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November 19, 2002

VIA OVERNIGHT MAIL

Ms. Marlene Dortch, Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
9300 East Hampton Drive
Capitol Heights, MD 30743

Re: *Ex Parte Submission Regarding Joint Application by BellSouth Corporation, BellSouth Telecommunications, Inc., and BellSouth Long Distance, Inc. for Provision of In-Region, InterLATA Services in Florida and Tennessee, WC Docket No. 02-307*

Dear Ms. Dortch:

This letter is to provide information regarding recent developments of which the Commission should be aware because of the impact on BellSouth's ability to fully open its markets to competitors. The issues involve problems with BellSouth's Release 11.0 and the operation of the CSOTS hackoffice system.

Network Telephone supports the comments made by AT&T in its November 13, 2002 letter to the Commission, a filing made at Commission Staffs request, regarding BellSouth's delay of Release 11.0.

BellSouth's handling of the entire issue of the defects in the release, and the process it has used to address the problems, calls into question BellSouth's commitment to the CLEC community in general, and to the Change Control Process in particular.

First, BellSouth's releases have been plagued by errors that have been costly to CLECs. Apparently, Release 11.0 will be no different. The CLEC community has no confidence 11.0 will be sound once released. In fact, on October 4, 2002 BellSouth became aware that, based on Telcordia's internal testing, Release 11.0 contained more than ten times the number of pre-released defects found in its two **prior** releases. (Stacy Reply Aff., November 1 *ex parte*.)

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Second, BellSouth is delaying a needed release that contains long-awaited CRs requested by CLECs. The Change Control Process itself is extremely slow and tedious, without adding the further delay of scheduled releases. In addition, the delays will no doubt push back the delivery dates for future releases as resources are used to test and clear-up Release 11.0.

Third, the poor communication BellSouth has had with CLECs throughout the process shows a serious lack of commitment to any type of a collaborative effort with the CLECs through the CCP. BellSouth was aware of release implementation problems weeks prior the October 31 date on which it advised the FCC of the problems and scheduled a call for CLECs. However, BellSouth made no effort to communicate the status of its release or communicate potential problems to its CLEC customers. When CLECs were advised, it was to be given two choices of how to go forward, without adequate time, discussion, or input allowed. This "pick your poison" approach cannot be construed in any way to be a "collaborative" effort. Make no mistake, BellSouth is the only party calling the shots, and it is doing so without so much as the pretense of collaboration.

Network Telephone has also had recent, and severe, problems with BellSouth's CSOTS system. CLECs use CSOTS to check the status of orders to ensure the orders are on schedule or have been completed. CSOTS is the order completion date notification Network Telephone uses to enter a customer into its billing system. CSOTS also includes line loss information, and provides a means to check the status of orders to make sure they are processing correctly

When CSOTS is not working, vital information is unavailable. Order status cannot be checked and there is, consequently, a lack of parity. BellSouth retail representatives can check for the same information through the service order processor CLECs cannot check order status and therefore may look less efficient to customers.

In addition, there is a resulting delay in entering a completed order into Network Telephone's billing due to the CSOTS outage, since order completion cannot be verified. The result of this is delayed billing and a resulting backbilling impact on the customer, lessening the customer's satisfaction.

Also cause for concern is the fact CSOTS only updates once daily. There is no real-time update. There is a lack of parity because BellSouth retail representatives can view the status of orders on a real time basis through SOCS. Recently, CSOTS has not even been correctly updating on a daily basis and Network Telephone has had to wait several days before being able to review the status of its orders.

The degradation and outage issues with CSOTS have worsened over the past **six** months. The CLECs have raised the question of whether there are adequate resources to

support CSOTS, and have requested causation for the outages, but have received little response from BellSouth. There is no metric to track the outages and BellSouth has said a change control request for improvement is not warranted. Any changes that BellSouth may have made to the system were not declared or otherwise visible to CLECs via CCP forums, Carrier Notifications, or other Notices. CLECs are apparently expected to visit the CSOTS outage information on the web and determine, after the fact, that we should have been prepared for the resulting lack of productivity and customer impact.

