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DA 98-408

Released: March 3, 1998

## COMMON CARRIER BUREAU SEEKS COMMENT ON NORTH AMERICAN NUMBERING COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION CONCERNING CINCINNATI BELL TELEPHONE (CBT) REQUEST TO SELECT ONE REGIONAL NUMBER PORTABILITY ADMINISTRATION CENTER

CC Docket 95-116  
NSD File No. L-98-14

Comment Date: March 18, 1998  
Reply Comment Date: March 27, 1998

On November 24, 1997, the Chairman, North American Numbering Council (NANC) forwarded to the Common Carrier Bureau its recommendation and the Local Number Portability Administration Working Group report concerning the Cincinnati Bell Telephone (CBT) request that CBT be allowed to select one regional Number Portability Administration Center (NPAC) for purposes of fulfilling its number portability responsibilities.<sup>1</sup>

The Commission specifically directed the NANC to review CBT's request and make a recommendation on whether local exchange carriers (LECs) with contiguous operating areas that overlap more than one (1) LNP region be allowed to select a single NPAC to the Commission on or before December 15, 1997. The NANC concluded that CBT's request does not raise technical difficulties with respect to LNP implementation or have negative financial consequences for carriers responsible for conducting queries necessary to route calls to the proper terminating carrier. The NANC, however, declined to answer the general question of whether LECs that overlap more than one number portability database region should be allowed to select a single NPAC, preferring instead to respond on a case-by-case basis. The NANC

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<sup>1</sup> See *In the Matter of Telephone Number Portability*, Second Report and Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, CC Docket 95-116 (rel. Aug. 18, 1997), at ¶ 22.

recommendation and LNPA Working Group report are attached to this Public Notice.

We seek comment on the NANC's November 24, 1997, recommendation and report by March 18, 1998, and reply comments by March 27, 1998. Interested parties should file an original and four copies of their comments with the Office of the Secretary, Federal Communications Commission, 1919 M Street, NW, Washington, DC 20554. In addition, parties should send two copies to Jeannie Grimes, Common Carrier Bureau, FCC, Suite 235, 2000 M Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20554, and one copy to ITS, at 1231 20th Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20036. Comments and reply comments will be available for public inspection and copying during regular business hours in the Commission's Public Reference Center, Room 239, 1919 M Street, NW, Washington, DC 20554. Copies of comments and reply comments will also be available from ITS, at 1231 20th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036, or by calling (202) 857-3800.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Gayle Radley-Teicher at (202) 418-2320 or Patrick Forster at 418-7061. The address is: Network Services Division, Common Carrier Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, 2000 M Street, NW, Suite 235, Washington, DC 20054. The fax number is: (202) 418-7314. The TTY number is: (202) 418-0484.

TEL NO.

Nov 24, 97 15:27 P.01

4140 Claver St.  
Honeoye Falls, NY 14472-9323

November 24, 1997

A. Richard Metzger, Jr.  
Acting Chief, Common Carrier Bureau  
Federal Communications Commission  
1919 M Street NW  
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Mr. Metzger:

Paragraph 22 of the FCC's Second Report and Order, CC Docket 95-116, *In the Matter of Local Number Portability* directed the North American Numbering Council (NANC) to consider the request of Cincinnati Bell Telephone (CBT) "that it be allowed to select one regional Number Portability Administration Center for purposes of fulfilling its number portability responsibilities". The same paragraph directs the NANC "to address the question of whether LECs with contiguous operating areas that overlap more than one number portability database region should be allowed to select a single Number Portability Administration Center".

The NANC finds that CBT's request does not raise technical difficulties with respect to local number portability implementation or have negative financial consequences for carriers responsible for conducting the queries necessary to route calls to the proper terminating carrier. Therefore, NANC recommends that CBT's request be granted.

With respect to the general question of LECs that overlap more than one number portability database region, the NANC believes that the question is too broad to be answered in a generic fashion at this time and prefers to respond on the basis of the circumstances in any specific case.

Attached is a copy of the findings and recommendations to NANC of the Local Number Portability Administration Working Group concerning this matter dated November 17, 1997.

