

COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY  
BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

In the Matter of:

AREA CODE EXHAUSTION RELIEF ) ADMINISTRATIVE  
FOR 606 AREA CODE REGION ) CASE NO. 377

O R D E R

On September 25, 1998, Lockheed Martin submitted to the Commission a proposal for relief of the 606 area code on behalf of the telecommunications industry within Kentucky. Lockheed Martin functions as the North American Numbering Plan Administrator ( NANPA ) pursuant to a contract with the Federal Communications Commission, which has ultimate authority over the North American Numbering Plan. In the filing, NANPA estimated that the supply of Central Office Prefixes available within the 606 area code would be exhausted by the 4th quarter of 2000.

Prior to the filing, NANPA had conducted an industry meeting on August 19, 1998, in Lexington, Kentucky. Commission staff was represented at the meeting. At that meeting, NANPA and the industry discussed various relief alternatives, as well as the necessity for relief of the 606 area code.

In the September 25, 1998 filing, NANPA proposed six relief alternatives, and requested that the Commission allow the permissive dialing period to begin on October 1, 1999, with the mandatory dialing period to begin six months later, on April 1, 2000. Following the filing, the Commission, by Order dated February 23, 1999, scheduled an

informal conference ( IC ) on March 24, 1999 to discuss the need for 606 area code relief and to discuss possibilities for such relief.

At the IC, all parties agreed with the need for 606 area code relief. Further, it was agreed that there were three viable options for relief. The first option would be an overlay of the 606 area code (Alternative #1 in NANPA s filing). In its filing, dated September 25, 1998, NANPA provided an estimated life until exhaustion of 6.3 years if Alternative #1 was adopted.

The second viable option (Alternative #2 in NANPA s filing) would be a diagonal line splitting the 606 area code into a Northeast and a Southwest sector. NANPA provided an estimated life of 6.5 years for the Northeast sector, and 6.0 years for the Southwest sector.

NANPA s Alternative #5 was an East-West split that would include Richmond, Winchester, and Lexington within the western area. A proposal for a third viable option would be a modification of this option to include the Cincinnati Bell Telephone Company ( Cincinnati Bell ) operating area within the Western area code. This option has since become known as Modified Alternative #5. NANPA filed further information on April 6, 1999, which indicated an estimated life of 7.3 years for the western area code and 6.0 years for the eastern side.

Parties at the IC also discussed area code relief as it may impact any potential Year 2000 issue, referring to possible computer problems relating to the date change which will occur on January 1, 2000. Because of this remote possibility, the parties agreed that the permissive dialing period should begin on April 1, 2000, followed by mandatory dialing on October 1, 2000.

Following the IC, the Commission held a series of public meetings as follows:

Cincinnati Airport	Thursday, April 15, 1999
Lexington	Friday, April 16, 1999
Somerset	Wednesday, April 21, 1999
Hazard Community College	Teleconference from Somerset
Ashland	Tuesday, April 27, 1999
Pikeville College	Wednesday, April 28, 1999

The purpose of the public meetings was to present information concerning 606 area code relief and to allow public input concerning the issue.

### DISCUSSION AND DECISION

The threshold issue in this case is the determination of the split line that would divide the 606 area code and the new (as yet undesignated) area code. The overwhelming majority of the public comments that stated a preference supported Modified Alternative #5. Two Morehead area citizens expressed support for Alternative #2, and the representative for a paging company supported Alternative #1, the overlay. While addressing the need for 502 area code relief, the Commission rejected an overlay as a solution to area code relief when it determined that the entire state of Kentucky should utilize the same dialing pattern to reduce confusion.<sup>1</sup> Modified Alternative #5 appears to meet reasonable criteria, including projected life until exhaustion as well as reasonable division of communities of interest.

The second issue that the Commission must determine is which of the new areas will retain the 606 area code. Virtually all parties expressed a desire to maintain 606 as their area code, and numerous comments have been filed in this case concerning which area should retain the 606 area code. Generally, the solution is to allow the area

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<sup>1</sup> Administrative Case No. 373, Area Code Exhaustion and Relief, Order dated November 16, 1998, page 3.

incorporating Lexington and Northern Kentucky (the areas of greatest population density and fastest growth) to retain 606 as its area code. However, there are unusual circumstances in the instant matter that must be considered.

As verified by oral and written comments received by the Commission and substantiated by publicly available information, major portions of Eastern and Southeastern Kentucky are economically depressed. There are costs, particularly for the business community, associated with conversion to a new area code. Those costs include changes in advertising, business cards, and necessary programming of telephone systems utilized by business. While these costs are a burden to any business and area, that burden would be unduly severe in those economically depressed areas. Additionally, there are efforts at both the state and federal levels to encourage investment within Eastern Kentucky. Stability of utility services (such as telephone numbers) is an important factor in such efforts. The Commission has therefore determined that the public interest will best be served if the eastern area, which includes Morehead, Ashland, Pikeville, and Somerset, maintains the 606 area code. NANPA will assign the new area code to be used in the western area following the issuance of this Order. The Commission has made this decision quickly in order to allow the public maximum time to adapt to the change.

The third issue to be determined in this matter is the effective date of the area code split. All parties have agreed that implementation of the new area code should begin on April 1, 2000, with a six-month permissive dialing period (during which time subscribers can dial either 606 or the new area code). Mandatory dialing of the new

area code would begin on October 1, 2000. The Commission has reviewed this proposal and finds it to be reasonable.

The final issue that must be addressed is the necessity for customer education concerning the change in area code regions. In order to ensure that customers are aware of the area code region split and associated dialing changes, each local exchange company should develop a customer education plan and further should submit copies of those plans for Commission review.

Cincinnati Bell should also submit for Commission review a copy of its proposed customer education plan to advise Kentucky customers of any change in local dialing patterns for calls across the state line between Northern Kentucky and Cincinnati, Ohio. The Commission will continue to require seven-digit dialing across area code boundaries within Kentucky for existing local calling plans.

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that:

1. The methodology for 606 area code relief within Kentucky shall be by geographical split.
2. The 606 area code region shall be split as described herein in accordance with Modified Alternative #5, a copy of which is appended hereto as Appendix A, and incorporated herein.
3. The eastern area code region, which includes Morehead, Ashland, Pikeville, and Somerset, shall retain the 606 area code.
4. The permissive dialing period shall begin not later than April 1, 2000, and mandatory dialing shall begin not earlier than October 1, 2000.

5. Local exchange carriers shall provide seven-digit dialing across area code boundaries within Kentucky for existing local calling plans.

6. Within 60 days of the date of this Order, local exchange carriers shall submit their proposed customer education plans for Commission review.

7. Within 60 days of the date of this Order, Cincinnati Bell shall submit for Commission review a copy of its proposed customer education plan to advise Kentucky customers of any change in local dialing patterns for calls across the state line between Northern Kentucky and Cincinnati, Ohio.

Done at Frankfort, Kentucky, this 4<sup>th</sup> day of August, 1999.

By the Commission

ATTEST:

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Executive Director

APPENDIX A

APPENDIX TO AN ORDER OF THE KENTUCKY PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION IN  
ADMINISTRATIVE CASE NO. 377 DATED AUGUST 4, 1999

# 606 Split with Exchange Areas

