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**COMMON CARRIER BUREAU RELEASES PRELIMINARY
COMMON INPUT VALUES TO FACILITATE SELECTION OF
FINAL INPUT VALUES FOR THE FORWARD-LOOKING COST MODEL
FOR UNIVERSAL SERVICE**

CC Docket Nos. 96-45, 97-160

Released: February 5, 1999

In the *Platform Order* released on October 28, 1998, the Commission adopted a forward-looking cost model to be used in determining federal universal service high cost support for non-rural carriers.¹ In this Public Notice, the Common Carrier Bureau (Bureau) announces that it is releasing on the Commission's website a preliminary set of common input values that can be used for analytical purposes in examining the cost model.

The Commission's process for estimating forward-looking economic cost for non-rural carriers has been divided into two stages. The first stage, the adoption of the model "platform" to be used to determine federal universal service high cost support for non-rural LECs, has been completed.² The platform establishes the aspects of the model that are essentially fixed -- primarily assumptions about the design of the network and network engineering and fixed characteristics such as soil and terrain.³ The second stage of this proceeding, the selection of the input values, such as the cost of cable, switches, and other network components is in progress.

By publicly releasing "working" numbers for all of the inputs, we are facilitating the ability of interested parties to review and comment on the selection of final input values. By making available a set of input values, interested parties will have the opportunity to run the model without the necessity of developing their own input values. We, therefore, intend to post a set of common input values on the Commission's website (http://www.fcc.gov/ccb/universal_service/highcost.html#determine). We emphasize that these common input values are "working" numbers, and should not be considered final values for any inputs. The Bureau has recently concluded three workshops designed to facilitate comment relating to specific input values and have received additional submissions from interested parties on certain major

¹ *Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service*, Fifth Report and Order, CC Docket Nos. 96-45, 97-160, FCC 98-279 (rel. Oct. 28, 1998) (*Platform Order*).

² *See Platform Order*.

³ *Platform Order* at para. 4.

inputs.⁴ We intend to review the data currently on the record in this proceeding and any data provided hereafter in determining the final input values.

For further information, please contact: Katie King, Accounting Policy Division, Common Carrier Bureau, (202) 418-7400.

⁴ See *Common Carrier Bureau To Hold Three Workshops On Input Values To Be Used To Estimate Forward-Looking Economic Costs For Purposes Of Universal Service Support*, Public Notice, CC Docket Nos. 96-45, 97-160, DA 98-2406 (rel. Nov. 25, 1998).