

**WIRELESS INTERCONNECTION
AGREEMENT**

BETWEEN

NORTH DAKOTA NETWORK COMPANY

AND

NORTH DAKOTA TELEPHONE COMPANY

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I. Article I

1. INTRODUCTION

This Interconnection/Compensation Agreement ("Agreement") is effective as of _____ (the "Effective Date"), by and between North Dakota Network Company ("NDNC") with offices at 3615 North Broadway, Minot, North Dakota 58702-2027 and North Dakota Telephone Company ("NDTC") with offices at 211 22nd Street NW, Devils Lake, ND 58301-0180.

2. RECITALS

WHEREAS, NDTC is a Local Exchange Carrier in the State of North Dakota;

WHEREAS, NDNC is a Commercial Mobile Radio Service provider of two-way mobile communications services operating within the state of North Dakota;

WHEREAS, NDTC and NDNC exchange calls between their networks and wish to establish Interconnection and Compensation arrangements for these calls;

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the mutual provisions contained herein and other good and valuable consideration, the receipt and sufficiency of which are hereby acknowledged, NDTC and NDNC hereby agree as follows:

II. Article II

1. DEFINITIONS

Special meanings are given to common words in the telecommunications industry, and coined words and acronyms are common in the custom and usage in the industry. Words used in this contract are to be understood according to the custom and usage of the telecommunications industry, as an exception to the general rule of contract interpretation that words are to be understood in their ordinary and popular sense. In addition to this rule of interpretation, the following terms used in this Agreement shall have the meanings as specified below:

1.1 "Act" means the Communications Act of 1934, as amended.

1.2 "As Defined in the Act", means as specifically defined by the Act.

1.3 "As Described in the Act" means as described in or required by the Act.

1.4 "Affiliate" means a person that (directly or indirectly) owns or controls, is owned or controlled by, or is under common ownership or control with, another person. For purposes of this paragraph, the term "own" means to own an equity interest (or the equivalent thereof) of more than 10 percent. 47 U.S.C. §153(1).

1.5 "Central Office Switch" means a switch used to provide Telecommunications Services, including, but not limited to:

(a) "End Office Switch" is a switch in which the subscriber station loops are terminated for connection to trunks. The subscriber receives terminating, switching, signaling, transmission, and related functions for a defined geographic area by means of an end office switch.

(b) "Remote End Office Switch" is a switch in which the subscriber station loops are terminated. The control equipment providing terminating, switching, signaling, transmission, and related functions would reside in a host office. Local switching capabilities may be resident in a Remote End Office Switch.

(c) "Host Office Switch" is a switch with centralized control over the functions of one or more Remote End Office Switches. A Host Office Switch can serve as an end office as well as providing services to other remote end offices requiring terminating, signaling, transmission, and related functions including local switching.

(d) "Tandem Office Switch" is a switching system that establishes trunk-to-trunk connections. Local tandems switch calls from one end office to another within the same geographic area, and access tandems switch traffic from host or end offices to and from an Interexchange Carrier. A Tandem Office Switch can provide host office or end office switching functions as well as the tandem functions.

———A Central Office Switch may also be employed as a combination End Office/Tandem Office Switch.

1.6 "Commercial Mobile Radio Services" or "CMRS" means Commercial Mobile Radio Services as defined in 47 CFR part 20.

1.7 "Commission" means the Public Service Commission of North Dakota.

1.8 "Effective Date" means the date first above written.

1.9 "FCC" means the Federal Communications Commission.

_____ 1.10 -- "Interconnection" for purposes of this Agreement is the linking of NDTC and NDNC networks for the exchange of telecommunications traffic described in this Agreement.

1.11 "Interexchange Carrier" or "IXC" means a carrier that provides or carries, directly or indirectly, InterLATA Service or IntraLATA Toll Traffic.

1.12 "InterLATA Service" means telecommunications between a point located in a local access and transport area and a point located outside such area. 47 U.S.C. §153(21).

1.13 "IntraLATA Toll Traffic" means those intraLATA station calls that are not defined as Local Traffic in this Agreement.

~~1.14~~ 1.14 "Local Access and Transport Area" or "LATA" means a contiguous geographic area:

(A) established before February 8, 1996, by a Bell operating company such that no exchange area includes points within more than 1 metropolitan statistical area, consolidated metropolitan statistical area, or State, except as expressly permitted under the AT&T Consent Decree; or

(B) established or modified by a Bell operating company after February 8, 1996, and approved by the Commission. 47 U.S.C. §153(25)

1.15 "Local Service Area" means, for NDND, Major Trading Area Number 12 (Minneapolis-St. Paul) and for NDTC, its local calling area contained in NDTC's then current General Subscriber Service Tariff.