Sincerely,



Alan C. Hasselwander  
Chairman, North American Numbering Council

Enclosure: 1

cc: Geraldine Matise, Marian Gordon, Heather B. Gold, Erin Duffy, Jeannie Grimes

**North American**

**Local Number**

**WINNING**

November 12, 1992

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LNPA Working Group

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 On June 27, 1996, the FCC adopted the First Report and Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (First Report and Order)<sup>1</sup> which established rules for implementing section 251(b) of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended, which requires all local exchange carriers to offer local number portability (LNP). The First Report and Order defines the LNP deployment schedule in the 100 largest Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs). In addition, the First Report and Order found that an architecture that uses regionally deployed databases would best serve the public interest and that the LNP databases should be administered by one or more neutral third parties.
- 1.2 The First Report and Order directed the North American Numbering Council (NANC), a federal advisory committee, to make recommendations regarding specific aspects of LNP implementation. NANC was directed to make several specific determinations regarding the administration selection process, the overall national architecture, and technical specifications for the regional LNP databases. NANC established the Local Number Portability Administration (LNPA) Working Group to review and make recommendations on these LNPA issues. The LNPA Working Group made a comprehensive report to NANC on April 25, 1997 which was released to the FCC on May 1, 1997. On May 2, 1997, the FCC's Common Carrier Bureau issued a Public Notice seeking comment on the NANC's LNP recommendations. Among the eight (8) parties filing comments, Cincinnati Bell Telephone Company (CBT) filed comments regarding the impact of its territory being split between two (2) different regions and administrators as defined in the LNPA Working Group report. The comments of CBT regarding the NANC LNP recommendations are provided in their entirety in Appendix A.
- 1.3 Section 6.6 of the NANC's LNPA Working Group report dated April 25, 1997, recommends the creation of seven (7) regional databases, with the regions matching the original Regional Bell Operating (RBOC) territories. CBT operates in the Cincinnati metropolitan area which includes counties in Ohio, Kentucky, and Indiana, resulting in a split between the Midwest Region administered on behalf of the industry by Lockheed Martin IMS and the Southeast Region administered by Perot Systems, Inc.. CBT further noted that NANC's recommendation for definition of the NPAC boundaries was intended to minimize implementation costs for the RBOCs. However, CBT states that requiring incumbent LECs that operate in a single contiguous operating area to interface with multiple NPACs will be more difficult and have a greater financial impact on small and mid-sized companies, like CBT, than on large carriers like the RBOCs. CBT estimates that it will cost an extra \$400,000 to connect to databases in two (2) regions.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, CBT requested the FCC to modify the NANC recommendation to avoid split territories for independent telephone companies like CBT. CBT recommends that non-

<sup>1</sup> Telephone Number Portability, First Report and Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, CC Docket No. 95-116, July 2, 1996. On March 11, 1997, the FCC released a First Memorandum Opinion and Order on Reconsideration, in which the LNP deployment periods for the first two (2) implementation phases were extended.

<sup>2</sup> CBT comments in the matter of NANC Recommendations Regarding the Implementation of Telephone Number Portability, CC Docket No. 95-116.

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RBOCs with contiguous operating areas that cross these regional LNP regions be given the option to select a single region.

- 1.4 On August 18, 1997, the FCC adopted the Second Report and Order in the matter of telephone number portability which adopts the recommendations of the NANC as set forth in the April 25, 1997, LNPA Working Group report. This Second Report and Order adopts, among other things, the NANC recommendation to implement the seven (7) regional number portability databases and that Lockheed Martin IMS and Perot Systems, Inc. serve as the administrators for the regional portability databases.<sup>3</sup> The FCC further agrees with NANC that regional databases build on the efforts of the Limited Liability Companies (LLCs), which manage the contractual relationship with Lockheed Martin IMS and Perot Systems, Inc., uses the experience of state sponsored LNP associations and workshops and minimizes the cost and complexity of the databases.<sup>4</sup>
- 1.5 The FCC declined to grant CBT's request to allow it to select one (1) regional Number Portability Administration Center (NPAC).<sup>5</sup> The FCC directs the NANC to review CBT's request and to make a recommendation to the Commission on or before December 15, 1997. This report responds to the Commission's directive and addresses specifically the question of whether Service Providers with contiguous operating areas that overlap more than one (1) LNP region be allowed to select a single NPAC.
- 1.6 During the implementation of LNP in the top 100 MSAs there are 14 MSAs with territories that cross state and/or regional boundaries. See Appendix B for details. Of these 14, eight (8) include multiple states within the same NPAC region, four (4) include multiple states in different NPAC regions operated by different NPAC vendors and two (2) include multiple states in different NPAC regions operated by the same NPAC vendor. The principle distinction between this condition and that described in Paragraph 1.5 above, is the Service Providers involved operate exclusively within only one (1) of the NPAC regions involved. This report also considers the impact of this condition on Service Providers operating in the affected MSAs.

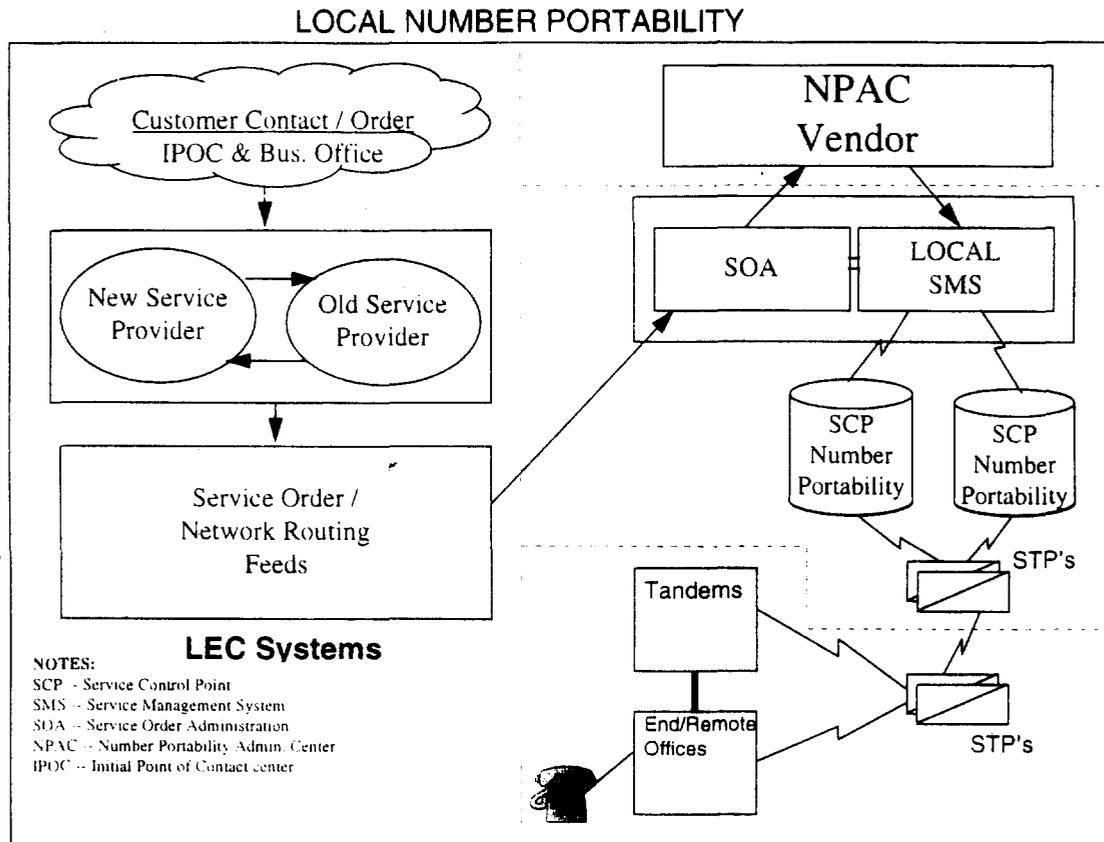
<sup>3</sup> Second Report and Order, ¶ 3.

<sup>4</sup> Second Report and Order, ¶ 21.

<sup>5</sup> Second Report and Order, ¶ 22.

**2. TECHNICAL BACKGROUND**

2.1 In order to adequately describe the potential alternatives it is necessary to provide a brief technical background. First the LNP architecture is depicted in the high level process diagram below<sup>6</sup> followed by functional descriptions of the significant elements of the process.



**2.2 Number Portability Administration Center (NPAC)**

The NPAC is the regional data center managed by one of the neutral third party vendors (i.e., Lockheed Martin IMS or Perot Systems, Inc.) where the NPAC Service Management System (SMS) resides. This is the regional database that receives information from both the incumbent and new Service Providers, including the Location Routing Number (LRN), validates the information and downloads new routing information when a customer is physically connected to the new Service Provider's network. The NPAC provides management and administration of the hardware and software that supports the NPAC SMS functionality.

<sup>6</sup> From LNPA Working Group Report dated April 25, 1997

2.3 Service Order Administration (SOA)

The SOA provides the functionality to interface to Service Provider's order and provisioning systems to update the NPAC SMS. The primary SOA function is to receive orders from the Service Provider's order entry systems, format the data and submit the information to the NPAC. SOAs are either developed and managed by a Service Provider or purchased from a third party vendor. In addition, a number of service bureaus provide SOA services eliminating the need for a physical connection from the Service Provider to the NPAC.

2.4 Local Service Management System (LSMS)

The LSMS is a hardware and software platform that contains the database of information required to effect porting of telephone numbers. The primary functions of the LSMS are to receive subscription data about ported numbers from the NPAC, process and store subscription information, and update network elements. LSMSs are either developed and managed by a Service Provider, or purchased from a third party vendor. In addition, a number of service bureaus provide LSMS services eliminating the need for a physical connection from that Service Provider to the NPAC.

