Legal Department

J. PHILLIP CARVER
Senior Regulatory Counsel
BellSouth Telecommunications, Inc.
150 South Monroe Street
Room 400
Tallahassee, Florida 32301
(404) 335-0710

February 23, 2004

Mrs. Blanca S. Bayó
Division of the Commission Clerk and
Administrative Services
Florida Public Service Commission
2540 Shumard Oak Boulevard
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0850

Re: Docket No.: 040130-TP

Dear Ms. Bayó:

Enclosed is an original and fifteen copies of BellSouth's Motion To Sever Or To Impose Procedural Restrictions, which we ask that you file in the captioned docket.

A copy of this letter is enclosed. Please mark it to indicate that the original was filed and return the copy to me. Copies have been served to the parties shown on the attached Certificate of Service.

Sincerely,

J. Phillip Carver

J. Phillip Carver

Enclosures

cc: All Parties of Record
Marshall M. Criser III
R. Douglas Lackey
Nancy B. White

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE
DOCKET NO. 040130-TP

I HEREBY CERTIFY that a true and correct copy of the foregoing was served via Electronic Mail and First Class U. S. Mail this 23rd day of February, 2004 to the following:

Staff Counsel
Florida Public Service Commission
Division of Legal Services
2540 Shumard Oak Boulevard
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0850

Jake E. Jennings
Senior Vice President
Regulatory Affairs and Carrier Relations
Two North Main Center
Greenville, SC 29601
Tel. No. (864) 672-5877
Fax. No. (864) 672-5105
Atty. for NewSouth
jejennings@newsouth.com

Marva Brown Johnson, Esq.
Senior Regulatory Policy Advisor
1755 North Brown Road
Lawrenceville, GA 30043
Tel. No. (678) 985-6220
Fax. No. (678) 985-6312
Atty. for KMC
marva.johnson@kmctelecom.com

Bo Russell, Vice President
Regulatory and Legal Affairs SE
301 North Main Street, Suite 5000
Greenville, SC 29601
Tel. No. (864) 331-7323
Fax. No. (864) 313-1236
Atty. for NuVox

James C. Falvey
Sr. Vice President – Regulatory Affairs
7125 Columbia Gateway Drive
Suite 200
Columbia, Maryland 21046
Tel. No. (301) 361-4298
Fax. No. (301) 361-7654
Atty. for Xspedius

John J. Heitmann
Enrico C. Soriano
Heather T. Hendrickson
KELLEY DRYE & WARREN LLP
1200 Nineteenth Street, N.W.
Suite 500
Washington, D.C. 20036
Tel. No. (205) 955-9600
Fax. No. (205) 955-9792
jheitmann@kelleydrye.com
esoriano@kelleydrye.com
hhendrickson@kelleydrye.com

Norman H. Horton, Esq.
MESSER CAPARELLO & SELF
215 South Monroe Street, Suite 701
Tallahassee, FL 32302
Tel. No. (850) 222-0720
Fax. No. (850) 224-4351
nhorton@lawfla.com

J. Phillip Carver (pdf)

BEFORE THE
FLORIDA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

In the Matter of	)	
	)	
Joint Petition for Arbitration of	)	
NewSouth Communications, Corp.,	)	**Docket No. 040130-TP**
NuVox Communications, Inc.,	)	
KMC Telecom V, Inc.,	)	
KMC Telecom III LLC, and	)	
Xspedius [Affiliates] of an	)	
Interconnection Agreement with	)	**Filed: February 23, 2004**
BellSouth Telecommunications, Inc.	)	
Pursuant to Section 252(b) of the	)	
Communications Act of 1934,	)	
as Amended	)	

BELLSOUTH'S MOTION TO SEVER OR TO IMPOSE PROCEDURAL RESTRICTIONS

BellSouth Telecommunications, Inc. ("BellSouth") hereby files its Motion to Sever Or To Impose Procedural Restrictions, and states the following:

1. Arbitrations such as the instant proceeding are filed pursuant to Section 252 of the Telecommunications Act. The Act contemplates that arbitrations will be between a single CLEC and a single incumbent. For example, Section 252(b)(4)(B) provides that "the State Commission may require the petitioning party and the responding party to provide such information as may be necessary for the State Commission to reach a decision on unresolved issues." Nevertheless, the above-captioned arbitration has been filed jointly by four unaffiliated CLECs (NewSouth, KMC, NuVox and Expedius). Clearly, the Act does not contemplate this type of joint filing. At the same time, such a joint filing is not expressly prohibited by the Act. Given this, there may well be circumstances in which it would be appropriate for the Florida Public Service Commission

("Commission") to consolidate properly filed, separate arbitrations into a single proceeding. On its face, however, the Joint Petition does not present such a case.

2. The Joint Petition suffers from two significant procedural infirmities. One, the proper procedure for seeking a joint proceeding would be for each of the four CLECs to file a separate petition and then move for consolidation. The Petitioning CLECs have failed to take this proper course. Instead, they have taken the liberty of inappropriately filing a petition on behalf of all four. Two, a proper Motion for Consideration should contain sufficient facts to allow the Commission to determine whether the requested consolidation would be in the interest of administrative economy, and would otherwise result in a more efficient resolution of the issues than would separate proceedings. The Petitioners have not only failed to file such a Motion, they have failed to make a sufficient showing to support consolidation.

3. Specifically, the Petitioners have set forth in the Petition a single paragraph that deals in a very cursory way with their decision to proceed jointly. This paragraph does not contain sufficient information to establish that proceeding on a joint basis is appropriate. Instead, this paragraph states a number of very vague assertions as to why the Petitioners believe this joint approach is appropriate, but little in the way of real facts. Moreover, the facts that are stated do not support consolidation.

4. First, the Petitioners state that they are filing the Petition jointly because they have negotiated jointly with BellSouth. It is true that these CLECs requested joint negotiations with BellSouth, and for the most part, BellSouth has been able to accede to this request. BellSouth, however, has never agreed to the filing of a Joint Petition, in substantial part, because of the procedural problems with such a filing that are discussed below. To the extent the Petition

implies that BellSouth has either agreed to a Joint Petition or waived its right to object, this implication is simply wrong.

5. Second, the Petition attempts to justify the Joint filing by reference to "the statutory deadline within which the Commission is charged with concluding this arbitration proceeding." (¶ 12). The CLECs, however, also request a waiver of this deadline if they are not allowed to proceed jointly. Also, the CLECs and BellSouth have discussed the prospect of requesting such a waiver regardless of whether the cases proceed jointly or separately. Thus, the CLECs cannot legitimately contend that the statutory deadline is always treated as being inflexible, or that a joint proceeding is the only way to meet this deadline.

6. Beyond this, the CLECs' attempt to support their joint filing with a number of vague assertions that are ultimately insufficient to allow the Commission to determine whether such a filing will result in increased efficiency and economy or in inefficiency and an unduly complicated proceeding. For example, the CLECs state that "to the fullest extent possible, CLECs anticipate the use of a 'team' witness approach." (¶ 12) (emphasis added). Obviously, this extremely vague statement does not constitute a commitment by the CLECs to do anything. Despite what they anticipate at the present, the Petition apparently reserves to the CLECs the option of filing the testimony of four completely independent sets of witnesses to address each of the 107 issues that they raise in their Joint Petition if they later decide that they would prefer to do so. Further, even if things turn out as the CLECs anticipate and they do follow a "team approach," there is still no indication in the Petition as to what this means. For example, the CLECs could decide that their team would best be served by having multiple witnesses provide essentially cumulative testimony on each issue.

7. Also, the single paragraph of the Petition that addresses the joint approach contains insufficient information to allow the Commission to determine if there is a true unity of interests among the CLECs. The Petition states that the CLECs' interests are not adverse to one another, but does not state that the CLECs' respective positions are the same. Thus, one could assume that the CLECs' team approach would entail multiple witnesses that address the same issue (each on behalf of a different company) in a way that would be "complimentary" to one another, but not adverse.

8. The point is this: the Commission should not allow the Petitioners to proceed jointly unless they do considerably more than make a vague allusion to an "anticipated" team approach. If the team approach ultimately entails, for example, the testimony of six witnesses for each of the four CLECs, then having a single proceeding in which 24 CLEC witnesses give extended, repetitive testimony would accomplish nothing more than having an extremely unwieldy proceeding. On the other hand, if it is the intention of the CLECs to effectively conduct the arbitration as if they were a single party (and they are willing to commit to this approach), then there may well be some economy in proceeding under the current joint structure. The difficulty is that the CLECs have provided nothing more than extremely vague representations on this point, and certainly what they have presented is an insufficient basis to support the motion to consolidate that they should have made, but did not.

