

EXHIBIT A



PUBLIC NOTICE

Federal Communications Commission
445 12th St., S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

News Media Information 202 / 418-0500
Internet: <http://www.fcc.gov>
TTY: 1-888-835-5322

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WIRELINE COMPETITION BUREAU APPROVES THE COMPLIANCE PLANS OF BIRCH COMMUNICATIONS, BOOMERANG WIRELESS, IM TELECOM, Q LINK WIRELESS AND TAG MOBILE

WC Docket Nos. 09-197 and 11-42

The Wireline Competition Bureau (Bureau) approves the compliance plans of five carriers: Birch Communications, Inc. (Birch); Boomerang Wireless, LLC (Boomerang); IM Telecom, LLC (IM); Q Link Wireless, LLC (Q Link); and TAG Mobile, LLC (TAG). The compliance plans were filed pursuant to the *Lifeline Reform Order* as a condition of obtaining forbearance from the facilities requirement of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended (the Act), for the provision of Lifeline service.¹

The Act provides that in order to be designated as an eligible telecommunications carrier for the purpose of universal service support, a carrier must “offer the services that are supported by Federal universal service support mechanisms . . . either using its own facilities or a combination of its own facilities and resale of another carrier’s services”² The Commission recently amended its rules to define voice telephony as the supported service and removed directory assistance and operator services, among other things, from the list of supported services.³ As a result of these amendments, many Lifeline-only ETCs that previously met the facilities requirement by providing operator services, directory assistance or other previously supported services no longer meet the facilities requirement of the Act.⁴ In the *Lifeline Reform Order*, the Commission found that a grant of blanket forbearance of the facilities requirement, subject to certain public safety and compliance obligations, is appropriate for carriers

¹ See *Lifeline and Link Up Reform and Modernization et al*, WC Docket No.11-42 *et al.*, Report and Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, 27 FCC Rcd 6656, 6816-17 at paras. 379-380 (2012) (*Lifeline Reform Order*). A list of the compliance plans approved through this Public Notice can be found in the Appendix to this Public Notice.

² 47 U.S.C. § 214(e)(1)(A).

³ See *Connect America Fund*, WC Docket No. 10-90 *et al.*, Report and Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, 26 FCC Rcd 17663, 17692-93, paras. 77-78, 80 (2011); *pets. for review pending sub nom. In re: FCC 11-161*, No. 11-9900 (10th Cir. filed Dec. 8, 2011); *Connect America Fund*, WC Docket No. 10-90 *et al.*, Order on Reconsideration, 26 FCC Rcd 17633, 17634-35, para. 4 (2011) (*USF/ICC Transformation Order on Reconsideration*).

⁴ See *Lifeline Reform Order*, 27 FCC Rcd 6812, at para. 366, App. A; *USF/ICC Transformation Order on Reconsideration* at para. 4. Some ETCs have included language in their compliance plans indicating that they have facilities or plan to acquire facilities in the future. See, e.g., Blanket Forbearance Compliance Plan, WC Docket Nos. 09-197 and 11-42, Q Link Wireless, LLC’s Third Amended Compliance Plan at 4 n. 2 (filed July 30, 2012). To the extent ETCs seek to avail themselves of the conditional forbearance relief established in the *Lifeline Reform Order*, we presume they lack facilities to provide the supported service under section 54.101 and 54.401 of the Commission’s rules. See 47 C.F.R. §§ 54.101 and 54.401. Such ETCs must comply with the compliance plan approved herein in each state or territory where they are designated as an ETC, regardless of their claim of facilities for other purposes, such as eligibility for state universal service funding.

seeking to provide Lifeline-only service.⁵ Therefore, in the *Lifeline Reform Order*, the Commission conditionally granted forbearance from the Act's facilities requirement to all telecommunications carriers seeking Lifeline-only ETC designation, subject to the following conditions: (1) compliance with certain 911 and enhanced 911 (E911) public safety requirements; and (2) Bureau approval of a compliance plan providing specific information regarding the carrier and its service offerings and outlining the measures the carrier will take to implement the obligations contained in the *Order*.⁶

The Bureau has reviewed the five plans listed in the Appendix for compliance with the conditions of the *Lifeline Reform Order*, and now approves those five compliance plans.⁷

Filings, including the Compliance Plans identified in the Appendix, and comments are available for public inspection and copying during regular business hours at the FCC Reference Information Center, Portals II, 445 12th Street, S.W., Room CY-A257, Washington, D.C. 20554. They may also be purchased from the Commission's duplicating contractor, Best Copy and Printing, Inc., Portals II, 445 12th Street, S.W., Room CY-B402, Washington, D.C. 20554, telephone: (202) 488-5300, fax: (202) 448-5563, or via email www.bcpiweb.com.

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For further information, please contact Divya Shenoy, Telecommunications Access Policy Division, Wireline Competition Bureau at (202) 418-7400 or TTY (202) 418-0484.

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⁵ See *Lifeline Reform Order*, 27 FCC Rcd 6813-6817 at paras. 368-381.

⁶ See *id.* at paras. 373 and 389. Subsequently, the Bureau provided guidance for carriers submitting compliance plans pursuant to the *Lifeline Reform Order*. *Wireline Competition Bureau Provides Guidance for the Submission of Compliance Plans Pursuant to the Lifeline Reform Order*, WC Docket Nos. 09-197 and 11-42, Public Notice, 27 FCC Rcd 2186 (Wireline Comp. Bur. 2012).

⁷ The Commission has not acted on any pending ETC petitions filed by these carriers, and this Public Notice only approves the compliance plans of the carriers listed above. While these compliance plans contain information on each carrier's Lifeline offering, we leave it to the designating authority to determine whether or not the carrier's Lifeline offerings are sufficient to serve consumers. See *Lifeline Reform Order*, 27 FCC Rcd 6679-80, 6818-19 at paras. 50 and 387.

APPENDIX

Petitioner	Compliance Plans As Captioned by Petitioner	Date of Filing	Docket Numbers
Birch Communications, Inc.	Further Amended Compliance Plan of Birch Communications, Inc.	July 2, 2012	09-197; 11-42
Boomerang Wireless, LLC	Boomerang Wireless, LLC Revised Compliance Plan	July 26, 2012	09-197; 11-42
IM Telecom, LLC	IM Telecom, LLC d/b/a Infiniti Mobile Compliance Plan	July 5, 2012	09-197; 11-42
Q Link Wireless, LLC	Q Link Wireless, LLC's Third Amended Compliance Plan	July 30, 2012	09-197; 11-42
TAG Mobile, LLC	TAG Mobile, LLC Compliance Plan	July 26, 2012	09-197; 11-42