

BEFORE THE
MISSISSIPPI PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

Docket No. 97-AD-0552

IN RE: IN THE MATTER
OF DESIGNATION
OF CARRIERS
ELIGIBLE FOR
FEDERAL
UNIVERSAL
SERVICE SUPPORT

ORDER

THIS DAY, there came on for consideration by the Mississippi Public Service Commission ("Commission") the matter of BellSouth Telecommunications, Inc.'s (BellSouth's") Petition for designation as a carrier eligible for federal universal service support, pursuant to Section 214(e) of the Telecommunications Act of 1996 ("TA96").

1. On September 8, 1997, this Commission entered an Order in this docket requiring all telecommunications carriers desiring to become an eligible telecommunications carrier ("ETC") to petition the Commission on or before November 14, 1997, for such designation, and to show in its filing that it meets the criteria set out in §214(e)(1) of the Telecommunications Act of 1996 and the pertinent provisions of the Federal Communications Commission's ("FCC's") May 8, 1997 Universal Service Order ("USO").

2. Pursuant to Section 214(e) of TA96 and 47 C.F.R. § 54.101-207, to qualify under federal law as a telecommunications carrier eligible for universal service funding, carriers must satisfy certain requirements or qualify for a waiver of those requirements. Carriers must offer specified services supported by the universal service mechanisms and must publicize the services availability. Services that must be provided by an eligible telecommunications carrier are:

- voice grade access to the public switched network;
- single party service;
- dual tone multi-frequency signaling or its functional equivalent;
- access to (1) emergency service, (2) operator services, (3) interexchange service, and (4) directory assistance; and
- toll limitation services for qualifying low-income consumers.

3. ETCs may offer these services using their own facilities or a combination of their facilities and resold services of another carrier. ETCs must also advertise the availability of, and the prevailing prices for, the services throughout the area in which they have been designated an ETC. The designation as an ETC ensures eligibility to receive specific federal universal service support, including high cost support, reimbursement for discounts provided to low income consumers and support for health care providers.

4. On or before the November 14, 1997, deadline established by the Commission, BellSouth Telecommunications, Inc. filed its petition for eligible

telecommunications carrier designation. BellSouth's petition established that it meets the criteria set forth in §214(e)(1) of TA96 and the USO.

5. The Commission finds that BellSouth, as an incumbent local exchange carrier, is capable of providing the required services for ETC status, except for toll control which requires real time capability within BellSouth's switches to record and rate every toll call as made. BellSouth has shown that this requirement is not technically feasible at this time, and thus BellSouth has demonstrated an exceptional circumstance warranting waiver pursuant to 47 C.F.R. § 54.101(c). The Commission, however, reserves the right to reconsider this waiver, if in the future it can be demonstrated that the capability is technically and economically feasible.

IT IS THEREFORE, ORDERED as follows:

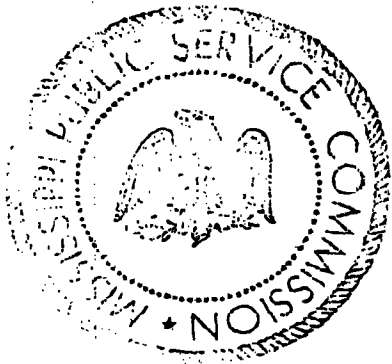
1. BellSouth is designated as an eligible telecommunications carrier throughout its current service area in Mississippi.
2. BellSouth's request for an exemption from the requirement of providing toll control is well taken and is therefore granted.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED, that this Order shall be effective upon its issuance.

Chairman Nielsen Cochran voted Aye; Vice-Chairman Bo Robinson voted Aye; Commissioner George Byars voted Aye.

SO ORDERED on this the 16th day of December, 1997.

MISSISSIPPI PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION



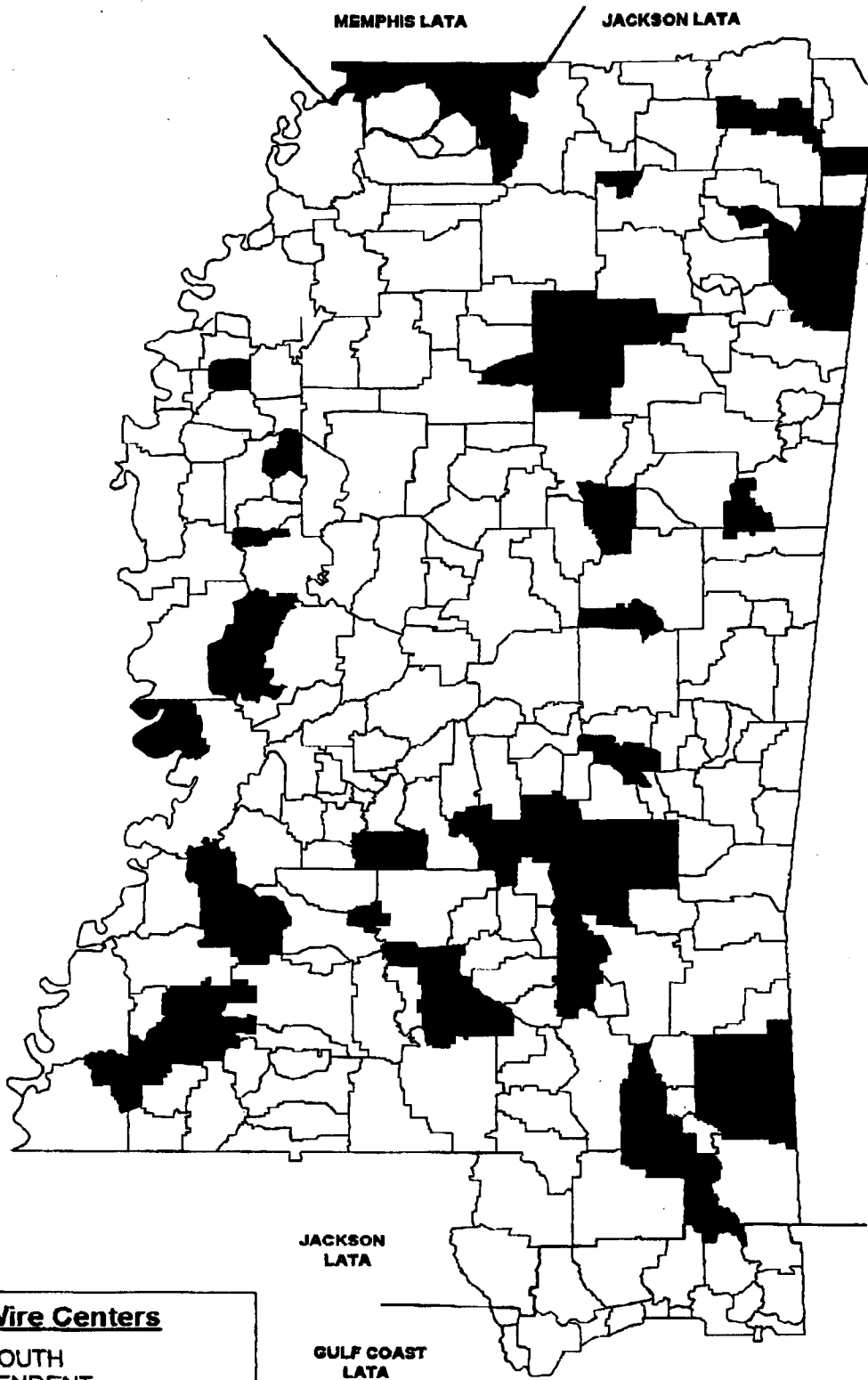
Nielsen Cochran
Nielsen Cochran, Chairman

Bo Robinson
Bo Robinson, Vice-Chairman

George Byars
George Byars, Commissioner

ATTEST: A True Copy

Brian U. Ray
BRIAN U. RAY
Executive Secretary



Mississippi Wire Centers
□ BELLSOUTH
■ INDEPENDENT

JACKSON LATA

GULF COAST LATA

EXHIBIT
"A"