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STATE OF MISSOURI
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

At a Session of the Public Service
Commission held at its office
in Jefferson City on the 6th
day of January, 1998.

In the Matter of the Investigation)	
into the Over-Earnings of Northeast)	<u>Case No. TO-98-216</u> ✓ PS
Missouri Rural Telephone Company.)	
In the Matter of the proposed tariff)	
sheets of Northeast Missouri Rural)	<u>Case No. TT-98-277</u> A.
Telephone Company.)	

ORDER SUSPENDING TARIFFS

Northeast Missouri Rural Telephone Company (NMRTC) filed a proposed tariff (File No. 9800470) on December 8, 1997, for Commission approval. This tariff filing would implement the rate restructuring plan proposed in the nonunanimous Stipulation and Agreement (Agreement) that was filed by the Staff of the Missouri Public Service Commission (Staff) on November 21, 1997. Southwestern Bell Telephone Company (SWBT) has been granted intervention. SWBT is opposed to the rate restructuring proposed in the Agreement, and requested a hearing on the Agreement, which the Commission granted. The Commission has scheduled a prehearing conference on the Agreement for January 5, 1998, and an evidentiary hearing for April 20, 21 and 22, 1998. Therefore, the tariff sheets filed by NMRTC are now the subject of a contested case, even though they were not filed in this case.

The effective date of the proposed tariff is January 8, 1998. On December 31, the Staff filed a motion to suspend the proposed tariff sheets, initiating Case No. TT-98-277. The Staff stated in its motion that approval of the tariff would be premature until the Commission makes a decision on the rate design set forth in the proposed Agreement.

The Commission has reviewed NMRTC's proposed tariff filing and the case papers, including Staff's recommendation. Approval of NMRTC's proposed tariffs is inappropriate at this time in that a hearing has been set on the Staff's investigation and the nonunanimous Stipulation and Agreement reached between NMRTC, Staff, the Office of the Public Counsel (OPC) and AT&T Communications of the Southwest, Inc. (AT&T). The Commission finds that the proposed tariff should be suspended in its entirety for a period of 180 days beyond the effective date of January 8, 1998, to July 7, 1998, or until otherwise ordered by this Commission. The Commission further finds that Case No. TT-98-277 should be consolidated with this case and that this case should be designated as the lead case.

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED:

1. That Case No. TT-98-277 is consolidated with Case No. TO-98-216, and that Case No. TO-98-216 shall be designated as the lead case.

2. That the Staff's Motion to Suspend Proposed Tariff Sheets, filed on December 31, 1997, is granted.

3. That the effective date of the following tariff sheets, submitted by Northeast Missouri Rural Telephone Company on December 8, 1997, is suspended to July 7, 1998, or until otherwise ordered by this Commission:

P.S.C. MO. No. 1 Consolidated

4th Revised Sheet No. A.1 Canceling 3rd Revised Sheet No. A.1

4th Revised Sheet No. A.1.1 Canceling 3rd Revised Sheet No. A.1.1

4. That this order shall become effective on January 6, 1998.

BY THE COMMISSION

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Dale Hardy Roberts". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "D" and "R".

Dale Hardy Roberts
Secretary/Chief Regulatory Law Judge

(S E A L)

Lumpe, Ch., Crumpton, Murray,
and Drainer, CC., concur.

Randles, Regulatory Law Judge