Ironically, when Network Telephone had historically complained of LENS problems and lack of CSR updates in the LENS system, BellSouth's response was to refer NTC to CSOTS as the most timely and accurate of its systems. One must now suppose that neither LENS nor CSOTS can be considered reliable.

BellSouth advised Network Telephone verbally that additions to the CSOTS system are in process and the improvements would likely take the rest of the year to implement. On November 15, 2002 BellSouth reported via e-mail that a new server would be in place for CSOTS by the end of November, but that the "long term solution is a platform upgrade, moving the application from an NT platform to a SUN/Solaris platform and away from Navigator to XML. As such a change request is not warranted; however, the platform change will be discussed as part of the migration discussion during the monthly Change Control meetings." (Jill Williams, Director - BST Network Services). CLECs have no assurance of, or time frame for, a permanent solution, and no explanation as to why such an impacting issue will not be processed and noticed under Change Control.

The CSOTS complications are crippling to Network Telephone's business production center. The outages are occurring at about five times the usual number, and range from minutes to hours. In addition to the work slow-downs, information on CSOTS is not updating in a timely manner, further compounding the problems.

A single Network Telephone provisioner tracking CSOTS issues over the period of seven calendar days from November 12, 2002 to November 18, 2002 encountered numerous and extreme problems, dramatically slowing down production. These issues are outlined in Exhibit 1. Out of 54 orders reviewed, 28 had problems with slow CSOTS updates (updates taking longer than one business day after the FOC).

More than 22 additional orders were impacted by CSOTS being inaccessible or extremely slow. Keep in mind that Exhibit 1 is based on sample data provided by one of NTC's provisioners, only a very small sample of the orders worked. Every single employee provisioning for NTC encounters the same problems. Network Telephone cannot efficiently run its business under the scenario you will find depicted in the summary of CSOTS problems outlined in Exhibit 1.

The Release 11.0 problems and delays, coupled with the CSOTS issues, clearly demonstrate that BellSouth continues to have unresolved service-affecting back office issues that cannot continue to be tolerated. Until these problems are satisfactorily resolved and a long-term solution is in place, BellSouth should clearly not be granted 271 relief in Florida and Tennessee. BellSouth's systems and upgrades do not function properly, or at parity, for its CLEC wholesale customers.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Margaret H. Ring". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping "M" and "R".

Margaret H. Ring, Director
Regulatory and Governmental Affairs
Network Telephone Corporation

cc: (via electronic mail)
Christine Newcomb, FCC
Janice Myles, FCC
Beth Keating, Florida Public Service Commission
Sara Kyle, Chairman, Tennessee Regulatory Authority
Luin Fitch, U.S. Department of Justice
Qualex International

