

NEWS

News media Information 202 / 418-0500

TTY 202 / 418-2555

Fax-On-Demand 202 / 418-2830

Internet: <http://www.fcc.gov>
<ftp.fcc.gov>

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

This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action. See MCI v. FCC, 515 F 2d 385 (D.C. Cir. 1974).

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
May 15, 2002

NEWS MEDIA CONTACT:
Michael Balmoris 202-418-0253
Email: mbalmori@fcc.gov

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION AUTHORIZES BELL SOUTH TO PROVIDE LONG DISTANCE SERVICE IN GEORGIA AND LOUISIANA

Washington, D.C. – The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) today voted to approve BellSouth’s application to provide in-region, interLATA service originating in Georgia and Louisiana. This is BellSouth’s first successful application. Approval of BellSouth’s application promises substantial benefits for the states’ consumers in the form of enhanced competition in both the local and long distance markets.

Competing carriers have approximately 912,000 lines in Georgia and roughly 828,000 of these lines are served on a facilities basis. For Louisiana, competing carriers have approximately 225,000 lines and some 155,000 of these lines are served on a facilities basis.

With the Telecommunications Act of 1996 (1996 Act), Congress envisioned fundamental, pro-competitive changes in the telecommunications markets by making a Bell Operating Company’s (BOC) entry into the long distance market subject to the BOC first opening its local service monopoly to competition. A BOC satisfies this contingency by demonstrating compliance with section 271 of the 1996 Act. After a BOC files a section 271 long distance application with the FCC, the FCC has 90 days to determine whether a BOC has taken the statutorily required steps to open its local telecommunications markets to competition, including compliance with the 1996 Act’s section 271 14-point “competitive checklist.”

Since the passage of the 1996 Act, the FCC has denied five long distance applications, and now has approved applications to provide in-region, long distance service in 13 states. Additionally, applications for seven states have been withdrawn. Currently, there are applications for 2 states – Maine and New Jersey – pending before the Commission. A summary of all section 271 applications can be accessed at the following FCC web page:

www.fcc.gov/Bureaus/Common_Carrier/in-region_applications/

-- more --

The FCC emphasizes that BellSouth must continue to comply with the section 271 checklist requirements, and the Commission has a number of enforcement tools at its disposal, including imposing penalties or suspension of approval.

-FCC-

Docket No.: WC 02-35

Action by the Commission May 15, 2002, by Report and Order (FCC 02-147). Chairman Powell and Commissioners Abernathy, Copps, and Martin; with Commissioner Copps issuing a statement.

Wireline Competition Bureau Staff Contact: Renee Crittendon at 202-418-1580

News about the Federal Communications Commission can also be found on the Commission's web site www.fcc.gov.