

conducting lengthy cost studies, Staff recommended that this service initially be provided without charge until such time as the Company completes its cost study.

VERIZON'S RESPONSE

After this item was placed on our public meeting agenda for May 28, Verizon submitted a letter in response to the Staff's recommendation. Verizon urged the Commission not to adopt the Staff's recommendation to reinstate Call Completion Service "prior to final approval of a tariff." Response Letter at 1. Verizon explained that it discovered that it was providing Completion Service "by accident to Idaho customers without a tariff in April of 2003." Upon discovering that Idaho's customers were inadvertently being offered this service, the Company instituted a change on May 1, 2003, that blocks access to this service by Idaho customers.

Verizon noted that it had never advertised the availability of this service to Idaho customers. Although the Company acknowledges that customers dialing 411 Directory Assistance would have heard a recorded message indicating that the call completion would cost \$.75 per call, Verizon did not charge customers for this service because "there was no approved Idaho tariff or billing mechanism for call completion service." *Id.*

In its Response, Verizon indicated that it is "committed to filing the [Call Completion Service] tariff as soon as it possibly can, hopefully within a four-week time[. H]owever, Verizon must complete a cost study for this service before the filing can be made." *Id.* at 2. Rather than adopt the Staff's recommendation to re-institute this service without charge until such time as Verizon can complete its cost study and file the tariff, the Company urged the Commission to reject the Staff's recommendation. Verizon argued that reinstating the service without charge would cause customer confusion if the service were re-instituted without charge and then a subsequent charge was imposed. The Company also complained that reinstating the service without charge would be inequitable. Allowing Verizon to complete its cost study and file the appropriate tariff would permit "the Company to offer, provision and bill the service the correct way." *Id.*

DISCUSSION

This case demonstrates the complexities involved when a telephone company offers a particular service on a regionalized basis. In this case, an Idaho customer dialed Verizon's 411 Directory Information Services and heard the Call Completion Service message. Although the message indicated that there was a \$.75 charge for completing the call, the customer assumed

that the charges were waived and did not appear on his monthly telephone statement because he had advised the Company of his visual impairment. In fact, all Idaho customers utilizing this service were not charged because the Company had neither a billing mechanism nor an approved tariff for Idaho customers.

We find it appropriate to order the Company to reinstate this service for Idaho customers. Consequently, we shall order the Company to file conforming tariffs for our review no later than June 9, 2003. While we understand the Company's desire to complete a cost study, we do not perceive that calculating the "appropriate charge" for this service should require a four-week delay. As the Staff pointed out, this service is currently offered to Verizon's Oregon and Washington customers at a uniform rate of \$.75. Obviously, the Company has already performed cost studies to justify the rates in these two states. Moreover, we do not find that re-instituting this service without charge would cause customer confusion. It was the Company that indicated there was a charge for the use of this service, yet did not bill Idaho customers for the charge. What causes customer confusion is offering a non-tariffed service and then abruptly discontinuing it. Use of the recorded message may adequately advise customers that there is a charge for this service and customers may choose not to avail themselves of the service.

ORDER

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that Verizon reinstate its Call Completion Service and submit a tariff for our review no later than June 9, 2003.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that given the expedited nature of this case, that the Commission Secretary electronically serve this Order upon the Company.

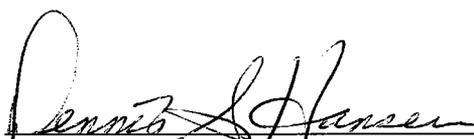
DONE by Order of the Idaho Public Utilities Commission at Boise, Idaho this 2nd
day of June 2003.



PAUL KJELLANDER, PRESIDENT

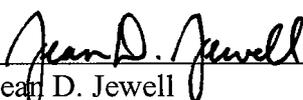


MARSHA H. SMITH, COMMISSIONER



DENNIS S. HANSEN, COMMISSIONER

ATTEST:



Jean D. Jewell
Commission Secretary

vid/O: