

JUN 22 9 45 AM '12

ARKANSAS PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

FILED

IN THE MATTER OF THE PETITION OF)
 NEUSTAR, INC. ON BEHALF OF THE)
 ARKANSAS TELECOMMUNICATIONS)
 INDUSTRY, FOR APPROVAL OF A)
 NUMBERING PLAN AREA (NPA) RELIEF)
 PLAN FOR THE 870 NPA)

DOCKET NO. 09-043-U
 ORDER NO. 5

ORDER

On May 17, 2012, NeuStar, Inc. (NeuStar), in its role as the North American Numbering Plan Administrator (NANPA), acting on behalf of the Arkansas Telecommunications Industry (Industry)¹ filed in this docket its *Addendum to Report and Response to Order Directing NeuStar and the Industry to Develop an Implementation Schedule* (Addendum Report). By its Addendum Report, NeuStar and the Industry request a delay in the Industry’s consensus implementation schedule of the approved Relief Plan for the 870 Numbering Plan Area (NPA) code. Addendum Report at 2-3.

Background

On May 12, 2009, NeuStar, acting on behalf of the Industry, initiated this docket with the filing of the *Petition of the North American Numbering Plan Administrator on Behalf of the Arkansas Telecommunications Industry* (Petition). By its Petition, NeuStar sought the approval of the Arkansas Public Service Commission (Commission) for the Industry’s consensus recommendation to add a new area code number throughout the existing 870 NPA. The new area code would be applied to all telephone services offered throughout the existing 870 NPA. The addition of a new area code in the

¹ The Industry is composed of current and prospective telecommunications carriers operating in or considering operations within the 870 area code of Arkansas.

870 NPA was proposed based on projections that, absent the addition of a new area code within the 870 NPA, the supply of available 870 telephone numbers would be exhausted by the fourth quarter of 2011.² Petition at 1-2.

NeuStar proposed six alternatives for implementation of a new area code within the existing 870 NPA. Five of the proposed plans were “geographic split plans” which would maintain 7-digit dialing within the NPA but would require approximately half of the existing 870 NPA customers to change their phone numbers to a new NPA central office code. The other alternative was an “all services distributed overlay” which would not require customers currently in the 870 NPA to change their phone numbers, but would require those customers to begin 10-digit dialing for all calls within the 870 NPA. *Id.* at 2-5.

NeuStar and the General Staff (Staff) of the Commission recommended the “all services distributed overlay” alternative, as the best resolution for 870 NPA customers and the Industry to address the pending exhaust of the available 870 NPA central office codes. *Id.* at 5, Staff Comments at 2. NeuStar based its recommendation on many different factors, including customer impact, costs associated with changing telephone numbers, and technical issues associated with changing customers’ phone numbers, including intramodal porting issues and wireless handset reprogramming. Petition Exhibit A at 3-4. Staff based its recommendation on many of the same factors and also noted that “(a)t some point it becomes impractical to carve the state into smaller and smaller [area code] pieces.” Staff Comments at 2.

² The projected exhaust date was later amended to the third quarter of 2013. *See* Direct Testimony of D. Wayne Milby filed on October 26, 2009, on behalf of NeuStar, at 4.

With regard to the appropriate implementation schedule time-frame, NeuStar recommended a 13 month schedule for implementing the “all-services distributed overlay.” Petition at 5-6. NeuStar and the industry recommended six months for network preparation followed by six months of permissive 10-digit dialing with mandatory 10-digit dialing to begin at the end of the permissive dialing period. The first activation for central office codes assigned from the new overlay NPA would take place one month after mandatory 10-digit dialing had begun. *Id.* Staff agreed that this was a reasonable time frame for implementing the all services distributed overlay. Staff Comments at 2.

Public comment hearings regarding NeuStar’s 870 NPA Relief Plan were conducted by the Commission in Harrison, Arkansas on Tuesday, September 8, 2009, in Jonesboro, Arkansas on Thursday, September 17, 2009, in Pine Bluff, Arkansas on Tuesday, September 29, 2009, and in Texarkana, Arkansas on Tuesday, October 6, 2009. An evidentiary hearing to consider NeuStar’s request was conducted by the Commission on October 28, 2009.

Based on the recommendations of NeuStar, the Industry and the Staff, the Commission issued Order No. 4 on December 11, 2009, adopting the “all services distributed overlay” as the most appropriate alternative for addressing the 870 NPA number exhaust problem. The Commission also directed NeuStar and the Industry to develop a consensus implementation schedule for the deployment of the new area code. Order No. 4 at 5-6.

On January 21, 2010, in compliance with Order No. 4, NeuStar filed in this docket its first *Report and Response to Order Directing NeuStar and the Industry to*

Develop an Implementation Schedule (NeuStar's First Report) which set forth the Industry's consensus implementation schedule based upon a 13 month timeline beginning in April 2012 and concluding in May 2013.

NeuStar's Addendum Report

Before the proposed implementation could begin, NeuStar states that the return of a large number of central office codes by a specific service provider caused NeuStar to recalculate the projected exhaust of the 870 NPA. Addendum Report at 2. Based upon this new data, NeuStar now projects that the 870 NPA exhaust will not occur until the fourth quarter of 2020.³ NeuStar states that it convened a regularly scheduled Industry meeting on April 23, 2012 to discuss what action, if any, is necessary as a result of the projected exhaust date being extended to 2020.⁴ During the meeting, the Industry "reached consensus to recommend to the Commission that the implementation timeline for the [870 NPA Relief Plan] ... be suspended." The Industry also "reached consensus to request that ... [NeuStar] reconvene the Industry approximately 24 months ahead of the projected exhaust date or when the number of remaining central office codes available for assignment reaches 70." When the Industry reconvenes, NeuStar states that the Industry will file a new implementation schedule for the 870 NPA overlay Relief Plan for consideration by the Commission. *Id.*

Given the extension of the projected exhaust of the 870 NPA from 2013 to 2020, NeuStar and the Industry propose to suspend the existing implementation timeframe for the 870 NPA relief plan. *Id.* at 2-3.

³ See 2012-1 NRUF and NPA Exhaust Analysis, April 2012 on www.nanpa.com under Report/NRUF/April 2012 NPA Exhaust Analysis.

⁴ A copy of the minutes of the meeting, including a list of participants at the meeting, was attached as Exhibit A to the Addendum Report.

Commission Findings and Ruling

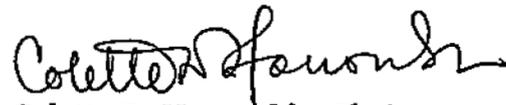
Given that the projected numbering exhaust date for the existing 870 NPA is now projected not to occur until the fourth quarter of 2020, the Commission finds that the suspension of the existing 870 NPA relief plan implementation schedule is in the public interest. Accordingly, the existing 870 NPA Relief Plan implementation schedule is hereby suspended. NeuStar and the Industry shall file in this docket a new proposed 870 NPA Relief Plan implementation schedule at least 22 months ahead of the projected 870 NPA exhaust date.

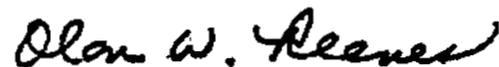
BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION,

This 22nd day of June, 2012.

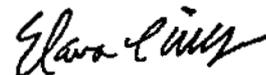
I hereby certify that this order, issued by the Arkansas Public Service Commission, has been served on all parties of record on this date by the following method:

U.S. mail with postage prepaid using the mailing address of each party as indicated in the official docket file, or
 Electronic mail using the email address of each party as indicated in the official docket file.


Colette D. Honorable, Chairman



Olan W. Reeves, Commissioner



Elana C. Wills, Commissioner


Secretary of the Commission