9. Accordingly, BellSouth submits that it is appropriate for the Commission to deal with the Petitioners' procedurally inappropriate approach by taking one of two actions: One, the Commission could immediately sever the proceeding into four separate arbitrations. Two, the Commission could allow the Petitioners to continue jointly, while adopting procedural

restrictions that are appropriate to ensure that efficiency and administrative economy is served rather than hindered by this approach.

10. Specifically, the Commission should require that, if the Petitioners continue to proceed jointly, then their positions must be the same on each issue. In the Petition, the Petitioners appear to state that they are in concert on 97 of the 107 issues, but that there is some variation in their positions on the other issues. (¶ 12). The Petition would also appear to suggest that there is no direct conflict on these remaining ten issues, but rather that there are particular issues that some, but not all, of the CLECs are advancing. However, the Petition contains insufficient information to ensure that this is the case. Therefore, the Commission should order that the CLECs may only continue with this proceeding if their positions on each issue are not only "not adverse," but are, in fact, identical. In other words, although not every CLEC needs to join in raising every issue, those CLECs that do jointly raise a given issue should be required to take the identical position.

11. Second, the Commission should restrict the CLECs to cross examining each BellSouth witness only once. Since the Petition does not address this issue in any way, the CLECs may well take the position that since there are four of them, that they are entitled to cross each BellSouth witness four times. If this is their intention, then there is little to be gained in the way of administrative economy by having a single proceeding. Thus, the Commission should also order that if the CLECs proceed jointly, then they should be strictly limited to one cross examination of each BellSouth witness.

12. Third, the Commission should order that if the CLECs continue jointly, then they should be limited to one witness per issue or sub-issue. BellSouth uses the term "sub-issue" advisedly, because there may be instances in which a single issue may require testimony from

two or more witnesses with different areas of expertise. For example, there are issues raised by the Petition that involve both policy considerations and technical questions (e.g., feasibility). Even if an arbitration appropriately involved only a single party on each side, multiple witnesses might still be necessary to address this type of issue. The CLECs, however, should not be allowed, for example, to address the policy aspect of a particular issue through the testimony of multiple witnesses. As stated above, in this instance, these witnesses would necessarily either be giving cumulative testimony or expressing differing positions on behalf of their respective employers. In either event, this approach would not be appropriate in an arbitration proceeding. Therefore, BellSouth requests that the Commission also order that the CLECs "team" be composed of only a single witness to address each substantive aspect of each issue.

13. Again, BellSouth would not object to the Joint Petition if it were clear that the CLECs intended to proceed as if they were a single entity. At the same time, BellSouth raised many of the issues addressed above with counsel for the CLECs prior to the Petition being filed, but received no assurances regarding the CLECs' intentions. Likewise, the Petition is, as explained above, extremely vague on certain salient points that this Commission must consider to determine whether a joint proceeding would be appropriate. All of this begs the question of why the CLECs have decided to file a Joint Petition. One would normally assume that if four CLECs have precisely the same position, then one of them would file for arbitration, and the other three would adopt the agreement that results from the arbitration. The fact that the CLECs have opted not to take this approach, combined with the fact that they have been extremely vague in the Petition as to their intentions, certainly raises the prospect of procedural improprieties, or at least difficulties, as this case progresses. BellSouth believes that it is imperative that the Commission act now to avoid a situation in which agency resources would be

wasted rather than conserved, and in which this arbitration would devolve into a complicated, multi-part proceeding having too many witnesses and a multiplicity of CLEC positions.

WHEREFORE, BellSouth respectfully requests the entry of an Order either severing this proceeding into four separate arbitration proceedings or, alternatively, imposing the procedural restrictions described above.

Respectfully submitted this 23rd day of February, 2004.

NANCY B. WHITE (RAD)
Museum Tower
150 West Flagler Street
Suite 1910
Miami, Florida 33130
(305) 347-5558

R. DOUGLAS LACKEY (RAD)
J. PHILLIP CARVER
General Attorneys
Suite 4300, BellSouth Center
675 West Peachtree Street, N.E.
Atlanta, GA 30375
(404) 335-0710

COUNSEL FOR BELLSOUTH
TELECOMMUNICATIONS, INC.

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