



PUBLIC NOTICE

Federal Communications Commission
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**EX PARTE TREATMENT OF PETITION FOR WAIVER
OF THE BENCHMARK SETTLEMENT RATE
FOR GUYANA
IB Docket No. 96-261**

On July 6, 2001, Atlantic Tele-Network, Inc. ("ATN"), the majority owner of Guyana Telephone & Telegraph Ltd. ("GT&T"), which is the incumbent telecommunication service provider in Guyana, filed a petition for waiver of the Commission's benchmark settlement rate of 23¢ for service on the U.S.-Guyana route. ATN requests a waiver of the benchmark settlement rate for a period of five years or until Guyana's teledensity reaches 23 telephones, whichever occurs first.

The Commission issued a Public Notice on July 17, 2001,¹ setting dates for public comment on the waiver request. That Public Notice did not address the *ex parte* treatment for this proceeding. As a waiver proceeding, pursuant to section 1.1208 of the Commission's rules,² this proceeding is thus treated as a restricted proceeding for purposes of the Commission's *ex parte* rules.

Pursuant to section 1.1200(a) of the Commission's rules,³ we find that the issues before us in this proceeding have applicability beyond the parties immediately involved in this proceeding. Accordingly, we find that it would serve the public interest to facilitate the participation of interested members of the public by reclassifying this proceeding as permit-but-disclose for purposes of the *ex parte* rules.⁴ Therefore, effective with the release of this Public Notice, *ex parte* presentations are permitted in this proceeding, provided they are disclosed as provided in the Commission's rules.⁵

For further information, please contact Ken Stanley or Lisa Choi, Telecommunications Division, International Bureau, (202) 418-1460.

¹ Petition for Waiver of the Benchmark Settlement Rate for Guyana, IB Docket No. 96-261, Public Notice, DA 01-1714 (rel. July 17, 2001).

² 47 C.F.R. § 1.1208

³ 47 C.F.R. § 1.1200(a).

⁴ See 47 C.F.R. § 1.1206

⁵ *Id.*