

Agenda Date: June 11, 2003
Item Number: A3

Docket: UT-030455
Company: Verizon Northwest Inc.

Staff: Robert Shirley, Telecommunications Policy Analyst
Rebecca Beaton, Telecommunications Policy Analyst

Recommendation:

Grant an exemption of WAC 480-120-450(2)(a) and (b) until December 31, 2004.

Background

On April 3, 2003, Verizon Northwest Inc. (Verizon) petitioned for a waiver¹ of certain provisions of WAC 480-120-450(2)(a) and (b). (See appendix A) Verizon is one of three local exchange companies (LECs) that provide E911 data base management. An essential element of the enhanced data base is the inclusion of location information that is used by emergency personnel to locate callers. Subsection (2)(a) and (b) require Verizon to make available both an internet-based method and a secure dial-up method for maintaining customer records in the E911 data base. PBX and LECs have used dial-up methods for maintaining records for some time, but internet methods are relatively new.

The rule was adopted in large part at the request of the Emergency Management Division (EMD). At the time the rule was adopted, the Commission was asked by Verizon to alter the rule and permit companies to offer either an internet-based method or a secure dial-up method. The Order of Adoption stated:

Companies suggest that a secure, internet-based method for maintaining customer records (of telephone locations) not be required, that companies that provide data base management be permitted to offer only a secure dial-up method for access to the data base to maintain records. This issue is very important to emergency management personnel because out-of-date records can literally mean the difference between life and death.

Unfortunately, in large buildings and building complexes when personnel are moved, the records are not always updated and the

¹ WAC 480-120-015 provides for exemptions rather than waivers.

location of the telephone in an emergency may be reported to be on a different floor, or even in a different building, than is really the case. Many large employers would like to contract with vendors that will maintain accurate records and this rule is intended to accommodate that activity. We remain convinced that the secure, internet-based method will result in records being kept more up-to-date than is the case today. We permit companies to provide the dial-up method as well.

Order of Adoption at ¶ 161.

In its petition, Verizon states it is creating an internet-based method to serve the needs of all the former GTE operating units, including Washington. *Petition at 2.* The new system is under going testing, but Verizon does not expect the internet-based method to be available until December 31, 2004. *Id.* Secure dial-up access is available at this time to both PBX owners and LECs.

Analysis

Subsection (2)(a) would assist PBX owners by permitting them to use a simple, internet-based method for maintaining records. EMD has informed Staff that it would not be problematic if the exemption were granted. Accordingly, Staff recommends that an exemption of subsection (2)(a), until December 31, 2004, would be consistent with the public interest, the purposes underlying regulation and applicable statutes.

Subsection (2)(b) is intended to address the needs of LECs with their higher volume of record changes. LECs have used secure dial-up systems for many years and EMD did not identify that as an area of concern. EMD has informed Staff that an exemption of (2)(b) until December 31, 2004, is acceptable to it. Accordingly, Staff recommends that an exemption of subsection (2)(b) until December 31, 2004, would be consistent with the public interest, the purposes underlying regulation, and applicable statutes.

EMD has requested that Verizon be directed to consult with EMD on the system under development and to file quarterly reports to EMD reporting its progress.

Summary

Staff recommends granting the exemptions until December 31, 2004, and directing Verizon to consult with EMD on development of its system and direct it to report on its progress to EMD on a quarterly basis.

Appendix A

WAC 480-120-450(2)

(2)(a) LECs that provide or make available E911 data base management, whether directly or through contract, must provide to all PBX owners or their agents (including LECs) a simple, internet-based method to maintain customer records in the E911 data base, and the LEC may provide an option of a secure dial up access method for the PBX owner or agent to maintain customer records in the E911 data base. The method must use a generally accepted national format for customer record information.

(b) LECs that provide or make available E911 data base management, whether directly or through contract, must provide or make available to all other LECs a simple, internet-based method to maintain customer records in the E911 data base for their non-PBX customers, and the LEC may provide an option of a secure dial up access or direct data link method for LECs to maintain customer records in the E911 data base. Methods for maintaining station location information that are not internet-based may be offered in addition to the required internet-based method.