the process of getting the
13	4th. I think that will give him enough time to get up	13	license that we need. A Plus Taxi is my husband's
14	to speed again.	14	company, and Garza Tours is under my name, but he was
15	JUDGE CHARTOFF: Okay. 9:30 or 1:30?	15	the one who was managing the company.
16	MS. NGUYEN: Let's do 1:30, please.	16	JUDGE CHARTOFF: I forgot to swear you in.
17	JUDGE CHARTOFF: Okay. I think okay. I	17	So let me swear you in right now. Please stand.
18	agree to do a continuance to June 4th at 1:30, and I	18	(Carmen Ceron-Garza and Armando Garza
19	will get a notice out to you probably tomorrow.	19	sworn.)
20	MS. NGUYEN: All right. Thank you. And I	20	JUDGE CHARTOFF: Thank you.
21	have the notice of appearance. Did the Court need this?	21	I'm sorry, so you were saying that you
22	JUDGE CHARTOFF: Sure.	22	closed the company, that your husband has a company, A
23	MS. NGUYEN: Okay.	23	Plus Taxi, and that he's going to get a permit for his
24	JUDGE CHARTOFF: Thank you.	24	business; is that right?
25	MS. NGUYEN: My apologies.	25	MS. GARZA: Yes, that's correct, and I have
	Page 10		Page 12
1	Page 10 JUDGE CHARTOFF: Okay. I'm going to call	1	Page 12 the documents that the lawyer prepared for you.
1 2		1 2	_
	JUDGE CHARTOFF: Okay. I'm going to call		the documents that the lawyer prepared for you.
2	JUDGE CHARTOFF: Okay. I'm going to call next Carmen Ceron-Garza, Garza Wine Tours.	2	the documents that the lawyer prepared for you. JUDGE CHARTOFF: Okay. Thank you.
2	JUDGE CHARTOFF: Okay. I'm going to call next Carmen Ceron-Garza, Garza Wine Tours. THE INTERPRETER: I am the interpreter for	2 3	the documents that the lawyer prepared for you. JUDGE CHARTOFF: Okay. Thank you. Let me swear you in.
2 3 4	JUDGE CHARTOFF: Okay. I'm going to call next Carmen Ceron-Garza, Garza Wine Tours. THE INTERPRETER: I am the interpreter for Ms. Garza today, Your Honor, here with her husband.	2 3 4	the documents that the lawyer prepared for you. JUDGE CHARTOFF: Okay. Thank you. Let me swear you in. (Jason Hoxit sworn.)
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	Page 13		Page 15
-			
1	Staff and see if you can agree on an order for entry.	1	JUDGE CHARTOFF: Okay. And you want
2	And essentially that order will say that you agree you	2	would you like to pursue the cease and desist order and
3	were operating without a permit, that you advertised	3	negotiate with Staff on the penalty?
4	without a permit, and that you agree to stop operating	4	MR. DAVIS: Yes.
5	until you get a permit should you decide to apply for	5	JUDGE CHARTOFF: Okay. And did you hear the
6 7	one.	6	paragraph I went through where I talked about the
	So once you are satisfied and understand all	1	recess?
8 9	the terms of the order, you and Staff will both sign it.	8 9	MR. DAVIS: Yes, yes.
	It will also include most likely an agreement about the	1	JUDGE CHARTOFF: Would you like me to repeat
10	amount of penalty that will be imposed. But if not, you	10	it?
11	can make your case about why the penalty should be	11	MR. DAVIS: No, you don't need to.
12	different than what Staff is recommending.	12	JUDGE CHARTOFF: Great. Okay. So yeah,
13	MS. GARZA: Okay. I'm going to sit here to	13	stick around, return to your seat, and wait for to
14	negotiate, then.	14	talk to Staff at the recess.
15	JUDGE CHARTOFF: Okay, good. Okay. Thank	15	MR. DAVIS: Okay. Thank you.
16	you. So for now, you can return to your seat and then	16	JUDGE CHARTOFF: Thank you.
17	at when we recess, you can speak with Staff.	17	Okay. The last is Michael Brown, doing
18	MS. GARZA: Thank you.	18	business as DLux Limos LLC.
19	JUDGE CHARTOFF: Okay. I'm going to call	19	Okay. So starting with Staff, please state
20	now Christene Davis, Crescent Bar Charters LLC.	20	your name and job title, spelling your last name for the
21	Okay. And please state your name and title	21	record.
22	for the record.	22	MR. TURCOTT: Good afternoon, Your Honor.
23	MS. PAUL: I'm Susie Paul. My last name is	23	It's Michael Turcott, T-u-r-c-o-t-t, compliance
24	P-a-u-l, and I'm a compliance investigator with consumer	24	investigator in consumer protection.
25	protection.	25	JUDGE CHARTOFF: Thank you.
	Page 14		Page 16
1	JUDGE CHARTOFF: Thank you.	1	And company?
		1 +	And company:
2	And for the company?	2	MR. BROWN: DLux Limos.
2 3			
	And for the company?	2	MR. BROWN: DLux Limos.
3	And for the company? MS. DAVIS: I'm Christene Davis with	2 3	MR. BROWN: DLux Limos. JUDGE CHARTOFF: And your first and last
3 4	And for the company? MS. DAVIS: I'm Christene Davis with Crescent Bar Charters.	2 3 4	MR. BROWN: DLux Limos. JUDGE CHARTOFF: And your first and last name, spelling your last name?
3 4 5	And for the company? MS. DAVIS: I'm Christene Davis with Crescent Bar Charters. JUDGE CHARTOFF: Okay.	2 3 4 5	MR. BROWN: DLux Limos. JUDGE CHARTOFF: And your first and last name, spelling your last name? MR. BROWN: Yes, ma'am. Michael Brown, DLux
