

BEFORE THE WASHINGTON UTILITIES
AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

In the Matter of the Petition for Arbitration)	DOCKET NO. UT-043013
Of an Amendment to Interconnection)	
Agreements of)	
VERIZON NORTHWEST INC.)	VERIZON'S ANSWER TO
With)	MCI'S PETITION FOR
COMPETITIVE LOCAL EXCHANGE)	REVIEW OF ORDER NO. 10
CARRIERS AND COMMERCIAL)	AND PETITION TO VACATE
MOBILE RADIO SERVICE PROVIDERS)	ORDER NO. 10
IN WASHINGTON)	
Pursuant to 47 U.S.C. Section 252(b) and)	
The Triennial Review Order.)	
_____)	

1. Verizon Northwest Inc. ("Verizon") hereby files its Answer to MCI's Petition for Review of Order No. 10 ("Petition"). As permitted by the ALJ's Notice Granting Request (Sept. 22, 2004), this Answer also presents additional issues for review and requests that Order No. 10 be vacated.

I. INTRODUCTION

2. MCI's Petition must be dismissed for procedural reasons or denied on the merits. MCI's first argument—that it cannot submit resale orders because it places orders only through EDI—is wrong as a matter of fact. The unrebutted evidence presented at the September 9 hearing shows that MCI has placed *hundreds* of local service orders with Verizon in Washington using Verizon's "WISE" Web/GUI interface.

3. MCI's second argument—that Order No. 5 requires Verizon to unbundle its packet switch—was already rejected by the Commission in this docket. As MCI admits, it and other CLECs asked the Commission to "clarify" Order No. 5 to require

Verizon to unbundle its packet switch. The Commission rejected this request in Order No. 8 and instructed the CLECs to file a petition for enforcement. The CLECs did not comply with the Commission's instruction or file a petition for review of Order No. 8; instead, they filed a new "Motion for Enforcement" in this docket. In response, the ALJ in Order No. 10 again instructed the CLECs to file a petition for enforcement, which they finally did in Docket No. UT-041127. Thus MCI's Petition here, although styled as a petition for review of Order No. 10, is in fact an untimely and impermissible request for reconsideration of Order No. 8.

4. Finally, MCI's third argument—that its interconnection agreement requires Verizon to unbundle its packet switch—raises the precise issue to be decided in Docket No. UT-041127. MCI's attempt to litigate this issue here ignores the Commission's explicit directive in Order No. 8 that MCI and other CLECs must file a separate petition for enforcement. Thus MCI's request is nothing more than an unlawful attempt to circumvent Docket No. UT-041127.

5. Furthermore, Order No. 10 should be vacated in its entirety because it unlawfully granted emergency injunctive relief. The law is clear: the Commission cannot grant such relief unless there is an "immediate danger to the public health, safety, or welfare" and the moving party establishes a likelihood of success on the merits. Moreover, unlike the normal discretion afforded an administrative agency, in an emergency adjudicative proceeding the agency may order only such action needed to avoid the immediate danger. In Order No. 10, however, the ALJ granted emergency injunctive relief even though (1) she found that "there is no immediate harm to the public welfare" and (2) she explicitly refused to consider the merits of the CLECs' claims—

indeed, she ruled the merits would be addressed in a separate, subsequent proceeding. (Order No. 10 ¶¶ 31, 34.) The ALJ also violated statutory and Commission procedure for holding evidentiary hearings. Given these procedural and substantive errors, the ALJ could not lawfully have granted *any* relief, and Order No. 10 must be set aside.