1.16 "Local Traffic" is defined for all purposes under this Agreement as Local Service Area traffic that is originated by a customer of one Party on that Party's network and terminates to a customer of the other Party on the other Party's network within the same Major Trading Area (MTA). Local Traffic may be handled pursuant to an approved interconnection agreement between the originating Party and a carrier which performs only a contractual transiting function for the originating Party in lieu of a direct connection between the Parties, provided that the customer of NDNC is a two-way CMRS customer and receives mobile service on a wireless, mobile basis as described in 47 U.S.C. §153(27). For purposes of determining originating and terminating points of a call on the NDNC network under this agreement, the originating or terminating cell site locations will be used as the point of call origination and termination, respectively.

~~1.18~~ 1.17 "Local Exchange Carrier" or "LEC" means any person that is engaged in the provision of telephone exchange service or exchange access. Such term does not include

a person insofar as such person is engaged in the provision of a commercial mobile service under section 332(c) of the Act, except to the extent that the Federal Communications Commission finds that such service should be included in the definition of such term. 47 U.S.C. §153(26).

~~1.18~~1.18 "Major Trading Area" or "MTA" means the service areas based on the Rand McNally 1992 Commercial Atlas & Marketing Guide, 123rd edition, at pages 38-39, as further specified or modified by 47 C.F.R. § 24.202 (a) or other applicable law.

~~1.18~~1.19 "Mobile service" means a radio communication service carried on between mobile stations or receivers and land stations, and by mobile stations communicating among themselves, and includes (A) both one-way and two-way radio communication services, (B) a mobile service which provides a regularly interacting group of base, mobile, portable, and associated control and relay stations (whether licensed on an individual, cooperative, or multiple basis) for private one-way or two-way land mobile radio communications by eligible users over designated areas of operation, and (C) any service for which a license is required in a personal communications service established pursuant to the FCC proceeding entitled "Amendment to the Commission's Rules to Establish New Personal Communications Services" (GEN Docket No. 90-314; ET Docket No. 92-100), or any successor proceeding. 47 U.S.C. §153(27)

~~1.19~~1.20 "Mobile station" means a radio-communication station capable of being moved and which ordinarily does move. 47 U.S.C. §153(28)

~~1.20~~1.21 "Non-Local Traffic" - All traffic which is not Local Traffic as defined in Section 1.16 hereof is Non-Local Traffic and will not be subject to Reciprocal Compensation.

~~1.21~~1.22 "NPA" or the "Number Plan Area" also referred to as an "area code" refers to the three-digit code which precedes the NXX in a dialing sequence and identifies the general calling area within the North American Numbering Plan scope to which a call is to be routed (i.e., NPA/NXX-XXXX.).

~~1.22~~1.23 "NXX" means the three-digit code, which appears as the first three digits of a seven-digit telephone number within a valid NPA or area code.

~~1.23~~1.24 "Party" means either NDTC or NDNC, and "Parties" means NDTC and NDNC.

~~1.24~~1.25 "Reciprocal Compensation" means an arrangement between two carriers in which each receives the same compensation from the other carrier for the transport and termination on each carrier's network of Local Traffic, as defined in Section 1.16 above, that originates on the network facilities of the other carrier.

~~1.25~~1.26 "Telecommunications" means the transmission, between or among points specified by the user, of information of the user's choosing, without change in the form or content of the information as sent and received. 47 U.S.C. §153(43)

~~1.26~~1.27 "Telecommunications Act" means the Communications Act of 1934, as amended.

~~1.27~~1.28 "Telecommunications Carrier" means any provider of telecommunications services, except that such term does not include aggregators of telecommunications services (as defined in 47 U.S.C. Section 226(a)(2)). A telecommunications carrier shall be treated as a common carrier under this chapter only to the extent that it is engaged in providing telecommunications services, except that the Federal Communications Commission shall determine whether the provision of fixed and mobile satellite service shall be treated as common carriage. 47 U.S.C. §153(44)

~~1.28~~1.29 "Termination" means the switching of Local Traffic at the terminating carrier's end office switch, or equivalent facility, and delivery of such traffic to the called party's premises. 47 CFR 51.701(d)

~~1.29~~1.30 "Transiting Traffic" is traffic that originates from one provider's network; "transits" one or more other provider's network substantially unchanged, and terminates to yet another provider's network.