3 4 5 6	And for the company? MS. DAVIS: I'm Christene Davis with Crescent Bar Charters. JUDGE CHARTOFF: Okay. MR. DAVIS: She's listed as the owner, but	2 3 4 5 6	MR. BROWN: DLux Limos. JUDGE CHARTOFF: And your first and last name, spelling your last name? MR. BROWN: Yes, ma'am. Michael Brown, DLux Limos, B-r-o-w-n.
3 4 5 6 7	And for the company? MS. DAVIS: I'm Christene Davis with Crescent Bar Charters. JUDGE CHARTOFF: Okay. MR. DAVIS: She's listed as the owner, but I'm her husband, Troy Davis, and I pretty much do the	2 3 4 5 6 7	MR. BROWN: DLux Limos. JUDGE CHARTOFF: And your first and last name, spelling your last name? MR. BROWN: Yes, ma'am. Michael Brown, DLux Limos, B-r-o-w-n. JUDGE CHARTOFF: And you're the owner?
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Page 17 Page 19 1 1 trade name for A Plus Taxi, working as A Plus Taxi. And MR. TURCOTT: No, Your Honor. No 2 2 objections. I think we've complied with everything that we have to 3 JUDGE CHARTOFF: Okay. So did you hear --3 as far as getting all the proper registrations and so MR. BROWN: Yes, ma'am. 4 forth and blah, blah, concerning the vehicle that 4 5 5 JUDGE CHARTOFF: -- the directions? we want to use. And the only thing that I'm waiting on 6 Okay. Great. Do you have any questions? 6 right now would be proper insurance coverage. So 7 7 MR. BROWN: No. anyways, he's got the declarations for both my wife and JUDGE CHARTOFF: Okay. 8 8 9 9 JUDGE CHARTOFF: Okay. MR. BROWN: We're all set. JUDGE CHARTOFF: So please return to your 10 10 MR. GARZA: And I think maybe he can explain 11 seat and wait to speak with Staff at the recess. 11 it better than I can. 12 MR. BROWN: Thank you, Your Honor. 12 MR. HOXIT: Your Honor, Staff would like to JUDGE CHARTOFF: So at this point, we're 13 13 enter in CCG-1 and AG-1 as exhibits. CCG-1 is a going to take a recess, and as soon as you have a chance 14 14 declaration of Carmen Ceron-Garza and AG-1 is a to review the cease and desist orders and language with 15 declaration of Armando Garza, Jr. 15 16 Staff, there will be some negotiation about the penalty. 16 JUDGE CHARTOFF: Okay. Thank you. And 17 It may be nominal depending on the history of your 17 there's no objection? 18 company or there may be a reason that Staff asked for a 18 MR. HOXIT: No objections, Your Honor. 19 larger penalty; for example, if you have appeared here 19 JUDGE CHARTOFF: So I will admit these 20 before or have previously held a household goods per --20 exhibits marked as AG-1 and CCG-1. 21 previously held an excursion or charter party carrier 21 (Exhibits AG-1 and CCG-1 admitted.) 22 22 permit with the Commission. JUDGE CHARTOFF: Thank you. 23 23 Typically, a portion of the penalty is So I'm just going to talk about the 24 suspended, which is meant to deter you from future 24 stipulated order to make sure you understand the order. 25 illegal operations. So you may pay a portion today and 25 So for the record, it says that Garza Wine Tours admits Page 18 Page 20 1 the remaining portion does not become payable unless you 1 it conducted operations without the required certificate 2 violate the order. Then after the recess, we will call 2 and that it also advertised to operate as a charter 3 3 each of you back up, make sure you understand the order, party or excursion service carrier without -- on at 4 4 and I will sign it on the record today, and then you least one occasion. And a \$5,000 penalty is being 5 5 will leave with a copy of it. imposed, 4,500 of the penalty is suspended for a period 6 So is there anything else before we take a 6 of two years and waived thereafter provided the business 7 break? Okay. All right. We are at recess. Thank you. 7 refrains permanently from operations as a charter party 8 (Recess taken from 1:56 p.m. to 3:08 8 or excursion carrier in the state of Washington. 9 9 The remainder of the penalty is payable 10 JUDGE CHARTOFF: We will be on the record. 10 according to the schedule in Appendix A, which shows 11 11 I understand the cease and desist orders have been \$150 today and payments monthly thereafter, and that you 12 explained and presented to each company, so I will call 12 agree to cease and desist operations as a charter party 13 you back up one at a time in the order we went in 13 and excursion carrier. before. So first I will call Carmen Ceron-Garza, Garza I just need to go over a couple more things. 14 14 15 15 Wine Tours. Please come back up. The order to cease and desist is permanent, meaning it 16 does not expire. So even after the two-year period of 16 Ms. Ceron-Garza, did you have a chance to 17 the suspended penalty, if Staff discovers you are still 17 walk through the multipage order? 18 MS. GARZA: Yes, my husband is going to talk 18 operating. Staff can go straight to superior court and 19 to you regarding the agreement that we talk about with 19 seek enforcement of this order, which will include