II. MCI'S PETITION MUST BE DISMISSED ON PROCEDURAL GROUNDS OR DENIED ON THE MERITS

A. MCI Can Place, and Has Placed, Orders Using Verizon's WISE Interface.

6. MCI claims that it cannot place resale orders because it uses only EDI and would be required to build a new OSS interface. (Petition ¶ 17.) This is the same claim that MCI witness Sherry Lichtenberg initially made in her direct testimony at the September 9 hearing and that Verizon witness Kathleen McLean fully rebutted.¹

7. During cross-examination, Ms. Lichtenberg admitted that when MCI's EDI system goes down or a customer is having a specific problem, MCI submits an order on Verizon's WISE interface "because it will move more rapidly." (Tr. at 243, l. 11-15.) She then tried to downplay MCI's current use of Verizon's existing WISE interface as an "exception," stating, "I do not believe we have used the WISE GUI² to place orders for local service for any of our entities." (Tr. at 243, l. 20-22.) Her "belief" was based on discussions she had with certain sales office personnel. (Tr. at 242, l. 11-12.)

8. In rebuttal, however, Verizon witness Ms. McLean explained that MCI has, in fact, submitted *hundreds* of orders in Washington using the WISE interface:

¹ As a preliminary matter, the only reason that MCI cannot use EDI for resale orders is because it has affirmatively chosen not to make the modifications necessary to do so. And while MCI is free to make such a decision, it cannot then use that decision as a basis to insist that Verizon be required to provide an unbundled network element that does not exist and never has existed.

² The terms "WISE interface," "WISE GUI," or "Web/GUI" all refer to the same thing: a simple, Web-based system for placing UNE or resale orders. (See, e.g., Tr. at 291-93.)

[T]hey [MCI] actually have submitted north of 700 LSRs [local service orders] using the WISE interface in Washington. . . . [A]nd MCI does use WISE in other [Verizon] states to place resale orders.

(Tr. at 280, l. 8-13.) Counsel for MCI then cross-examined Ms. McLean on this very issue:

Q. MCI is not ordering through the WISE system today, isn't that right?

A. That's not right. I have several hundred local service requests received from MCI via the Web GUI in Washington State so far in 2004.

Q. Are those related to local number portability?

A. No, they're not, they're related to migrations, new connects, disconnects, and change activities.

Q. But those are not orders for –

A. For UNE platform.

Q. UNE Platform?

A. Yes, they are.

(Tr. at 311, l. 5-18.)

9. Furthermore, Ms. McLean explained that MCI has used Verizon's WISE system in California to perform changes to existing resale accounts, to migrate new accounts, to suspend service, to restore service, and to disconnect service. (Tr. at 286, l. 4-9.) She also explained that MCI has several thousand trained WISE users. (Tr. at 294, l. 15-16.) After listening to all this evidence, ALJ Rendahl observed at the hearing, "I think there's sufficient testimony in the record that MCI does use the [WISE] system for certain circumstances, and I don't know that we need to beat that horse anymore" (Tr. at 296, l. 4-6.)

10. MCI, of course, did not rebut any of this testimony, and therefore failed to meet its burden of proof that it cannot place orders via the WISE interface.³ In short, MCI's witness, Ms. Lichtenberg, was apparently unaware that MCI uses Verizon's WISE interface. Repeating Ms. Lichtenberg's erroneous opinion in a Petition for Review does not make it true.⁴

B. As the ALJ Determined, the Relief MCI Seeks Cannot Currently Be Provided.

11. In addition to properly reflecting the fact that MCI can and does use Verizon's existing WISE interface to place resale orders and thus MCI can, if it is so inclined, support its end user customers served out of the Mount Vernon central office, the Order also properly reflects the fact that Verizon *cannot* process UNE-P orders for a packet switch. Thus MCI's petition seeks the immediate and precipitous imposition on Verizon of a legal obligation that is, by definition, impossible to comply with. This would be arbitrary and capricious as a matter of law under any test. *See, e.g., Isla Verde*

³ Significantly, when MCI was confronted with evidence that it was using the WISE interface in Washington, it requested the purchase order numbers for these orders. (Tr. at 311-12.) Verizon quickly provided this information to MCI, and MCI has not even attempted to refute the specific facts that MCI currently uses the WISE interface to place orders in Washington. MCI's subsequent silence on this point implicitly ratifies the conclusion that MCI so strenuously attempts to avoid: MCI is already using in Washington an interface that will allow it to order resale services if it actually wishes to do so. There is thus no harm to MCI that warrants the extraordinary relief MCI seeks, much less reconsideration of the ALJ's ruling.

