

**BEFORE THE IDAHO PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION**

**IN THE MATTER OF THE JOINT )  
APPLICATION OF VERIZON NORTHWEST ) CASE NO. VZN-T-02-4  
INC. AND LEVEL 3 COMMUNICATIONS )  
FOR APPROVAL OF AN AMENDMENT TO )  
AN EXISTING INTERCONNECTION )  
AGREEMENT PURSUANT TO 47 U.S.C. § ) ORDER NO. 29699  
252(e) )**

The Commission is asked in this case to approve an amendment to an existing interconnection agreement between Verizon Northwest Inc. and Level 3 Communications. In this Order the Commission approves the Application.

**BACKGROUND**

Under the provisions of the federal Telecommunications Act of 1996, interconnection agreements must be submitted to the Commission for approval. 47 U.S.C. § 252(e)(1). The Commission may reject an agreement adopted by negotiations only if it finds that the agreement: (1) discriminates against a telecommunications carrier not a party to the agreement; or (2) implementation of the agreement is not consistent with the public interest, convenience and necessity. 47 U.S.C. § 252(e)(2)(A). As the Commission noted in Order No. 28427, companies voluntarily entering into interconnection agreements “may negotiate terms, prices and conditions that do not comply with either the FCC rules or with the provision of Section 251(b) or(c).” Order No. 28427 at 11 (emphasis in original). This comports with the FCC’s statement that “a state commission shall have authority to approve an interconnection agreement adopted by negotiation even if the terms of the agreement do not comply with the requirements of [Part 51].” 47 C.F.R. § 51.3.

**THE CURRENT APPLICATION**

The Joint Application for approval of amendment to the interconnection agreement between Verizon and Level 3 Communications was filed on December 30, 2004. With this filing the parties modify the inter-carrier compensation and the interconnection architecture. In addition, the parties agree to comply with the FCC declaratory ruling with regard to VoIP traffic that originates on and terminates to the Public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN).

## STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff has reviewed the Application and did not find any terms or conditions to be discriminatory or contrary to the public interest. Staff believes that the amendment is consistent with the pro-competitive policies of this Commission, the Idaho Legislature, and the federal Telecommunications Act of 1996. Accordingly, Staff believes that the Application for Amendment merits the Commission's approval.

## COMMISSION DECISION

Under the terms of the Telecommunications Act, interconnection agreements must be submitted to the Commission for approval. 47 U.S.C. § 252(e)(1). The Commission's review is limited, however. The Commission may reject an agreement adopted by negotiation only if it finds that the agreement discriminates against a telecommunications carrier not a party to the agreement or implementation of the agreement is not consistent with the public interest, convenience and necessity. *Id.* Additionally, companies voluntarily entering into interconnection agreements "may negotiate terms, prices and conditions that do not comply with either the FCC rules or with the provision of Section 251(b) or (c)." Order No. 28427 at 11 (emphasis in original); 47 C.F.R. § 51.3.

Based upon our review of the Application and the Staff's recommendation, the Commission finds that the agreement is consistent with the public interest, convenience and necessity and does not discriminate. Therefore, the Commission finds that the agreement should be approved. However, approval of this agreement does not negate the responsibility of either of the parties to this agreement to obtain a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity if they are offering local exchange services or to comply with *Idaho Code* §§ 62-604 and 62-606 if they are providing other non-basic local telecommunications services as defined by *Idaho Code* § 62-603.

## ORDER

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that the amended interconnection agreement between Verizon Northwest Inc. and Level 3 Communications, Case No. VZN-T-02-4, as discussed above, is approved.

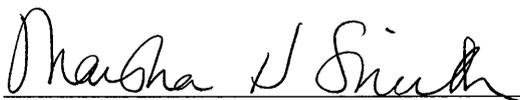
THIS IS A FINAL ORDER. Any person interested in this Order (or in issues finally decided by this Order) may petition for reconsideration within twenty-one (21) days of the service date of this Order. Within seven (7) days after any person has petitioned for

reconsideration, any other person may cross-petition for reconsideration. See *Idaho Code* §§ 61-626 and 62-619.

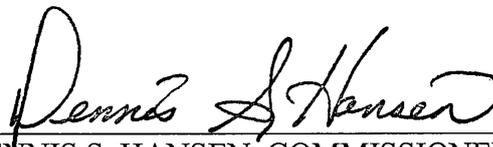
DONE by Order of the Idaho Public Utilities Commission at Boise, Idaho this 28<sup>th</sup> day of January 2005.



PAUL KJELLANDER, PRESIDENT

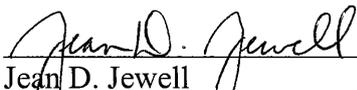


MARSHA H. SMITH, COMMISSIONER



DENNIS S. HANSEN, COMMISSIONER

ATTEST:



Jean D. Jewell  
Commission Secretary

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