

COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY
BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

In the Matter of:

REVIEW OF AN AGREEMENT)	
BETWEEN GTE SOUTH INCORPORATED)	CASE NO. 97-442
AND GTE COMMUNICATIONS CORPORATION)	
PURSUANT TO 47 U.S.C. 252(i))	

O R D E R

On October 6, 1999, GTE South Incorporated ("GTE South") and GTE Communications Corporation ("GTE Communications") submitted to the Commission their negotiated agreement for the interconnection of their networks. GTE Communications is purporting to adopt the interconnection agreement between GTE South and AT&T Communications of the South Central States, Inc. ("AT&T"), which was approved by the Commission in Case No. 96-478.¹ The adoption letter, which appears to comprise the only document memorializing the parties' principal agreement, was negotiated pursuant to the Telecommunications Act of 1996 (1996 Act), 47 U.S.C. Sections 251 and 252. Section 252(e) of the 1996 Act requires the parties to an interconnection agreement adopted by negotiation to submit the agreement for approval to the Commission.

¹ Case No. 96-478, Petition by AT&T Communications of the South Central States, Inc. for Arbitration of Certain Terms and Conditions of a Proposed Agreement With GTE South Incorporated Concerning Interconnection and Resale Under the Telecommunications Act of 1996. (Order dated July 30, 1999).

The Commission has reviewed the agreement and finds that no portion thereof discriminates against a telecommunications carrier not a party to the agreement. The Commission is somewhat hesitant, however, to find that the implementation of the agreement is consistent with the public interest, convenience, and necessity without informing GTE Communications that it is entitled to adopt the AT&T agreement in its entirety.

In the agreement filed by GTE South, GTE Communications has agreed to "not seek UNE platforms or already bundled combinations of UNEs."² The document also contains GTE South's legal conclusions regarding its alleged, lawful right to withhold access that is required by law. Its legal analysis is erroneous. However, as this matter represents the voluntary negotiations between the parties, the Commission will approve the agreement. GTE Communications should be aware that GTE South has been ordered by this Commission to provide when requested the combined UNE platform where the platform already exists in GTE South's network.³ 47 U.S.C. 251, the Federal Communications Commission ("FCC") rules, the United States Supreme Court, and this Commission require UNEs to be furnished. Moreover, the Supreme Court specifically upheld the FCC rule prohibiting an incumbent local exchange carrier ("ILEC") from breaking apart UNEs when they are ordered by a competing local exchange carrier ("CLEC") in combination.⁴ The Commission has consistently reiterated its determination that UNEs are central to providing local exchange service and must be provided by

² September 23, 1999 adoption letter at 1.

³ Case No. 96-478, *supra*, (Order dated May 13, 1999).

⁴ AT&T Corp. v. Iowa Utilities Board, 119 S.Ct. 721 (1999); 47 CFR 315(b).

ILECs to CLECs in the manner requested. In addition to the references from Case No. 96-478 discussed herein, the Commission has consistently ruled in other proceedings pursuant to the Telecommunications Act of 1996.⁵

GTE Communications must comply with all relevant Commission mandates for serving in this Commonwealth.

The Commission, having been otherwise sufficiently advised, HEREBY ORDERS that:

1. Subject to GTE Communications' notification to the Commission within 10 days of the date of this Order that it desires to exercise its legal right to revoke this agreement and adopt the entire AT&T agreement, this agreement negotiated between GTE South and GTE Communications is approved.

2. GTE Communications shall file a tariff for local service prior to providing local service giving 30 days' notice to the Commission and shall comply with all Commission regulations and orders as directed.

⁵ See Petition by MCI for Arbitration of Certain Terms and Conditions of a Proposed Agreement with GTE South Incorporated Concerning Interconnection and Resale Under the Telecommunications Act of 1996, Case No. 96-440, Order dated September 1, 1998, at 17 (requiring GTE to permit MCI to order UNEs in combination and stating, "[t]he Commission will not tolerate an ILEC's literally breaking apart network elements that are physically connected in the manner requested by a CLEC"). See also Investigation Regarding Compliance of the State of Generally Available Terms of BellSouth Telecommunications, Inc. With Section 251 and Section 252(d) of the Telecommunications Act of 1996, Case No. 98-348, Order dated August 21, 1998, at 8 (finding "unacceptable" a proposed provision that BellSouth would separate combined elements when a CLEC ordered them in combination and finding that "[s]uch separation and subsequent recombination would serve no public purpose and would increase costs that ultimately would be passed on to the consumer").

Done at Frankfort, Kentucky, this 16th day of December, 1999.

By the Commission

ATTEST:

Executive Director