~~1.30~~1.31 "Transport" means the transmission and any necessary tandem switching of Local Traffic subject to Section 251(b)(5) of the Act from the interconnection point between the two carriers to the terminating carrier's end office switch that directly serves the called party, or equivalent facility provided by a carrier other than an incumbent LEC. 47 CFR 51.701(c)

~~1.31~~1.32 "Type 1 Service" often referred to as a line-side trunk connection, is a service that involves connection to a telephone company end office similar to that provided to a private branch exchange (PBX). A type 1 Service is offered in connection with the provision of telephone numbers hosted by a NDTC switch.

~~1.32~~1.33 "Type 2 Service" often referred to as a trunk side connection, is a service that involves interconnection to a telephone company end office (Type 2-B) or tandem (Type 2-A).

2.0 INTERPRETATION AND CONSTRUCTION

All references to Sections, Exhibits and Schedules shall be deemed to be references to Sections of, and Exhibits and Schedules to, this Agreement unless the context shall otherwise require. The headings of the Sections and the terms are inserted for convenience of reference only and are not intended to be a part of or to affect the meaning of this Agreement. Unless the context shall otherwise require, any reference to

any agreement, other instrument or other third party offering, guide or practice, statute, regulation, rule or tariff is for convenience of reference only and is not intended to be a part of or to affect the meaning of a rule or tariff as amended and supplemented from time-to-time (and, in the case of a statute, regulation, rule or tariff, to any successor provision).

3.0 SCOPE

3.1 This Agreement relates to the exchange of Local Service Area traffic between specific exchanges of NDTC-, as noted in Attachment A, and all NPA/NXX's under NDNC's OCN 2577. NDNC represents that it is a CMRS provider of communications services to subscribers in MTA No. 12, (Minneapolis-St. Paul).

3.2 This Agreement is limited to traffic of NDTC end user customers for which NDTC has tariff authority to carry. This Agreement is limited to traffic of NDNC end user customers to which NDNC provides service on a two-way wireless, mobile basis. This Agreement covers only traffic of NDNC end user customers that are utilizing a mobile station, as defined in the Communication Act of 1934. This Agreement does not cover traffic of NDNC end user customers that are utilizing customer premise equipment for communications over a wireless local loop or quasi-fixed wireless service, even though the customer premise equipment might be transportable in a quasi-mobile application. This Agreement does not cover traffic of NDNC on a one-way mobile basis, sometimes called paging service.

3.3 Nothing in this Agreement shall be construed as a waiver by either party to institute proceedings before the Commission to compel the establishment of interconnection arrangements between NDNC and NDTC for wireless local loop service or quasi-fixed wireless services. If NDNC desires to establish interconnection arrangements with NDTC for wireless local loop or quasi-fixed wireless, or paging service, NDTC will engage in bona fide negotiations with NDNC to establish interconnection and compensation arrangements for such traffic. In the event said negotiations do not result in mutually satisfactory interconnection and compensation arrangements within a reasonable amount of time, either party may institute proceedings before the Commission pursuant to section 49-21-09 of the North Dakota Century Code.

3.4 The Parties also agree to exchange traffic associated with Third-Party local providers if an agreement has been made between the originating carrier and both the transiting company and the terminating company.

3.5 Traffic that is exchanged through an Interexchange Carrier (IXC) is not covered under this Agreement.

3.6 Any amendment, modification, or supplement to this Agreement must be in writing and signed by an authorized representative of each party.

4.0 SERVICE AGREEMENT

Description of Arrangements. This Agreement provides for the following interconnection and arrangements between the networks of NDTC and NDNC

4.1 Direct Interconnection: A two-way direct trunk group is provisioned between NDTC's Rugby Host Office Switch (RGBYNDXADS0) and NDNC's point of presence in the Rugby exchange, with the point of interconnection designated at NDTC's Rugby Host Office Switch. NDNC agrees to arrange for facilities between the two networks and charges will be billed by NDTC to NDNC at the applicable rates.

A. Landline-to-Wireless:

~~B.~~ Calls from NDTC's customers as indicated in Attachment A, to NDNC customers with NPA/NXX's under OCN 2577, are dialed as 1+ calls and handed off to the pre-subscribed Interexchange Carrier of the customer's choice. NDTC will bill these calls at applicable tariff rates to the pre-subscribed Interexchange Carrier and no Reciprocal Compensation between the two Parties will apply.

B.