2.5 Service Control Point (SCP)

The SCP provides the LNP association between the called party and the carrier Location Routing Number (LRN) that identifies the carrier to which the call is to be routed. The SCP stores all ported numbers within the rate center. The SCP associates a carrier ID with the ported number and returns the carrier address (LRN) to the Signaling Transfer Point (STP).

2.6 Signaling Transfer Point (STP)

The STP receives the LRN query and routes the query to the appropriate LNP SCP.

### 3. TECHNICAL SOLUTIONS

- 3.1 The LNPA Working Group established a team to address the directive to make a recommendation to the Commission on or before December 15, 1997. The team was made up of representatives from Ameritech, AT&T, BellSouth, CBT, GTE, as well as Lockheed Martin IMS, Perot Systems, Inc., and Illuminet. The report and recommendations represent the consensus opinion of the entire LNPA Working Group.

CBT was the only Service Provider to comment on the NANC recommendation regarding the requirement to connect to two (2) regional NPAC SMSs when the Service Provider's contiguous operating territory is split between two (2) NPAC regions. No other example has been identified of another small or mid-sized wireline Service Provider facing this situation. However, wireless carriers operate within Metropolitan Trading Areas (MTAs) that cross state, as well as, regional boundaries and are subject to the same condition and will face the same concerns as CBT when they begin porting numbers.

While no Service Provider made comments nor did the FCC direct the NANC to consider the condition where MSAs cross state and/or regional boundaries, it is none the less addressed in the report. This is different than the CBT situation because all the companies involved (see Appendix B) operate entirely within the boundaries of a single NPAC, where CBT operates within two (2) NPAC regions. The impact of this condition on Service Providers exists where MSAs cross regional NPAC boundaries and the cross border locations are included in a local calling area. The result of this condition is the need for the involved Service Providers to receive downloads from both NPACs in order to properly route local calls to ported telephone numbers.

Four (4) alternatives were identified as potential solutions to address the concerns of CBT and other LECs with the same or similar circumstances. The alternatives are described in paragraphs 3.2 through 3.5 below.

#### 3.2 Option 1 - Develop a System Interface to Both NPAC SMSs

Connect the Service Provider's LSMS and SOA to both NPAC SMSs in accordance with the architectural plan recommended by NANC and adopted by the Commission. Most, if not all, of the available LSMS and SOA systems currently on the market support connectivity to multiple NPAC SMSs. The NPAC SMSs developed by both neutral third party vendors, in accordance with NANC standards, have functionality that allows a Service Provider to identify only the specific NPA-NXXs for which they wish to receive LSMS downloads.

##### 3.2.1 Impacts on Resources

Service Providers connecting to two (2) NPAC vendors will incur additional ongoing costs to provide connections to multiple NPAC vendors. For example, these recurring costs include, but are not limited to, networks, reports, audits, and

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for the Low-Tech Interface (see paragraph 3.3) if used. Depending on the outcome of the FCC cost recovery order for LNP, there may be additional Service Provider costs for interfacing with two (2) NPAC vendors.

Connecting to multiple NPAC SMSs requires the Service Provider to obtain multiple operating licenses from its LSMS and SOA vendor(s). These represent additional one-time Right-to-Use (RTU) charges that the Service Provider must incur to interface with multiple NPACs. In addition, this may require multiple systems on which to operate the application.

If the Service Provider interfaces with both NPAC vendors, the Service Provider is required to participate in two (2) complete turn up tests and certification procedures for the LSMS and SOA with both NPACs, adding approximately two (2) additional months to the testing effort.

These additional impacts on the Service Provider's resources add to the complexity and cost to meet the FCC deployment schedule and increases the difficulty for new Service Provider entry into these markets.

3.2.2 Other Considerations

Generally, for MSAs like Cincinnati, new Service Providers entering this market view this as entry into a single market area. Requiring Service Providers to interface with multiple NPAC SMSs places an additional burden on them as well. While many Service Providers are entering numerous markets that would require them to interface with both NPAC vendors, this is not always the case, and increases the cost for Service Providers who may not otherwise have a need to interface with a second NPAC SMS.

While this option results in some additional expense for Service Providers with contiguous operating territories that cross NPAC boundaries and for Service Providers operating in territories contained within one (1) NPAC region in an MSA that crosses NPAC regional boundaries, it was viewed as a cost of doing business by all involved wireless and wireline Service Providers except CBT as no other comments were received by the Commission concerning this situation.

3.3 Option 2 - Use Vendors to Provide Selected NPAC Services

To avoid developing their own systems, interfaces, and network connections, Service Providers may elect to use various vendor and service bureau services. Following are examples of existing services and logical combinations of these services:

- A. The Service Provider may use a service bureau for both LNP subscription processing (i.e., SOA) and the LNP database required to correctly route calls to ported telephone numbers. The subscriptions are exchanged with the service bureau by either a system interface, e-mail, or facsimile.

