

[Service Date: September 18, 2006]

BEFORE THE
WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND
TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

IN THE MATTER OF

LEVEL 3 COMMUNICATIONS, LLC'S
PETITION FOR ARBITRATION PURSUANT
TO SECTION 252(B) OF THE
COMMUNICATIONS ACT OF 1934, AS
AMENDED BY THE
TELECOMMUNICATIONS ACT OF 1996,
AND THE APPLICABLE STATE LAWS FOR
RATES, TERMS, AND CONDITIONS OF
INTERCONNECTION WITH QWEST
CORPORATION

Docket No. UT-063006

**LEVEL 3 COMMUNICATIONS,
LLC'S RESPONSE TO BENCH
REQUEST NOS. 1 AND 2**

Level 3 Communications, LLC ("Level 3"), by and through its undersigned attorneys, hereby submits its Responses to the Bench Requests of the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission ("Commission"), dated September 1, 2006, as follows:

**WASHINGTON UTILITIES & TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
RESPONSE TO BENCH REQUEST**

Docket No.: UT-063006
Response Date: September 18, 2006
Requestor: Commission
Respondent: Level 3
Prepared by: Erik Cecil

BENCH REQUEST NO. 1:

Does Level 3 provide VNXX service in Washington State to any customers other than Internet Service Providers? If so, please identify the type of customer Level 3 serves, *e.g.*, residential or business customer.

LEVEL 3'S RESPONSE TO BENCH REQUEST NO. 1:

Answering this question first assumes an agreed-upon definition of VNXX. So, to the extent the definition addresses the location of transport facilities owned or paid for by Level 3, then Exhibit MDG-2 illustrates that Level 3's network supports very little VNXX.

Secondly, as to the type of customer, Level 3 not only provides services to the nation's largest dialup Internet Service Providers such as Earthlink, MSN and AOL, it provides Voice over Internet Protocol to Enhanced Service Providers nationwide. Based upon the foregoing, Level 3's Washington network provides VNXX only to ISPs and ESPs.

Level 3's network is all IP. It does not provide TDM-based traditional voice services in the state of Washington. Accordingly, Level 3 does not provide voice-based VNXX, as that term is understood to refer to non-enhanced traffic.

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BENCH REQUEST NO. 2:

Please provide details on the differences in the features and functionality between Local Interconnection Service (LIS) and Feature Group D (FGD) trunks. Include detailed information that explains why intrastate, interstate, and local calls can or cannot be mixed on LIS trunks. Please include any standards, both internal and industry, which may apply. If the above traffic has been mixed on LIS type trunks in other locations, please provide detailed information including what states and companies have been involved, and any differences between LIS type trunks in those jurisdiction and Qwest's LIS trunks.

LEVEL 3'S RESPONSE TO BENCH REQUEST NO. 2:

There is no fundamental difference between FGD trunks and LIS trunks, or any other trunks for that matter. The difference lies in the software options selected by the LEC when programming a switch, each of which are capable of routing all types of calls. There is no difference in the physical network involved either – whether it be the facility over which the traffic is transmitted or the switches at either end directing where the traffic should go. A switch routes traffic between local loops and trunk groups and between different trunk groups, and the same switches perform these functions whether for local or toll traffic. As described in more detail in Mr. Greene's and Mr. Wilson's testimony, the term "trunk" refers to a single voice-grade connection capable of carrying one voice call between two switches, and a "trunk group" is a collection of trunks normally, but not necessarily, provisioned over the same physical facility connecting two switches. A trunk is the logical connection between the two switches and is analogous to a lane drawn on a highway, the highway being the physical facility between two switches (the fiber optic cable). A "trunk group" would be the equivalent of multiple lanes on the same highway all going together in the same direction. For individual trunks, some lanes may be marked for traffic going north, some for traffic going south, some for buses only, etc., or multiple trunks could be marked for traffic going to the same destination. The different "lanes" or trunks differ only in how they are programmed to direct traffic over the physical facility.

Every switch, whether provided by Lucent, Nortel or other manufacturer, must be programmed to route calls in the manner desired by the provisioning LEC. A single software package is inherent to every switch, each of which is capable of providing the LEC with the same functionality. The LEC chooses which software options to utilize based upon the functionality it wishes the switch to perform. The LEC can select options necessary to direct the switch to route only toll calls to a given trunk (effectively designating that trunk as an FGD trunk), and the LEC can also select options to program the switch to route only locally dialed calls to another given trunk. Similarly, the LEC can select options sufficient to enable the switch

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to route all calls to a single trunk or trunk group. A switch can route an interexchange call to a LIS trunk just as easily as it does to an FGD trunk. It is just a matter of programming the routing table with the correct trunk group assignment, and the routing table must be programmed regardless of whether a call is routed to a LIS trunk or an FGD trunk.

Although various kinds of calls might begin in non-PSTN format (such as IP-enabled), Level 3 delivers all of its traffic bound for Qwest subscribers in standard PSTN circuit-switched format. Level 3 also provides standard SS7 signaling, and receives all traffic from Qwest in that same, standard format. So, all traffic coming from Qwest is obviously in TDM format, and by the time Level 3 delivers any traffic to Qwest, it is all in that same format as well. In other words, LIS trunks can carry intrastate, interstate and local calls combined. The intrastate, interstate and local distinctions are actually regulatory classifications created for the purpose of rating calls. The activity involved in routing a call is determined not by such classifications but by the dialed number or, for ported numbers, the local routing number (LRN). There is no reason, technical or otherwise, that intrastate, interstate and local calls cannot be combined over the same LIS trunks.

Level 3 combines intrastate, interstate and local traffic over local interconnection facilities in 34 states today under its interconnection agreements with Verizon, AT&T and BellSouth. In the State of Washington, Level 3 combines all of its traffic with Verizon over its interconnection facilities according to a negotiated Interconnection Agreement filed with and approved by the WUTC. It is Level 3's understanding that AT&T, Verizon and Qwest all use the same types of switches (the majority of which are Lucent and Nortel switches), so there are no differences between Qwest's "LIS" trunks and the other RBOCs' local interconnection trunks. Neither the networks that Verizon, AT&T and BellSouth deploy, nor the traffic exchanged over them, is different than what Level 3 proposes to do with Qwest.

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that I have this 18th day of September, 2006, served the true and correct original, along with the correct number of copies, of the foregoing document upon the WUTC, via the method(s) noted below, properly addressed as follows:

Carole Washburn
Executive Secretary
Washington Utilities and Transportation
Commission
1300 S Evergreen Park Drive SW
Olympia, WA 98504-7250

_____ Hand Delivered
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_____ Overnight Mail (UPS)
_____ Facsimile (360) 586-1150
 Email (records@wutc.wa.gov)

with a copy to
WUTC Records Center

I hereby certify that I have this 18th day of September, 2006, served a true and correct copy of the foregoing document upon parties of record, via the method(s) noted below, properly addressed as follows:

On Behalf Of Qwest Corporation:

Lisa A. Anderl
Qwest Corporation
1600 7th Avenue, Room 3206
Seattle WA 98191

_____ Hand Delivered
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Confidentiality Status: Confidential

On Behalf Of Level 3 Communications, LLC:

Erik Cecil
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Confidentiality Status: Confidential

On Behalf Of Qwest Corporation:

Thomas M. Dethlefs
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On Behalf Of Level 3 Communications, LLC:

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I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of Washington that the foregoing is true and correct.

DATED this 18th day of September, 2006, at Seattle, Washington.