~~B.~~ Wireless-to-Landline:

~~5.0~~ Calls from NDNC customers with NPA/NXX's under OCN 2577, to NDTC customers as indicated in Attachment A are routed from NDNC's Parent Network in Minot, MNOTNDXA01T, via the two-way trunk group to NDTC and terminated by NDTC, as appropriate. These calls are billed Reciprocal Compensation rates by NDTC to NDNC as indicated in 5.1 below.

5.0

5.0 COMPENSATION

5.1 Traffic Subject to Reciprocal Compensation.

Reciprocal Compensation is applicable for the Transport and Termination of Local Traffic and is related to the exchange of traffic described in Section 4.1.B.

The rate for Reciprocal Compensation shall be \$0.011 per minute.

5.2 Traffic Subject to Transiting Charges

Transiting compensation is applicable to all traffic originated on NDNC's network, with NPA/NXX's under OCN 2577, and transited through NDTC's network

facilities and delivered to a non-party Telecommunications Carrier. Transiting compensation is billed to the originating party.

The rate for Transiting compensation shall be \$0.006852 per minute.

5.5.3 Calculation of Payments and Billing.

5.4 NDNC will compensate NDTC for Local Traffic delivered to NDTC over the two-way trunk group for termination to NDTC's customers, as prescribed in Section 4.1.B., and at the rates provided in Section 5.1. NDNC will also compensate NDTC for transiting traffic, as prescribed and at the rate provided in Section 5.2.

5.5 NDTC shall prepare a monthly billing statement to NDNC which will separately reflect the calculation of Reciprocal and Transiting compensation due NDTC. Actual terminating usage recorded by NDTC will be used for billing NDNC.

5.6 Each party may request to inspect, during normal business hours, the records, which are the basis for any monthly bill issued by the other Party and to request copies thereof provided that the requested records do not exceed 24 months in age from the date the monthly bill containing said record information was issued.

6.0 NOTICE OF CHANGES

If a Party contemplates a change in its network, which it believes will materially affect the inter-operability of its network with the other Party, the Party making the change shall provide at least ninety (90) days advance written notice of such change to the other Party.

7.0 GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PARTIES

7.1 Each Party is individually responsible to provide facilities within its network which are necessary for routing, transporting and, consistent with Section 5, measuring and billing traffic from the other Party's network and for delivering such traffic to the other Party's network in a mutually acceptable format, and to terminate the traffic it receives in that mutually acceptable format to the proper address on its network. The Parties are each solely responsible for participation in and compliance with national network plans, including The National Network Security Plan and The Emergency Preparedness Plan. Neither Party shall use any service related to or use any of the Services provided in this Agreement in any manner that prevents other persons from using their service or destroys the normal quality of service to other carriers or to either Party's customers, and subject to notice and a reasonable opportunity of the offending Party to cure any violation, either Party may discontinue or refuse service if the other Party violates this provision.

7.2 Each Party is solely responsible for the services it provides to its customers and to other Telecommunications Carriers.

7.3 Each Party is responsible for administering NXX codes assigned to it.

7.4 Each Party is responsible for obtaining Local Exchange Routing Guide ("LERG") listings of the Common Language Location Identifier ("CLLI") assigned to its switches.

8.0 TERM AND TERMINATION

8.1 Subject to the provisions of Sections 13, the initial term of this Agreement shall be for two years ("Term") which shall commence on the Effective Date. This Agreement shall automatically renew for successive six-month periods, unless, not less than one hundred twenty (120) days prior to the end of the Term or any renewal term, either party notifies the other party of its intent to terminate this Agreement. In the event of such renegotiation, this Agreement shall remain in effect until such time that a new agreement becomes effective.

8.2 The Parties agree that disputed and undisputed amounts due under this Agreement shall be handled as follows:

8.2.1 If any portion of an amount due to a Party (the "Billing Party") under this Agreement is subject to a bona fide dispute between the Parties, the Party billed (the "Non-Paying Party") shall, within thirty (30) days of its receipt of the invoice containing such disputed amount, give written notice to the Billing Party of the amounts it disputes ("Disputed Amounts") and include in such notice the specific details and reasons for disputing each item. The Non-Paying Party shall pay when due all undisputed amounts to the Billing Party. The Parties will work together in good faith to resolve issues relating to the disputed amounts. If the dispute is resolved such that payment is required, the Non-paying Party shall pay the disputed amounts with interest at the lesser of (i) one and one-half percent (1-1/2%) per month or (ii) the highest rate of interest that may be charged under North Dakota's applicable law. In addition, the Billing Party may cease terminating traffic for the Non-paying Party after undisputed amounts not paid become more than 90 days past due, provided the Billing Party gives an additional 30 days notice and opportunity to cure the default

8.2.2 Any undisputed amounts not paid when due shall accrue interest from the date such amounts were due at the lesser of (i) one and one-half percent (1-1/2%) per month or (ii) the highest rate of interest that may be charged under North Dakota's applicable law.