significant additional penalties. So there is a strong

regard to the payment schedule, if you miss a payment,

and payable immediately. So if for some reason you're

going to be late making a payment, you will need to

the entire amount, including the \$4,500, will become due

incentive for you to comply with the law. And with

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the Staff.

JUDGE CHARTOFF: Is your microphone on?

MR. GARZA: I'm Armando Garza, Carmen's

husband. The agreement that we came up with is that my

submitted a request to have Garza Wine Tours put on as a

wife has dissolved the company and in turn, I have

	Page 21		Page 23
1	contact Staff and make arrangements. Failing to contact	1	JUDGE CHARTOFF: And the remainder of the
2	Staff will ensure that the entire penalty is imposed.	2	penalty is due and payable
3	Do you understand that?	3	MS. DAVIS: We paid it. We paid our due.
4	MR. GARZA: Yes.	4	JUDGE CHARTOFF: Oh, okay. There's a the
5	MS. GARZA: Yes.	5	order says according to the schedule in Appendix A. So
6	JUDGE CHARTOFF: Do you understand legally	6	I'm going to just cross that out.
7	what you can and can't do?	7	MS. PAUL: Okay. Yes, there was no payment
8	MS. GARZA: Yes.	8	plan. They made the payment today.
9	MR. GARZA: Yes, a little bit more than what	9	JUDGE CHARTOFF: Okay. Okay. And did you
10	I did before, yes.	10	hear I'll just repeat this quickly. The order to
11	JUDGE CHARTOFF: Okay. And remember that	11	cease and desist is permanent, meaning it does not
12	Commission Staff is always available to assist you if	12	expire. So even after the two years of the suspended
13	you have any questions. The Commission's goal is	13	penalty, when that has run, if Staff discovers you are
14	compliance. Are there any additional questions?	14	still operating, Staff can go straight to superior court
15	MR. HOXIT: Not from Staff.	15	to seek enforcement of the order which will include
16	MR. GARZA: No.	16	significant additional penalties.
17	JUDGE CHARTOFF: Okay. Then I will sign the	17	MR. DAVIS: That's unless we obtain a new
18	order. Okay. And Staff will make a copy for you and	18	permit, correct?
19	then you are free to go.	19	JUDGE CHARTOFF: Yes.
20	MS. GARZA: Thank you so much.	20	MR. DAVIS: Thank you.
21	JUDGE CHARTOFF: Thank you.	21	JUDGE CHARTOFF: Yes. Oh, so you paid the
22	MR. GARZA: Thank you.	22	penalty in full. Oh, wait. Right. So you paid the
23	JUDGE CHARTOFF: So I will next call	23	penalty in full so no payment plan. Okay. And do you
24	Christene Davis, Crescent Bar Charters.	24	understand legally what you can and can't do?
25	Okay. So, Ms. Davis, did you have a chance	25	MR. DAVIS: Yes.
	,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,		
	Page 22		Page 24
1	Page 22	1	Page 24
1	to walk through the order?	1	JUDGE CHARTOFF: Okay. I will go ahead and
2	to walk through the order? MS. DAVIS: Yes.	2	JUDGE CHARTOFF: Okay. I will go ahead and sign this. Okay. We will get you a copy and you're