Encl.: Exhibit I

EXHIBIT 1

CSOTS Issue Log
 November 12-18, 2002
 NTC - One provisioner

CSOTS Issues

DATE	BST Order#	Date FOC Received	FOC Date	Date CSOTS Available	Issues With Records
11/12/02	C9F3RXC0	11/8	11/12	11/13	HTG missing from line; did not know until CSR updated; CSR updated correctly on 11-14
11/13/02	N5F9TRD6	11/9	11/13	11/11	Order in AO & PF status
	COQQ5788	11/7	11/12	11/11	features being removed that were not requested to be removed
	COBG6TY8	11/12	11/14	11/14	Timed out @ 11:15am
	C1WMB600	11/12	11/12	11/14	CSR did not update; could not view CSOTS prior to completion
	C1Q7J448	11/11	11/15	11/13	took over 20 minutes to pull up CSOTS for this order
	C60MTHL6	11/12	11/14	11/13	4 lines missing on CSOTS; printed new CSOTS in the afternoon, all TNs accounted for.
	C5FXVRY7	11/12	11/14	11/13	
	C10M0R49	11/8	11/12	11/12	
	C59W59R3	11/12	11/14	11/14	
	C92KX0T1	11/12	11/14	11/14	
	CY6RCF45	11/12	11/14	11/14	
	CX4200D3	11/12	11/13	NA	Was not able to view CSOTS because system was down
	C96JCHK6	11/12	11/14	11/14	
	CX5BCDG3	11/8	11/11	11/11	
	C57JM4J9	11/7	11/11	11/12	
	C50H7HW6	11/7	11/11	11/12	
	C92NRK56	11/12	11/14	11/14	
	C92DWP7	11/12	11/14	11/14	
	C56B8944	11/12	11/14	11/14	
	C5973YV7	11/11	11/13	11/13	
	C5DRYBD6	11/11	11/13	11/13	
	N969MB27	11/12	11/14	11/14	
	C5CTCH24	11/12	11/14	11/13	
	C5348MJ1	11/12	11/14	11/13	
	C98FVQ89	11/13	11/15	11/15	Could not hold file from billing to see if CSOTS shows CP CSOTS will not even let me log into the system (9:05 am 11-15)
	CODL66B4	11/13	11/13	11/14	
					Could not pull CSOTS for 10 orders; system was extremely slow. It was taking over 30 minutes for some orders to be accessed and would sometimes get a time out error because it took too long
11/14/02	C1NL3712	11/12	11/12	11/14	could not see billing from 11-13 due to CSOTS taking so long to access information, CSR did not update
	N96TRXK2	11/12	11/12		It took 2 hours to pull CSOTS this morning
	C1RKQ915	11/12	11/18	11/14	As of 11-14 CSOTS & CSR has not updated.
	C5P2R021	11/13	11/15	11/14	
	C6B6YY55	11/12	11/13	11/14	
	C9839X64	11/13	11/15	11/15	
	C9CMDFM1	11/13	11/15	11/14	
	C99L93R9	11/13	11/15	11/15	
	C51BGC47	11/14	11/15		
	C51YD9K8	11/14	11/18	11/15	
11/15/02					CSOTS taking over 20 minutes to pull up records, called for support, took 20 minutes to get a response. With 11/15/02 CSOTS still not updated due to high volume of queries and they are supposed to get a new server
	C6FPN1T7	11/14	11/14	11/15	
	C95LH3R5	11/15	11/18		
	C96V85D1	11/15	11/18		
	C9GD19J5	11/15	11/18		
	C6HYL827	11/14	11/18		
	C62KYG96	11/14	11/18		
					2:30pm CSOTS taking over 20 minutes to pull record, spoke with Tanya
	C5P89214	11/15	11/15	11/18	
	C1FBMFC5	11/14	11/15	11/15	
	C96H2W95	11/14	11/14	11/15	

EXHIBIT 1
 CSOTS Issue Log
 November 12-18, 2002
 NTC - One provisioner

	CYCFT813	11/14	11/18	11/15	
	C99F40W7	11/13	11/18	11/15	
	C963BKC4	11/13	11/15	11/15	
	C5FBQ693	11/14	11/19	11/15	
	C1XRD380	11/14	11/14	11/15	sent file to billing without confirming CSOTS shows DP. CSOTS extremely slow and DP no want to delay billing
	C1QM9263	11/14	11/14	11/15	sent file to billing without confirming CSOTS shows DP. CSOTS extremely slow and do not want to delay billing
	C4Y4G699	11/14	11/18		
	C4547V72	11/15	11/18		
11/18/02					CSOTS down PAGE NOT ABLE TO BE DISPLAYED is the error received. called EC support spoke with Clay during system ticket open is 2711. explained to him that I needed to be opened on my own behalf. Tammy Gamble (Comptroller) opened ticket with Scott Rabbons with EC Support. she is unable to confirm her order has completed and cannot access CSOTS (9:30 am)

	Indicates orders which did not update the business day following FOC, as they should have	28 of 54 orders (52%) did not update in a timely manner
	Indicates Service outage and delay issues with CSOTS	A minimum of 22 orders had delay times of more than 20 minutes due to slow or no access problems