8.2.3 Undisputed amounts shall be paid within thirty (30) days of receipt of invoice from the Billing Party.

8.3 ___ Upon termination or expiration of this Agreement in accordance with this Section:

- (a) Each Party shall comply immediately with its obligations as set forth above;
- (b) Each Party shall promptly pay all amounts (including any late payment charges) owed under this Agreement;
- (c) Each Party's indemnification obligations shall survive termination or expiration of this Agreement.

8.4 Either Party may terminate this Agreement in whole or in part in the event of a default of the other Party, provided, however, that the non-defaulting Party notifies the defaulting Party in writing of the alleged default and the defaulting Party does not correct the alleged default within thirty (30) days after receipt of written notice thereof.

9.0 CANCELLATION CHARGES

Except as provided herein, no cancellation charges shall apply.

10.0 NON-SEVERABILITY

10.1 The services, arrangements, terms and conditions of this Agreement were mutually negotiated by the Parties as a total arrangement and are intended to be non-severable.

10.2 Nothing in this Agreement shall be construed as requiring or permitting either Party to contravene any mandatory requirement of federal or state law, or any regulations or orders adopted pursuant to such law.

11.0 INDEMNIFICATION

11.1 Each Party (the "Indemnifying Party") shall indemnify and hold harmless the other Party ("Indemnified Party") from and against loss, cost, claim liability, damage, and expense (including reasonable attorney's fees) to customers and other third parties for:

- (1) damage to tangible personal property or for personal injury proximately caused by the negligence or willful misconduct of the Indemnifying Party, its employees, agents or contractors;

(2) claims for libel, slander, or infringement of copyright arising from the material transmitted over the Indemnified Party's facilities arising from the Indemnifying Party's own communications or the communications of such Indemnifying Party's customers; and

(3) claims for infringement of patents arising from combining the Indemnified Party's facilities or services with, or the using of the Indemnified Party's services or facilities in connection with, facilities of the Indemnifying Party.

Notwithstanding this indemnification provision or any other provision in the Agreement, neither Party, nor its parent, subsidiaries, affiliates, agents, servants, or employees, shall be liable to the other for Consequential Damages (as defined in Section 12.3).

11.2 The Indemnified Party will notify the Indemnifying Party promptly in writing of any claims, lawsuits, or demands by customers or other third parties for which the Indemnified Party alleges that the Indemnifying Party is responsible under this Section, and, if requested by the Indemnifying Party, will tender the defense of such claim, lawsuit or demand.

(1) In the event the Indemnifying Party does not promptly assume or diligently pursue the defense of the tendered action, then the Indemnified Party may proceed to defend or settle said action and the Indemnifying Party shall hold harmless the Indemnified Party from any loss, cost liability, damage and expense.

(2) In the event the Party otherwise entitled to indemnification from the other elects to decline such indemnification, then the Party making such an election may, at its own expense, assume defense and settlement of the claim, lawsuit or demand.

(3) The Parties will cooperate in every reasonable manner with the defense or settlement of any claim, demand, or lawsuit.

12.0 LIMITATION OF LIABILITY

12.1 No liability shall attach to either Party, its parents, subsidiaries, affiliates, agents, servants, employees, officers, directors, or partners for damages arising from errors, mistakes, omissions, interruptions, or delays in the course of establishing, furnishing, rearranging, moving, terminating, changing, or providing or failing to provide services or facilities (including the obtaining or furnishing of information with respect thereof or with respect to users of the services or facilities) in the absence of gross negligence or willful misconduct.

12.2 Except as otherwise provided in Section 11.0, no Party shall be liable to the other Party for any loss, defect or equipment failure caused by the conduct of the first Party, its

agents, servants, contractors or others acting in aid or concert with that Party, except in the case of gross negligence or willful misconduct.

12.3 In no event shall either Party have any liability whatsoever to the other Party for any indirect, special, consequential, incidental or punitive damages, including but not limited to loss of anticipated profits or revenue or other economic loss in connection with or arising from anything said, omitted or done hereunder (collectively, "Consequential Damages"), even if the other Party has been advised of the possibility of such damages.