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- B. Both of the neutral third party vendors, in accordance with NANC standards, offer a Low-Tech Interface (LTI) to support communication with the NPAC. The LTI supports the same functionality as the SOA to NPAC SMS interface designed for use by large Service Providers, which uses Common Management Information Protocol (CMIP). Implementation, maintenance, and operation of the CMIP interface, which is more efficient for dealing with large volumes of data, is both more complex and more costly than the LTI.

The Service Provider may use the LTI to the NPAC SMS to create, cancel, or modify subscription versions, and perform other necessary functions with the NPAC SMS as defined by the current requirements.

- C. The Service Provider connects to the NPAC SMS in its primary operating territory with its own LSMS and SOA systems. In the secondary area, the Service Provider may use the LTI for LNP subscription processing and a third party Service Providers or service bureau to provide the LNP database required to correctly route calls to ported telephone numbers.
- D. The Service Provider may use an LSMS and/or SCP from a third party vendor or from a service bureau to provide the LNP database required to correctly route calls to ported telephone numbers. The Service Provider uses a third party LSMS to interface with both NPAC SMSs which is then used to update routing information in the network elements. LNP queries may also be routed to a third party SCP or STP to receive the correct routing information for telephone numbers in a ported NPA-NXX.

3.3.1 Impacts on Resources

Using services provided by vendors and/or service bureaus simplifies the process for the Service Provider and is intended to result in lower costs than the process described in Option 1. No additional Right-to-Use charges are required and additional testing is not needed. In addition, if these services are used exclusively, the network connections with multiple NPACs is simplified to a connection only with the selected vendor. It is each Service Provider's choice to select the combination of services that best satisfies the financial and operational requirements and other special circumstances faced by individual Service Providers.

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3.3.2 Other Considerations

This option does not impact the processes or costs in any way to other Service Providers, LSMS and SOA vendors, service bureaus, or NPAC vendors. Rather, the total cost and responsibility lies with the effected Service Provider.

This option satisfies the needs both for the situation of Service Providers with contiguous operating territories that cross NPAC boundaries and for Service Providers operating in territories contained within one (1) NPAC region in an MSA that crosses NPAC regional boundaries.

3.4 Option 3 - Place all NPA NXXs in the MSA entirely within one (1) NPAC region

In the case of CBT, since all the NPA NXXs within the Cincinnati MSA, including those in Ohio, Indiana, and Kentucky, are operated by CBT, it is feasible to move all of the LNP management into one (1) NPAC. A complete list of the NPA NXXs served by CBT in Kentucky, which are currently included in the Southeast NPAC region, is contained in Appendix C. In this option, CBT would manage their Kentucky NPA NXXs with the remainder of their LNP activity included in the Midwest NPAC region. It is anticipated that other wireless and wireline Service Providers with the same conditions would also be allowed to select one (1) NPAC region to support their LNP needs.

3.4.1 Impacts on Resources

The NPAC vendors determined that this option can be accomplished through an administrative change and does not require software development. In the case of CBT, the process to implement this option requires a request from the appropriate LLC to Perot Systems, Inc. not to open specific NPA NXXs to porting in the Southeast region NPAC, and a corresponding request from the appropriate LLC to Lockheed Martin IMS to open these NPA NXXs to porting in the Midwest region NPAC.

Option 3 creates an opportunity to open NPA NXXs to porting in error. The NPACs are not currently designed to screen such code openings to insure that codes are opened for porting in the appropriate region and not in multiple regions. A technical modification to ensure accurate code openings is, therefore, recommended for Option 3.

3.4.2 Other Considerations

While this option satisfies the need of a Service Provider like CBT with an operating territory that is split between multiple NPAC regions managed by different administrators, it creates the following situations that also must be considered:

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- A. If an exception is made for CBT, new entrants that establish territories that cross regional boundaries, or other existing wireless and wireline Service Providers that currently operate in territories similar to CBT's, will request, and would reasonably expect to be granted, similar exceptions. Maintaining the changes is administratively burdensome on the industry and the NPAC vendors and would often result in the need for Service Providers to obtain downloads from an additional NPAC region as described in Paragraph 3.1.
- B. A new entrant into a territory where designated NPA-NXXs were moved to another NPAC region is now required to obtain NPAC services from a second region.
- C. Lockheed Martin IMS and Perot Systems, Inc. have contracts with the regions that covered specific NPA NXXs and physical territories, and contract pricing for both vendors is based on the level of services provided to the Service Providers in these territories. Therefore, amendments to the vendor contracts are required each time such a realignment is made.
- D. Combining porting activities from multiple states may negatively impact cost allocation models and data requests from regulatory bodies.

