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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION TAKES ADDITIONAL STEPS TO IMPROVE TELEPHONE NUMBERING SYSTEM USAGE

Washington, D.C. – Today, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) continued its efforts to maximize the efficiency with which numbering resources in the North American Numbering Plan (NANP) are utilized. Beginning in 1999, the Commission initiated and ultimately adopted various measures to ensure that the numbering resources of the NANP are used efficiently, and that all carriers have the numbering resources needed to compete in the expanding telecommunications marketplace.

Today's action builds upon past rulings, which established, among other things, 1) national thousands-block number pooling, which enables numbers to be allocated in blocks of 1,000 rather than 10,000 blocks, 2) numbering resource reclamation requirements to ensure the return of unused numbers to the NANP inventory, and, 3) a 60% utilization threshold, which increases to 75% over time, that carriers must meet before getting additional numbers in their service area.

The specific measures and issues addressed in today's *Third Report and Order and Second Order on Reconsideration* include:

1. Federal Cost Recovery

- Allows incumbent local exchange carriers (LECs) to recover their carrier-specific costs directly related to national thousands-block number pooling implementation to the extent that they are not recovered through existing rates.
- Reaffirms states' obligation to commence cost recovery procedures for costs incurred by carriers participating in state pooling trials, and encourages states that have not yet done so to use the model established by the Commission for national pooling cost recovery.

2. National Thousands-Block Number Pooling Administration

- Declined to alter the implementation date for covered CMRS carriers to participate in pooling.
- Declined to extend the pooling requirement to paging carriers.
- Declined to extend pooling requirements to non-LNP capable carriers outside the largest 100 MSAs that have not received a request to deploy LNP from a competing carriers.

3. Technology Specific Overlays / Other Issues

- Will lift the ban on technology-specific and service-specific overlays, and requires Commission approval of state proposals on a case-by-case basis.
- Declined to lower the initial utilization threshold of 60%.
- Will deny numbering resources to carriers that are found to violate the Commission's numbering requirements.
- Clarified that all carriers in the top 100 Metropolitan Service Areas (MSAs) must become local number portability (LNP) capable.
- Established a "safety valve" to allow carriers not meeting the growth numbering resources requirements to get needed numbers.
- Declined to exempt carriers participating in number pooling from the utilization threshold.

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Docket Nos.: CC 99-200, 96-98, and 95-116

Action by the Commission December 12, 2001 by Third Report and Order and Second Order on Reconsideration (FCC 01-362). Chairman Powell and Commissioners Abernathy, Copps, and Martin; with Martin issuing a separate statement.

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