13.0 REGULATORY APPROVAL

The Parties understand and agree that this Agreement will be filed with the Commission, and to the extent required by FCC rules may thereafter be filed with the FCC. Each Party covenants and agrees to fully support approval of this Agreement by the Commission or the FCC under Section 252(e) of the Act without modification. The Parties, however, reserve the right to seek regulatory relief and otherwise seek redress from each other regarding performance and implementation of this Agreement. In the event the Commission or FCC rejects this Agreement in whole or in part, the Parties agree to meet and negotiate in good faith to arrive at a mutually acceptable modification of the rejected portion(s). Further, this Agreement is subject to change, modification, or cancellation as may be required by a regulatory authority or court in the exercise of its lawful jurisdiction.

The Parties agree that their entrance into this Agreement is without prejudice to any positions they may have taken previously, or may take in future, in any legislative, regulatory, judicial or other public forum addressing any matters, including matters related to the same types of arrangements covered in this Agreement.

14.0 CHANGES IN LAW

The Parties acknowledge that the respective rights and obligations of each Party as set forth in this Agreement are based on the text of the Act and the rules and regulations promulgated thereunder by the FCC and the Commission as of the Effective Date ("Applicable Rules"). In the event of any amendment to the Act, any effective legislative action or any effective regulatory or judicial order, rule, regulation, arbitration award, dispute resolution procedures under this Agreement or other legal action purporting to apply the provisions of the Act to the Parties or in which the FCC or the Commission makes a generic determination that is generally applicable which revises, modifies or reverses the Applicable Rules (individually and collectively, Amended Rules), either Party may, by providing written notice to the other party, require that the affected provisions of this Agreement be renegotiated in good faith and this Agreement shall be amended accordingly to reflect the pricing, terms and conditions of each such Amended Rules relating to any of the provisions in this Agreement.

15.0 MOST FAVORED NATION PROVISION

In accordance with §252(i) of the Act and 47 C.F.R. §51.809, NDNC shall be entitled to adopt from NDTC any entire Interconnection/Compensation agreement provided by NDTC to any other CMRS provider that has been filed and approved by the Commission, for services described in such Agreement, on the same terms and conditions. The term of the adopted agreement shall expire on the same date as set forth in the agreement that was adopted.

16.0 MISCELLANEOUS

16.1 Authorization

16.1.1 North Dakota Telephone Company is a corporation duly organized, validly existing and in good standing under the laws of the State of North Dakota and has full power and authority to execute and deliver this Agreement and to perform its obligations hereunder, subject to any necessary regulatory approval.

16.1.2 North Dakota Network Company is a corporation duly organized, validly existing and in good standing under the laws of the State of North Dakota and has full power and authority to execute and deliver this Agreement and to perform its obligations hereunder, subject to any necessary regulatory approval.

16.2 Compliance. Each Party shall comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations applicable to its performance under this Agreement.

16.3 Independent Contractors. Neither this Agreement, nor any actions taken by NDNC or NDTC in compliance with this Agreement, shall be deemed to create an agency or joint venture relationship between NDNC and NDTC, or any relationship other than that of purchaser and seller of services. Neither this Agreement, nor any actions taken by NDNC or NDTC in compliance with this Agreement, shall create a contractual, agency, or any other type of relationship or third party liability between NDNC and NDTC end users or others.

16.4 Force Majeure. Neither Party shall be liable for any delay or failure in performance of any part of this Agreement from any cause beyond its control and without its fault or negligence including, without limitation, acts of nature, acts of civil or military authority, government regulations, embargoes, epidemics, terrorist acts, riots, insurrections, fires, explosions, earthquakes, nuclear accidents, floods, work stoppages, equipment failure, power blackouts, volcanic action, other major environmental disturbances, unusually severe weather conditions, inability to secure products or services of other persons or transportation facilities or acts or omissions of transportation carriers

(collectively, a "Force Majeure Event"). If any Force Majeure condition occurs, the Party delayed or unable to perform shall give immediate notice to the other Party and shall take all reasonable steps to correct the force majeure condition. During the pendency of the Force Majeure, the duties of the Parties under this Agreement affected by the Force Majeure condition shall be abated and shall resume without liability thereafter.