This option does not address the needs of Service Providers operating in territories contained in one (1) NPAC region in an MSA that crosses NPAC regional boundaries as it is not reasonable to move NPA NXXs away from the NPAC region where customer service is provided

3.5 Option 4 - Establish an interface between Perot Systems, Inc. NPAC(s) and the Lockheed Martin IMS NPAC(s).

In this option, the Perot Systems, Inc. and Lockheed Martin IMS NPACs share porting information between NPAC regions through one (1) of four (4) mechanisms outlined in A through D below. The NPACs share information, including, but not limited to the affected NPA NXXs, ported telephone numbers, Location Routing Number's, and Carrier IDs.

- A. By manually sending and receiving information. Ported information is sent via facsimile to and from the Perot Systems, Inc. and Lockheed Martin IMS NPACs. A full analysis is required to determine if there are any technical impacts, but this clearly represents a significant administrative burden.

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- B. By sending and receiving information via tape, File Transfer Protocol (FTP), or Secure Internet. If FTP or tape is selected the file formats need to be agreed upon. If a Secure Internet solution is desired a full analysis, design, and development effort is required.
- C. By developing a direct interface between the Perot Systems, Inc. and Lockheed Martin IMS NPACs. NPAC SMS and SOA applications would require modifications and/or development to support this solution. Essentially, based on logic that would follow standard technical recommendations, the NPACs would pass information back and forth. In this scenario the NPACs also will modify the existing means of providing Audits and Reports.
- D. By developing a two-way symmetrically replicated database that shares and processes ported information between the two NPAC vendors. This requires a significant analysis, design, and development effort.

3.5.1 Impacts on Resources

Option 4, regardless of the method selected, significantly impacts the NPAC vendor systems and operations. It is clear that this option is the most complex and therefore the most difficult and costly to implement and is therefore not a suitable short term alternative.

3.5.2 Other Considerations

In addition to the technical and operational impacts of implementing this option, several other issues must be considered. First, this option, because of the significant technical impacts, carries a significant associated cost. Therefore, the vendor contracts for services provided by the NPAC vendors would require reevaluation and probable contract amendment.

Secondly, this option is intended to provide the architectural platform necessary to accommodate location portability. Since the FCC concluded that the disadvantage of mandating location portability outweighs the benefits<sup>7</sup> and referred the issue of location portability to state regulatory bodies<sup>8</sup>, it is premature to invest significant resources to this option until such time as the regulators and the industry adopt a plan to address the public policy issues and architectural design implications associated with location portability.

<sup>7</sup> First Report and Order, ¶184

<sup>8</sup> First Report and Order, ¶186

#### 4. RECOMMENDATIONS

##### 4.1 LNPA Working Group Recommendation

The LNPA Working Group met on November 12, 1997, to consider the options and to develop a recommendation. The LNPA Working Group first considered whether an exception could be made in the case of CBT, and aside from CBT, unanimously concluded that such a precedent would require similar consideration to all future requests from other wireless or wireline Service Providers in similar circumstances. Therefore, the consensus recommendation is Option 1, which requires Service Providers to obtain services from multiple NPACs where their contiguous operating territories span multiple NPAC regions. Selecting this option maintains the original recommendation in the LNPA Working Group report dated April 25, 1997, and adopted in the FCC's LNP Second Report and Order. This recommendation avoids redrawing NPAC boundaries for CBT and other Service Providers making similar requests in the future.

While the LNPA Working Group agrees with CBT on their statement of facts for wireline Service Providers, it concludes that wireless carriers that operate in MTAs that cross state as well as regional boundaries, will request similar consideration when they begin porting numbers. In addition, as additional wireless and wireline Service Providers enter new markets across the country and begin porting numbers, it is likely that the conditions affecting CBT will be encountered by others. Ongoing requests to redraw NPAC regional boundaries would be disruptive to the industry and would generally advantage one (1) Service Provider while negatively impacting others. It is for this reason as well as to avoid administrative and operational burdens on the industry that the LNPA Working Group selected Option 1.

Finally, it was determined that maintaining the existing NPAC regions is appropriate for the MSAs that cross state and NPAC regional boundaries as outlined in Paragraph 1.6. Since the Service Providers involved operate exclusively within only one (1) NPAC region, changing the region boundaries would advantage one (1) Service Provider and disadvantage others. It was therefore concluded that Option 1 is also the recommendation for dealing with this issue.