⁴ The only other CLEC witness to testify at the hearing, UNICOM witness Daughtry, in response to questions from the ALJ, candidly stated that "technically," UNICOM's customers do not see any difference between UNE-P and resale and, importantly, that UNICOM, a "small company," does not have any ordering or billing problems as a result of Verizon's switch replacement because it uses the WISE GUI system. (Tr. at 269.) Given that UNICOM, a small company, is able to place orders and conduct business by using Verizon's WISE interface, it is inconceivable that MCI cannot do the same.

Indeed, according to MCI, "it began to market its Neighborhood product to customers in the Mount Vernon area in early 2004" and only "provides services to more than 100 customers in that area." (Petition ¶ 18.) Even assuming optimistically that MCI is adding 25 Neighborhood customers a month, that would still on average be less than one customer a day. Any suggestion that a company with the resources of MCI cannot place those orders through Verizon's WISE interface—an interface that MCI currently uses—is simply absurd on its face.

Int'l Holdings v. City of Camas, 146 Wn.2d 740, 750, 49 P.3d 867 (2002). It would also amount to a prohibition on the deployment of new packet switching technology by ILECs in Washington.

12. At the hearing, Ms. McLean testified at length and in detail regarding the fact that Verizon does not have the processes in place to offer UNE-P from the Mount Vernon packet switch or any other such switch. (Tr. at 283, l. 7-13.) This should not be a surprise, since the FCC declined to order the unbundling of a packet switch more than eight years ago in its first Local Competition Order and twice reaffirmed that position. Moreover, as Ms. McLean explained, even if Verizon were somehow legally obligated to create the OSS needed to support the unbundling of a packet switch, it would take Verizon six to nine months, hundreds of people, and as much as millions of dollars to implement such processes (assuming they could be implemented). (Tr. at 297, l. 21-24.) Ms. McLean contrasted the extensive and expensive work required of Verizon with the work that CLECs would have to undertake to place resale orders using Verizon's *existing* processes. (Tr. at 283, l. 13-21; Tr. at 297, l. 5-24.) As Ms. McLean explained, even if a CLEC suddenly insisted on using only Verizon's EDI interface for placing resale orders, the modifications that a CLEC would have to make to use EDI would be small and incremental in contrast to the significant software development that Verizon would have to undertake to provide the OSS capability to unbundle a packet switch. (Tr. at 280-81; 297, l. 6-24.)

13. Indeed, CLECs are already serving end users in Verizon's Washington territory using resale. As Ms. McLean pointed out, there are approximately 6,000 resale lines in service today in Verizon's Washington territory. (Tr. at 284, l. 4.) More

specifically, of the five CLEC complainants, “two have resale lines in service at Mt. Vernon and all five use *both* of the electronic interfaces common to both resale and UNE-P.” (Tr. at 278, l. 17-21 (McLean Testimony) (emphasis added)).⁵ This point was reiterated during Ms. McLean’s cross examination, when she confirmed for AT&T’s counsel that “[t]here is no CLEC in the Mt. Vernon switch that exclusively uses EDI.” (Tr. at 338, l. 5-6.)

14. The ALJ heard all this evidence, and Order No. 10 properly reflects the facts that Verizon cannot process UNE-P orders placed for its Mt. Vernon packet switch and that there is no immediate harm to the CLECs or their customers from requiring them to use existing systems to order resale on this switch. (Order No. 10 ¶¶ 31-32.)