16.5 Confidentiality

16.5.1 Any information such as specifications, drawings, sketches, business information, forecasts, models, samples, data, computer programs and other software and documentation of one Party (a Disclosing Party) that is furnished or made available or otherwise disclosed to the other Party or any of its employees, contractors, or agents (its "Representatives" and with a Party, a "Receiving Party") pursuant to this Agreement ("Proprietary Information") shall be deemed the property of the Disclosing Party. Proprietary Information, if written, shall be clearly and conspicuously marked "Confidential" or "Proprietary" or other similar notice, and, if oral or visual, shall be confirmed in writing as confidential by the Disclosing Party to the Receiving Party within ten (10) days after disclosure. Unless Proprietary Information was previously known by the Receiving Party free of any obligation to keep it confidential, or has been or is subsequently made public by an act not attributable to the Receiving Party, or is explicitly agreed in writing not to be regarded as confidential, such information: (i) shall be held in confidence by each Receiving Party; (ii) shall be disclosed to only those persons who have a need for it in connection with the provision of services required to fulfill this Agreement and shall be used by those persons only for such purposes; and (iii) may be used for other purposes only upon such terms and conditions as may be mutually agreed to in advance of such use in writing by the Parties. Notwithstanding the foregoing sentence, a Receiving Party shall be entitled to disclose or provide Proprietary Information as required by any governmental authority or applicable law, upon advice of counsel, only in accordance with Section 16.5.2 of this Agreement.

16.5.2 If any Receiving Party is required by any governmental authority or by applicable law to disclose any Proprietary Information, then such Receiving Party shall provide the Disclosing Party with written notice of such requirement as soon as possible and prior to such disclosure. The Disclosing Party may then seek appropriate protective relief from all or part of such requirement. The Receiving Party shall use all commercially reasonable efforts to cooperate with the Disclosing Party in attempting to obtain any protective relief which such Disclosing Party chooses to obtain.

16.5.3 In the event of the expiration or termination of this Agreement for any reason whatsoever, each Party shall return to the other Party or destroy all Proprietary Information and other documents, work papers and other material (including all copies thereof) obtained from the other Party in connection with this Agreement and shall use all reasonable efforts, including instructing its employees

and others who have had access to such information, to keep confidential and not to use any such information, unless such information is now, or is hereafter disclosed, through no act, omission or fault of such Party, in any manner making it available to the general public.

____ 16.6 Governing Law. For all claims under this Agreement that are based upon issues within the jurisdiction (primary or otherwise) of the FCC, the exclusive jurisdiction and remedy for all such claims shall be as provided for by the FCC and the Act. For all claims under this Agreement that are based upon issues within the jurisdiction (primary or otherwise) of the Commission, the exclusive jurisdiction for all such claims shall be with the Commission, and the exclusive remedy for such claims shall be as provided for by such Commission. In all other respects, this Agreement shall be governed by the domestic laws of the State of North Dakota without reference to conflict of law provisions.

____ 16.7 Taxes. Each Party purchasing services hereunder shall pay or otherwise be responsible for all federal, state, or local sales, use, excise, gross receipts, transaction or similar taxes, fees or surcharges levied against or upon such purchasing Party (or the providing Party when such providing Party is permitted to pass along to the purchasing Party such taxes, fees or surcharges), except for any tax on either Party's corporate existence, status or income. Whenever possible, these amounts shall be billed as a separate item on the invoice. To the extent a sale is claimed to be for resale tax exemption, the purchasing Party shall furnish the providing Party a proper resale tax exemption certificate as authorized or required by statute or regulation by the jurisdiction providing said resale tax exemption. Failure to timely provide such sale for resale tax exemption certificate will result in no exemption being available to the purchasing Party.

____ 16.8 Assignment. This Agreement shall be binding upon the Parties and shall continue to be binding upon all such entities regardless of any subsequent change in their ownership. Each Party covenants that, if it sells or otherwise transfers to a third party, unless the Party which is not the subject of the sale or transfer reasonably determines that the legal structure of the transfer vitiates any such need, it will require as a condition of such transfer that the transferee agree to be bound by this Agreement with respect to services provided over the transferred facilities. Except as provided in this paragraph, neither Party may assign or transfer (whether by operation of law or otherwise) this Agreement (or any rights or obligations hereunder) to a third party without the prior written consent of the other Party which consent will not be unreasonably withheld; provided that either Party may assign this Agreement to a corporate Affiliate or an entity acquiring all or substantially all of its assets or equity by providing prior written notice to the other Party of such assignment or transfer. Any attempted assignment or transfer that is not permitted is void ab initio. Without limiting the generality of the foregoing, this Agreement shall be binding upon and shall inure to the benefit of the Parties' respective successors and assigns.