The consensus decision to select Option 1 was supported by all wireline Service Providers with the exception of CBT. While most of the wireless Service Providers voted with the majority, several joined CBT in their selection of Option 3, which permits Service Providers to select one (1) NPAC region when their contiguous operating territories span multiple NPAC regions. The CBT statement in support of Option 3 is contained in paragraph 4.2 below.

##### 4.2 CBT Recommendation

Upon reviewing the MSAs that cross state boundaries, CBT finds that they are in a unique situation. Of the fourteen (14) MSAs that cross state boundaries, only six (6) cross NPAC region boundaries. Of those six (6), four (4) are split between NPAC

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vendors. And of those four (4), only the Cincinnati MSA has the same incumbent Service Provider (i.e., CBT) on both sides of the boundary.

CBT has suggested that it be permitted to select a single NPAC for the Cincinnati MSA resulting in reduced costs for implementing LNP. While this is true for CBT in the Cincinnati MSA, the FCC has asked the NANC to look at the impact of other MSAs in the same or similar situation. As previously stated, there is no other MSA in exactly the same situation as Cincinnati. Of the other five (5) MSAs that cross NPAC regional boundaries, there is a different Service Provider on each side of the boundary. To move that MSA entirely within one (1) region would decrease the cost for the Service Provider whose region is selected, but increase the cost of the other Service Provider. The *status quo* for these MSAs appears to be the best alternative. For the Cincinnati MSA, the cost is reduced for **all** Service Providers.

Less than fifteen (15) percent of CBT's one-million access lines are in the Kentucky portion of the MSA. No other LEC operates within the Kentucky portion of the MSA, and since the MSA boundary matches the LATA boundary through the Kentucky portion of the region, the only N-1 carriers will be interexchange carriers. Service Providers entering the region view it as a single market. Generally, national carriers will already be connected to all NPACs. For regional carriers, who may not be so connected, having to deal with two (2) NPACs increases the cost and lead time to enter the market. CBT, therefore, recommends that the Cincinnati MSA be assigned to the Midwest Regional NPAC.

**Appendix A**

**CINCINNATI BELL TELEPHONE  
COMMENTS  
REGARDING NANC LNP RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Before the  
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
Washington, D.C. 20554**

In the Matter of )  
 )  
The North American Numbering Council )  
(NANC) Recommendations )  
Regarding the Implementation of ) CC Docket No. 95-116  
Telephone Number Portability )  
 )  
 )

**COMMENTS OF CINCINNATI BELL TELEPHONE COMPANY**

**I. INTRODUCTION**

Cincinnati Bell Telephone Company ("CBT"), an independent, mid-sized local exchange carrier, submits these comments in response to the Commission's Public Notice issued May 2, 1997 seeking comment on the North American Numbering Council's (NANC) recommendations regarding the implementation of telephone number portability. Specifically, CBT comments on the impact of its territory being split between two different regions and administrators.

**II. DISCUSSION**

Section 6.6 of the NANC's Local Number Portability Administration Selection Working Group report ("NANC Report") dated April 25, 1997, recommends the creation of seven regional databases, with the regions matching the Regional Bell Operating Company ("RBOC") territories. The report cites several reasons for establishing regions that match the RBOC territories. The foremost reason cited is that it is easier and less costly for the RBOCs to connect

to a single regional database, rather than multiple databases.<sup>1</sup> In addition, the state commissions, telecommunications industry and the FCC are already familiar with the RBOC territories and thus, will find it easier to work within these areas. The NANC Report notes the following justifications for matching regional databases to RBOC territories:

1. state commissions, the industry and the FCC have become accustomed to working with the RBOCs in their regions;
2. state commissions within RBOC territories have formed associations to address regional issues and therefore, both incumbents and new entrants are currently working within those areas;
3. state commissions have been asked by limited liability companies ("LLCs") to focus their Numbering Plan Area Coordinator ("NPAC") efforts on established RBOC territories; and
4. when faced with the opportunity for system efficiencies and an aggressive schedule, the industry has leaned toward the RBOC territories.<sup>2</sup>

While CBT does not disagree with the justification for matching the regional databases to the RBOC territories, it does object to the apparent lack of consideration of the impact on non-RBOCs. CBT believes that it may be the only incumbent local exchange carrier ("ILEC") with a contiguous operating area (other than ILECs operating in the U. S. territories) whose territory is not wholly contained within one of the seven regional databases. CBT operates in the Cincinnati

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<sup>1</sup> NANC Report, Section 6.6.5.2.

<sup>2</sup> NANC Report, Section 6.6.5.3.

metropolitan area which includes counties in Ohio, Kentucky and Indiana<sup>3</sup> and thus, will be split between the Mid-west (Region # 3) and the Southeast (Region # 4) regions. As the NANC stated in its recommendation, being split between regions will complicate implementation and lead to higher costs. This result is true not only for the RBOCs, but for any carrier that must connect to more than one regional database.