C. Order No. 5 Does Not Require Verizon to Unbundle Its Packet Switch.

15. This is the third time MCI has made its Order No. 5 argument. Enough is enough.

16. As Verizon has explained several times, and as MCI’s Petition admits, in Order No. 8 the Commission rejected the CLECs’ request to “clarify” Order No. 5 to require Verizon to unbundle its Mt. Vernon packet switch. Instead, the Commission instructed the CLECs to present this issue by filing a petition for enforcement. Rather than follow this instruction, the CLECs filed a Motion for Enforcement of Order No. 5 in this docket. The ALJ should have immediately dismissed this improper motion, but instead scheduled an emergency hearing to determine whether Verizon’s switch conversion would cause immediate harm to any customer. In Order No. 10, the ALJ found that there was no such harm and instructed the CLECs to file a petition for

⁵ Mr. Daughtry, the UNICOM witness, admitted at the hearing that his company currently purchases resale from Verizon today. (Tr. at 273, l. 16-18.)

enforcement, just as the Commission instructed them to do in Order No. 8 when it refused the CLECs' request to "clarify" Order No. 5.

17. This procedural history proves that MCI's Order No. 5 argument has nothing to do with Order No. 10; rather, it is an unlawful attempt to seek reconsideration of Order No. 8. The Commission issued that order on August 13, 2004, and any petition for reconsideration should have been filed within 10 days. *See* WAC 480-07-810(3) (10-day requirement for review of interlocutory orders); WAC 480-07-850(1) (10-day requirement for review of final orders). MCI's procedural gamesmanship and attempts to flout Order No. 8 must be rejected.

D. MCI's Interconnection Agreement Argument Will Be Addressed in Docket No. UT-041127, Not Here.

18. MCI's third and final argument is that its interconnection agreement requires Verizon to unbundle its Mt. Vernon packet switch. This is the very issue that will be addressed in Docket No. UT-041127. In fact, MCI's Petition for Review in this docket incorporates by reference the CLECs' Joint Petition for Enforcement in that docket. For the reasons stated above, MCI's attempt to litigate this issue here ignores Order No. 8 and therefore must be rejected.

19. Read most charitably, MCI's attempt to litigate the interconnection agreements in this docket is an attempt to obtain a final decision on the merits as quickly as possible. Verizon shares this desire, and this is one of the reasons why Verizon's Response in UT-041127 specifically requests that the Commission decide the dispute based solely on the parties' submissions. But MCI's Petition for Review of Order No. 10 is not the proper procedural vehicle to resolve the issue. Instead, for the reasons

described above, the Commission should deny MCI's Petition for Review of Order No. 10 and issue a prompt decision in UT-041127, which is now ripe for review.

II. ORDER NO. 10 IS UNLAWFUL

20. The ALJ's Notice Granting Request (Sept. 22, 2004) allows a party to present additional issues for review in its Answer. Here, Verizon requests that Order No. 10 be vacated for three reasons:

21. *First*, Order No. 10 must be vacated because it unlawfully grants emergency injunctive relief. The ALJ specifically found that "there is no immediate harm to the public welfare." (Order No. 10 ¶ 31.) The law is clear: the Commission cannot grant such relief *unless* there is an "immediate danger to the public health, safety, or welfare." (RCW 34.05.479; WAC 480-07-620). Given the ALJ's own findings, she could not have granted any relief and Order No. 10 must be vacated.

22. *Second*, Order No. 10 must be vacated because the ALJ granted relief—albeit very limited in nature—without any consideration of likelihood of success on the merits. The ALJ simply deferred this issue to another docket (yet to even be properly opened at the time of her ruling). The law is clear that in addition to irreparable injury a party seeking preliminary relief must make some demonstration of likelihood of success on the merits. *See, e.g., Air Liquide America Corp., v. Puget Sound Energy*, Sixth Supplemental Order, Docket Nos. UE-001952, UE-001959 (W.U.T.C. Jan. 22, 2001) (requiring moving party to establish "a clear legal or equitable right" to emergency relief); *Tyler Pipe Indus. v. Dep't of Revenue*, 96 Wn.2d 785, 793, 638 P.2d 1213 (1982) (moving party must show likelihood of success on merits to prove clear legal or equitable right). Because the ALJ simply ignored one factor essential to *any* preliminary relief

(and a factor upon which the movant bears the burden of proof), Order No. 10 is contrary to law and must be vacated.

