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June 16, 2016

Ms. Marlene H. Dortch  
Secretary  
Federal Communications Commission  
The Portals  
445 Twelfth Street, S.W.  
Room TW-B204F  
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Ms. Dortch:

Re: Nevada Bell Telephone Company (NBTC) Confidential Documents; Tariff F.C.C. No. 1,  
Transmittal No. 293 Request for Confidential Treatment

Pursuant to the Commission's decision in Examination of Current Policy Concerning the Treatment of Confidential Information Submitted to the Commission, GC Docket No. 96-55 (FCC 98-184), released Aug. 4, 1998 ("Confidential Information Order") and in accordance with the Commission's rules related to the Freedom of Information Act, 47 C.F.R. §§ 0.457 and 0.459, NBTC requests confidential treatment of certain data filed in conjunction with its 2016 Annual Filing filed on June 16, 2016.

**Statement pursuant to 47 C.F.R. § 0.459(b)**

**(1) Identification of the specific information for which confidential treatment is sought.**

NBTC requests that the pages marked "Confidential" in the attached document be treated on a confidential basis under Exemption 4 of the Freedom of Information Act.

**(2) Identification of the Commission proceedings in which the information was submitted or a description of the circumstances giving rise to the submission.**

NBTC Tariff F.C.C. No. 1, Transmittal No. 293

**(3) Explanation of the degree to which the information is commercial or financial, or contains a trade secret or is privileged.**

The information provided by NBTC displays access service revenues and quantities which NBTC considers to be confidential business information, and such disclosure would cause NBTC competitive harm.

**(4) Identification of any measures taken by the submitting party to prevent unauthorized disclosure; and**

This information has been maintained on a confidential basis and would not ordinarily be disclosed to parties outside the company.

**(5) Identification of whether the information is available to the public and the extent of any previous disclosure of the information to third parties.**

This information has been maintained on a confidential basis and would not ordinarily be disclosed to parties outside the company.

**(6) Justification of the period during which the submitting party asserts that material should not be available for public disclosure.**

NBTC cannot determine at this time any date on which this information would become “stale” for such a purpose. The NBTC revenues and quantities information should be withheld from public disclosure indefinitely as its commercial value to competitors is not likely to diminish.

**(7) Any other information that the party seeking confidential treatment believes may be useful in assessing whether its request for confidentiality should be granted.**

Under applicable Commission and Court rulings, the subject material must be kept free from public disclosure. Exemption 4 of the Freedom of Information Act shields information which is (1) commercial or financial in nature; (2) obtained from a person outside government; and (3) privileged or confidential. See Washington Post Co. v. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 690 F. 2d 252 (D.C. Cir. 1982). The attached information clearly satisfies the first two elements of that test. With respect to the third element of the above test, information is considered to be “confidential” if disclosure is likely to (1) impair the government’s ability to obtain necessary information in the future, or (2) harm substantially the competitive position of the person from which the information was obtained. National Parks and Conservation Ass’n. v. Morton, 498 F. 2d 765, 770 (D.C. Cir. 1974).

The Commission has specifically held that disclosure of data gathered by the Commission under its audit authority would be likely to impair the government’s future ability to obtain such data, notwithstanding the statutory authority to compel production. See In the Matter of Martha H. Platt On Request for Inspection of Records, FOIA Control Nos. 90-63 (October 3, 1990).

The Commission has recognized that competitive harm can result from the disclosure of confidential business information that gives competitors insight into a company's costs, pricing plans, market strategies, and customer identities. See In re Pan American Satellite Corporation, FOIA Control Nos. 85-219, 86-38, 86-41, (May 2, 1986).<sup>1</sup>

### **Protective Order Requested**

NBTC acknowledges that the Bureau is directed by the Commission's Confidential Information Order, at paras. 35-42, to routinely employ the standard protective order detailed in the Confidential Information Order for materials submitted under a request for confidential treatment unless complete confidentiality is requested. If any person (other than an agency employee working directly on the matter in connection with which these documents are submitted) requests an inspection or requests a copy of the documents or any portion of them, please provide me sufficient advance notice prior to any such disclosure to allow NBTC to pursue appropriate remedies to preserve the confidentiality of the information. NBTC is also submitting a redacted public version.

Should you have any questions please contact me on (202) 463-4148. My office address is 1120 20th Street NW Suite 800, Washington, DC 20036, Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Very truly yours,

/s/ Keith M. Krom

Keith M. Krom  
General Attorney & Associate General Counsel

Attachments

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<sup>1</sup> Further, the Commission has ruled that not only should such data be protected, but also that information that explains and analyzes in detail such information must be protected to ensure the competitively sensitive information cannot be determined. *Allnet Communications Services, Inc. Freedom of Information Act Request*, FOIA Control No. 92-149, Memorandum Opinion and Order (released August 17, 1993) at p. 5. The Commission's decision was upheld in a memorandum opinion of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit, which affirmed a U.S. District Court decision protecting the information. Allnet Communications Services, Inc. v. FCC, Case No. 92-5351 (memorandum opinion issued May 27, 1994, D.C. Cir.).