CBT estimates that it will cost an extra \$400,000 to connect to databases in two different regions. This cost will be in addition to the considerable cost of implementing number portability in one territory. There is no justification for this additional cost, and since the long-term cost recovery mechanisms have not yet been determined, CBT is very concerned that this additional burden will fall on CBT and its customers.

As CBT indicated in its Comments on the Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking regarding the long-term number portability cost recovery<sup>4</sup> and in its Comments on Petitions for Reconsideration of the First Report and Order,<sup>5</sup> implementing number portability will be more difficult and have a greater financial impact on small and mid-sized companies, like CBT, than on large carriers like the RBOCs. The existing requirements of implementing number portability are already burdensome. The NANC recommendations add to the burden on small companies like CBT by requiring implementation of number portability within two different regions

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<sup>3</sup> CBT's territory includes four counties in southwestern Ohio, six counties in northern Kentucky, and two counties in southeastern Indiana.

<sup>4</sup> In the Matter of Telephone Number Portability, CC Docket No. 95-116, RM 8535, Comments of CBT filed August 16, 1996, at p. 4.

<sup>5</sup> CBT Comments on Petitions for Reconsideration of Pacific Telesis Group and BellSouth Corporation, CC Docket No. 95-116, RM 8535 filed September 27, 1996, at pp. 3-4.

simultaneously, while tailoring the drawing of regions to relieve the burden on the RBOCs.<sup>6</sup> CBT submits that this solution is not competitively neutral, since it provides a cost advantage to an RBOC that intends to compete with an independent company whose territory is split. CBT urges the Commission to modify the NANC recommendation to avoid split territories for independent telephone companies like CBT.

While the NANC's justification for matching regions to RBOC territories offers some overall efficiencies, its anti-competitive impact on the non-RBOC carriers cannot be ignored. To mitigate the burden on mid-sized companies, CBT recommends that the NANC's recommendation be modified. CBT asserts that the inequity in the NANC recommendation can easily be removed by giving non-RBOCs with contiguous operating areas the option to select a single region. CBT submits that allowing it to select a single regional database is consistent with the way CBT is viewed by the competitive local exchange carriers ("CLEC") and the Commission. CLECs view the Cincinnati metropolitan area as a single market without regard to the fact that CBT's operating area is split between two RBOC regions. The Commission has in its number portability implementation likewise viewed the entire Cincinnati metropolitan statistical area ("MSA") as one region.<sup>7</sup> The Cincinnati MSA includes all of CBT's Kentucky territory and almost all of its Ohio territory.

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<sup>6</sup> CBT may be one of only a few ILECs faced with having to implement number portability within two regions simultaneously, since many small and mid-sized LECs may not be required to implement LNP in the near term, or if they must implement it, they are likely to operate entirely within a single region.

<sup>7</sup> First Report and Order In the Matter of Telephone Number Portability, FCC 96-286 adopted June 27, 1996, released July 2, 1996 at paragraph 77 and Appendix F-Implementation Schedule.

Allowing CBT to select a single region will not significantly distort the distribution of lines among the regions.<sup>8</sup> Any other companies that might be affected by this proposal would also probably have a small number of lines and therefore would not significantly shift the distribution of lines among regions.<sup>9</sup>

This proposal does not eliminate any of the efficiencies in the NANC proposal, but rather makes it more efficient by reducing the overall cost of implementing number portability. Regardless of the final cost recovery mechanism implemented by the Commission, the public will clearly benefit from any measures taken to further reduce the cost of implementing number portability.

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<sup>8</sup> CBT has less than .6% of all access lines.

<sup>9</sup> Over 75% of all access lines are currently RBOC lines.

### **III. CONCLUSION**

CBT respectfully requests the Commission to modify the NANC's recommendations to allow non-RBOC companies with contiguous operating areas to select a single regional database. This change is competitively neutral and will benefit consumers by reducing costs without compromising the efficiency of the system recommended by the NANC.

Respectfully submitted,

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Christopher J. Wilson  
Christine M. Strick  
FROST & JACOBS LLP  
2500 PNC Center  
201 East Fifth Street  
Cincinnati, Ohio 45202  
(513) 651-6800

Thomas E. Taylor  
Sr. Vice President-General Counsel  
Cincinnati Bell Telephone Company  
201 East Fourth Street, 6th Floor  
Cincinnati, Ohio 45202  
(513) 397-1504

Attorneys for Cincinnati Bell  
Telephone Company

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**Appendix B**

**MULTIPLE STATE/NPAC REGION  
METROPOLITAN STATISTICAL AREAS (MSAs)**