2	to walk through the order? MS. DAVIS: Yes. JUDGE CHARTOFF: And did you understand all	2 3	JUDGE CHARTOFF: Okay. I will go ahead and sign this. Okay. We will get you a copy and you're free to go.
2 3 4	to walk through the order? MS. DAVIS: Yes. JUDGE CHARTOFF: And did you understand all the pages?	2 3 4	JUDGE CHARTOFF: Okay. I will go ahead and sign this. Okay. We will get you a copy and you're free to go. MS. DAVIS: Thank you.
2 3 4 5	to walk through the order? MS. DAVIS: Yes. JUDGE CHARTOFF: And did you understand all the pages? MS. DAVIS: I do.	2 3 4 5	JUDGE CHARTOFF: Okay. I will go ahead and sign this. Okay. We will get you a copy and you're free to go. MS. DAVIS: Thank you. MR. DAVIS: Thank you, Your Honor.
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	Daws 0F		Dawa 27
	Page 25		Page 27
1	MR. BROWN: Yes, ma'am.	1	CERTIFICATE
2	JUDGE CHARTOFF: Okay. And you have been	2	
3	assessed a penalty of \$5,000. 3,500 of the penalty is	3	STATE OF WASHINGTON
4	suspended?	4	COUNTY OF THURSTON
5	MR. BROWN: Yes, ma'am.	5	
6	JUDGE CHARTOFF: Okay. And the remainder of	6	I, Tayler Garlinghouse, a Certified Shorthand
7	the penalty	7	Reporter in and for the State of Washington, do hereby
8	MR. BROWN: Paid in full.	8	certify that the foregoing transcript is true and
9	JUDGE CHARTOFF: Oh, that has been paid in	9	accurate to the best of my knowledge, skill and ability.
10	full, okay.	10	60104
11	Is that correct?	11	
12	MR. TURCOTT: Yes, ma'am.		
13	JUDGE CHARTOFF: Okay.	12	Jayla Garlinghouse
14	MR. TURCOTT: Yes, Your Honor.	13	Tayler Garlinghouse, CCR 3358
15	JUDGE CHARTOFF: Again, I'm just crossing	14	
16	out subject of schedule on Appendix A. Since it's a	15	
17	typo, I think it's we don't need to resign. And do	16	
18	you understand the order to cease and desist is	17	
19	permanent?	18	
20	MR. BROWN: Yes, ma'am. Until further	19	
21	licenses are in place?	20	
22	JUDGE CHARTOFF: Right, unless you have a	21	
23		22	
	license in place.	23	
24	MR. BROWN: Yes, ma'am.	24 25	
25	JUDGE CHARTOFF: Okay. And you understand	25	
	Page 26		
1	legally what you can and can't do?		
2	MR. BROWN: Yes, ma'am.		
3	JUDGE CHARTOFF: Okay. Any additional		
4	questions? Okay. I will sign it. We'll get you a copy		
5	and you will be free to go.		
6	MR. BROWN: Thank you, Your Honor.		
7	JUDGE CHARTOFF: Thank you. Okay. And we		
8	are adjourned.		
9	·		
10	(Adjourned at 3:24 p.m.)		
11			
12			
13			
14			
15			
16			
17			
18			
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21			
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24			
25			
1		1	

	23:5 25:16	5.24 9.16 10.1	8:18,23 9:1,7,10	aamnany 4,22 5,15
<u>A</u>	apply 13:5	5:24 8:16 10:1	9:15,17,22,24	company 4:22 5:15 7:13 10:23,24
ability 27:9		13:19 18:2,12,14 21:23	, , ,	,
able 6:22 12:23	approximately 3:13		10:1,7,10,18,22	11:9,14,15,22,22
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