23. **Third**, Order No. 10 must be vacated because the September 9 emergency hearing was procedurally unlawful. The ALJ's recognition that a petition to enforce was the proper procedural vehicle for presentation of these issues should have been the end of the matter. There was simply no jurisdiction to order preliminary relief outside of a petition to enforce any Commission order or meeting all of the statutory criteria for entering such relief, which, as noted above, require a showing of imminent danger to end user service. In addition, the hearing itself violated the Commission's procedural rules. The law is clear: the Commission cannot hold a hearing on less than seven days' notice. RCW 34.05.434; WAC 480-07-440. Moreover, the notice for any hearing *shall* include a "statement of the legal authority and jurisdiction under which the hearing is to be held" as well as a "reference to the particular sections of the statutes and rules involved." (RCW 34.05.434(2)(f), (g)). Here, the hearing was held on only one day's notice, and the September 8 "Notice of Hearing" failed to include any statement of legal authority and jurisdiction. For these reasons, the hearing was unlawful and the order resulting from that hearing must be set aside.

24. In an effort to deal with the notice requirement, the ALJ suggested in footnote 3 of Order No. 10 that RCW 34.05.434 requires seven days' notice for *initial* hearings but that this requirement does not apply to *continued* hearings under WAC 480-07-440(2). The fault with this analysis, though, is that WAC 480-07-440(2) applies only "[w]hen a hearing is not concluded as scheduled," a situation which simply does not apply to the hearing scheduled for September 9. Furthermore, the seven-day requirement

in RCW 34.05.434 is not limited to “initial” hearings, as footnote 3 states; instead, the distinction between “initial” and “continued” hearings is drawn in WAC 480-07-440. This Commission rule cannot trump the statute.⁶ *Wash. Indep. Tel. Ass’n v. Telecomms. Ratepayers Ass’n*, 75 Wn. App. 356, 880 P.2d 50 (1994).

25. As Verizon has previously pointed out, the ALJ was placed in a very difficult position because of the CLECs’ strategic decision to wait for months, and until the very eve of the deployment, before seeking expedited relief. The CLECs’ attempt to create an emergency by failing to raise their concerns in a timely fashion, therefore forcing the ALJ to rule expeditiously, no doubt greatly contributed to the errors the ALJ made. This is one of the reasons why it is hornbook law that a party cannot benefit from an “emergency” that the party itself has created. But while the CLECs’ conduct explains the ALJ’s errors, it does not cure them.

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⁶ Footnote 3 of Order No. 10 also explains that the Commission may hold an emergency adjudicative proceeding under RCW 34.05.479 to address a situation involving “an immediate danger to the public health, safety or welfare requiring immediate agency action.” As noted above, however, Order No. 10 expressly found that there is no such danger. Indeed, the CLECs themselves did not even allege any such danger in their motion. Nor had they, at the time the ALJ called for the emergency hearing, offered any evidence of impending danger or proffered anything more than a naked assertion of harm by the CLECs’ counsel in a prehearing conference. Thus, if the ALJ conducted a proceeding under RCW 34.05.479, and it appears she did, she erred in granting relief.

26. Order No. 10 is unlawful on procedural and substantive grounds, and therefore must be vacated.

Dated this 4 day of October, 2004.

Respectfully submitted,



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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that I have this 4th day of October, 2004, served the true and correct original, along with the correct number of copies, of *Verizon's Answer to MCI's Petition for Review of Order No. 10 and Petition to Vacate Order No. 10* and a *Certificate of Service* upon the WUTC, via the method(s) noted below, properly addressed as follows:

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I hereby certify that I have this 4th day of October, 2004, served a true and correct copy of the foregoing documents upon parties noted below via E-Mail and U.S. Mail:

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

DATED this 4th day of October, 2004, at Seattle, Washington.



Heidi L. Wilder