___16.9 Non-Waiver. Failure of either Party to insist on performance of any term or condition of this Agreement or to exercise any right or privilege hereunder shall not be construed as a continuing or future waiver of such term, condition, right or privilege.

16.10 Notices. Notices given by one Party to the other Party under this Agreement shall be in writing and shall be: (i) delivered personally; (ii) delivered by express delivery service; (iii) mailed, certified mail, return receipt requested; or (iv) delivered by telecopy to the following addresses of the Parties:

To:	To:
<u>North Dakota Network Company</u>	North Dakota Telephone Company
Steven D. Lysne _____	Dave Dircks
P. O. Box 2027 _____	P.O. Box 180
3615 N. Broadway _____	211 22 nd Street NW
Minot, ND 58702-2027 _____	Devils Lake, ND 58301-0180

or to such other address as either Party shall designate by proper notice. Notices will be deemed given as of the earlier of: (i) the date of actual receipt; (ii) the next business day when notice is sent via express mail or personal delivery; (iii) three (3) days after mailing in the case of certified U.S. mail; or (iv) on the date set forth on the confirmation in the case of telecopy.

16.11 Publicity and Use of Trademarks or Service Marks. Neither Party nor its subcontractors or agents shall use the other Party's trademarks, service marks, logos or other proprietary trade dress in any advertising, press releases, publicity matters or other promotional materials without such Party's prior written consent.

16.12 Joint Work Product. This Agreement is the joint work product of the Parties and has been negotiated by the Parties and their respective counsel and shall be fairly interpreted in accordance with its terms. In the event of any ambiguities, no inferences shall be drawn against either Party.

16.13 No Third Party Beneficiaries; Disclaimer of Agency. This Agreement is for the sole benefit of the Parties and their permitted assigns, and nothing herein expressed or implied shall create or be construed to create any third-party beneficiary rights hereunder. Except for provisions herein expressly authorizing a Party to act for another, nothing in this Agreement shall constitute a party as a legal representative or agent of the other Party; nor shall a Party have the right or authority to assume, create or incur any liability or any obligation of any kind, express or implied, against, in the name of, or on behalf of the other Party, unless otherwise expressly permitted by such other Party. Except as otherwise expressly provided in this Agreement, no party undertakes to perform any obligation of the other Party, whether regulatory or contractual, or to assume any responsibility for the management of the other Party's business.

16.14 No License. No license under patents, copyrights, or any other intellectual property right (other than the limited license to use consistent with the terms, conditions

and restrictions of this Agreement) is granted by either Party, or shall be implied or arise by estoppel with respect to any transactions contemplated under this Agreement.

16.15 Technology Upgrades. Nothing in this Agreement shall limit either Parties' ability to upgrade its network through the incorporation of new equipment, new software or otherwise, provided it is to industry standards, and that the Party initiating the upgrade shall provide the other Party written notice at least ninety (90) days prior to the incorporation of any such upgrade in its network which will materially impact the other Party's service. Each Party shall be solely responsible for the cost and effort of accommodating such changes in its own network.

16.16 Scope of Agreement. This Agreement is intended, *inter alia*, to describe and enable specific Interconnection/Reciprocal Compensation arrangements between the Parties. This Agreement does not obligate either Party to provide arrangements not specifically provided for herein.

16.17 Entire Agreement. The terms contained in this Agreement and any Schedules, Exhibits, tariffs and other documents or instruments referred to herein are hereby incorporated into this Agreement by reference as if set forth fully herein, and constitute the entire agreement between the Parties with respect to the subject matter hereof, superseding all prior understandings, proposals and other communications, oral or written. Neither Party shall be bound by any preprinted terms additional to or different from those in this Agreement that may appear subsequently in the other Party's form documents, purchase orders, quotations, acknowledgments, invoices or other communications. This Agreement may only be modified by a writing signed by an officer of each Party.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Parties hereto have caused this Agreement to be executed as the dates listed below.

North Dakota Network Company

North Dakota Telephone Company

By: _____

By: _____

Printed: _____

Printed: _____

Title: _____

Title: _____

Date: _____

Date: _____

Attachment A

**North Dakota Telephone Company
Locality NPA/NXX Designations**

<u>Locality</u>	<u>NPA/NXX</u>		
Balta	701	542	
Drake/Anamoose	701	465	
Fessenden	701	547	
Harvey	701	324	
Rugby	701	776	
Velva	701	338	

