

News Release

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Contact:

Bob Rowe, 406-444-6167
Montana Public Service Commissioner

Frank Darr, 614-688-5473
States' Administrative Coordinator

**ROC STATES CONTRACT WITH 3 CONSULTANTS
TO PERFORM TESTING OF QWEST'S OPERATIONS SUPPORT SYSTEMS**

Three consultant firms have signed contracts with the Regional Oversight Committee representing 13 state public utility commissions to perform three separate roles in the independent third-party testing of Qwest's operation support systems.

Operational support systems, termed OSS, are the systems a telephone company uses to provide service to its customers, whether these are its own retail customers or competing telephone companies. OSS functions which Qwest must provide at the same level to its competitors as it provides to itself are pre-ordering, ordering, provisioning, repair and maintenance, and billing.

KPMG Consulting is the overall test administrator for the ROC test and will produce the final report of the results. Hewlett Packard Consulting will act as a newly established competitive local exchange carrier to serve as an unbiased vehicle for testing Qwest's systems, documentation and processes. Liberty Consulting will conduct an audit to ensure that all aspects of Qwest's wholesale performance measures and retail parity standards are sound and comply with the collaboratively developed ROC performance measurement definitions.

"This is a major milestone in a unique and important project," said Montana Public Service Commissioner Bob Rowe of Montana, chairman of the ROC-OSS Collaborative. "We look forward to working with KPMG, Hewlett Packard and Liberty to conduct a test of the very highest quality. I am eager to get down to the nuts and bolts of actual system testing."

"The ROC has now signed contracts with vendors to begin the in-depth review of the openness of Qwest's operational support systems," according to ROC Chairman Edward Garvey of Minnesota. "Now we can start actual testing. Up until now the ROC states, Qwest, and CLECs have been working to design the test process and selecting the vendors to perform the test. OSS openness is vital to the development of a competitive marketplace for local telephone service in the Qwest region. We are pleased with the work that has been done to get us to this stage."

Section 271 of the federal Telecommunications Act of 1996 sets out a procedure through which Bell Operating Companies such as Qwest could be allowed to provide long-distance service within their own regions in exchange for opening their systems to local competition. Section 271 sets out a "fourteen point checklist," and requires that allowing the Bell Operating Company into in-region long distance be determined to be in the public interest. The Federal Communications Commission makes determinations, state-by-state, based on consultation with the federal Department of Justice and state public utility commissions. State commissions play a key role in developing a factual record, and resolving the entire range of problems associated with opening local phone systems to competition.

The Regional OSS Collaborative was established by 13 of the 14 states served by Qwest. It is an open, web-based process, providing a forum for all interested parties to resolve issues. States involved in the project are: Montana, Idaho, Utah, Washington, Oregon, New Mexico, Colorado, Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wyoming, Iowa

and Nebraska. Information about the ROC-OSS Collaborative is available at <http://www.nrri.ohio-state.edu/oss.htm>.

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RESOLUTION

For the US West Regional Oversight Committee

Resolutions Supporting the Adoption of Testing Approaches to Assure Fair and Open Operational Support Systems

Whereas: Competitive entrants to telecommunications markets face obstacles unless US West's Operational Support Systems (OSS) provide them timely, accurate and nondiscriminatory information about potential customers and access to those customers; and

Whereas: Access to timely, accurate and nondiscriminatory OSS is a key element to satisfaction of the requirements of section 271 of the Telecommunications Act of 1996; and

Whereas: While the best evidence of such access is through the demonstration of robustly competitive markets, testing is designed to provide evidence demonstrating that US West has provided competitive entrants access to OSS; and

Whereas: Testing may also be a means of improving the OSS to ensure continuing improvement in the provision of telecommunications service; and

Whereas: Successful testing requires that the test be open (subject to the need to protect confidential or proprietary information and the integrity of the test), complete, free of bias, and measured against performance indicators, in a manner that is consistent with the appropriate qualitative and quantitative requirements of testing; and

Whereas: Each of the state commissions of the US West Regional Oversight Committee is currently engaged in a joint collaborative to test the OSS of US West in order to pool our resources and build on each state's strength; and

Whereas: Both the Arizona and the regional collaborative testing efforts have made significant progress towards the definition of principles, performance measures, and testing requirements by working collaboratively with US West and competitive local exchange carriers; and

Whereas: The regional collaborative testing effort of thirteen states has developed or is developing test requirements and test performance measures and is seeking a vendor or vendors to perform its testing; and

Whereas: Arizona has recently finalized a Master Test Plan, is in the process of finalizing its Test Standards, and has selected its vendors to perform the role of Third Party Test Administrator and Test Transaction Generator;

Now therefore be it

Resolved: The Regional Oversight Committee supports the rigorous OSS testing as a means of facilitating competitive entry and indicating US West's compliance with the Telecommunications Act of 1996, and be it further

Resolved: The Regional Oversight Committee commends the parties' ongoing good faith and productive efforts in these testing efforts, and be it further

Resolved: The Regional Oversight Committee supports and endorses the significant progress of the collaborations; and be it further

Resolved: The Regional Oversight Committee encourages continuation of the collaborative efforts of US West, the competitive local exchange carriers, state consumer advocates and state regulatory commissions.

Adopted by the Regional Oversight Committee on April 4, 2000.