

STATE OF MICHIGAN

BEFORE THE MICHIGAN PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

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In the matter, on the Commission's own motion, )  
of legislative-type inquiry into the quality of telecom- )  
munication services of **AMERITECH MICHIGAN.** )  
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Case No. U-12571

At the August 17, 2000 meeting of the Michigan Public Service Commission in Lansing,  
Michigan.

PRESENT: Hon. John G. Strand, Chairman  
Hon. David A. Svanda, Commissioner  
Hon. Robert B. Nelson, Commissioner

**ORDER COMMENCING INQUIRY**

On July 12, 2000, Ameritech Michigan filed a corrective action notification pursuant to R 484.52 of the Commission's quality of service rules for telecommunication services. The rule requires that a provider must arrange to clear nonemergency service repair requests within a monthly average of 36 hours or less. Failure to meet this standard for three months triggers a requirement for the provider to submit a written report to the Commission in addition to taking corrective action. The report details that the monthly average time required for Ameritech Michigan to clear repair requests has increased from over 40 hours in March to nearly 44 hours in April and to more than 66 hours in May. Thus, over a period of three months, the average time required to clear customer repair requests has risen by over 50%. On August 15, 2000, Ameritech Michigan filed another corrective action notification pursuant to R 484.52, which indicates that its

monthly average time required for repairs in June rose to over 88 hours, more than double the average for March. Additionally, the Commission has received information that some customers are waiting more than four weeks for service restoration following a complaint of disruption.

Further, the Commission notes that the number of telecommunication complaints has risen over the last three years. Total contacts the Commission received in 1997 were 10,652. In 1999, that number reached 16,277. In the first half of 2000, the Commission has received over 8,500 complaints with the volume of calls increasing on a week by week basis. This trend is alarming, particularly considering that over the last year, the number of slamming complaints has diminished by more than 80%. Thus, the increase in quality of service complaints has risen even more than the increase in all complaints might suggest.

Currently, the overwhelming majority of complaints registered at the Commission relate to Ameritech Michigan. For the week of July 31, 2000, the Commission received over 200 calls complaining about Ameritech Michigan's failure to perform repairs promptly and correctly. The number of complaints about Ameritech Michigan's service has risen to a level that has overwhelmed the Commission Staff assigned to respond to those complaints.

Pursuant to Section 202 of the Michigan Telecommunication Act (the Act), the Commission is empowered to establish and enforce quality standards for providing telecommunication services in Michigan, and is entrusted with the duty to preserve the provision of high quality basic local exchange service. MCL 484.2202; MSA 22.1469(202). Further, the Commission has the authority to initiate an investigation pursuant to Section 203 of the Act, MCL 484.2203; MSA 22.1469(203).

The Commission takes very seriously its duty to promote high quality telecommunication services, and to ensure that all persons have access to just, reasonable, and affordable basic local

exchange service. Because of the concerns arising out of the information outlined above, the Commission finds that it should conduct a legislative-type inquiry into the quality of telecommunication services that Ameritech Michigan provides and the steps that the company has taken, and plans to take, to remedy this situation. This inquiry may lead to a proceeding under Section 203, which may result in the imposition of penalties and other remedies. Therefore, Ameritech Michigan shall, within 14 days of the date of this order, file in this docket an explanation of how its service quality problems developed and a verified statement detailing its business plan to adequately and expeditiously address these problems.

Further, the Commission finds that it should provide an opportunity for public input. To that end, a hearing shall be held on September 18, 2000 at 9:00 a.m. at the offices of the Commission at 6545 Mercantile Way, Lansing, Michigan 48909. The Commission will also consider comments made by the public at any of the five public forums scheduled throughout the state. In addition, the Commission will consider written comments concerning the issues raised in this order.

The Commission FINDS that:

- a. Jurisdiction is pursuant to 1991 PA 179, as amended, MCL 484.2101 et seq.; MSA 22.1469(101) et seq.; 1969 PA 306, as amended, MCL 24.201 et seq.; MSA 3.560(101) et seq.; and the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure, as amended, 1992 AACRS, R 460.17101 et seq.
- b. The Commission should commence a legislative-type inquiry into the quality of service provided by Ameritech Michigan.
- c. Ameritech Michigan should be required to file an explanation of how its service quality problems developed and a verified, detailed business plan with explicit commitments to take

action within a specific time frame that will adequately and expeditiously address its quality of service problems. The plan should include a public education/public notification component, which openly informs the public about the problem and its solution.

THEREFORE, IT IS ORDERED that:

A. Ameritech Michigan shall, within 14 days, file an explanation of how its service quality problems developed and a verified, detailed business plan including a public notification component with explicit commitments to take action within a specific time frame that will adequately and expeditiously address its quality of service problems.

B. A public hearing shall be held on September 18, 2000 at 9:00 a.m. in the Commission's offices located at 6545 Mercantile Way, Lansing, Michigan 48909, at which interested members of the public may appear and be heard. Ameritech Michigan shall appear and present a brief summary of its business plan to the public.

C. The Commission will consider comments on Ameritech Michigan's quality of service at any of the five public forums scheduled throughout the state:

Escanaba	Wednesday	September 13, 2000	6:00 p.m.
Tawas City	Thursday	September 21, 2000	6:00 p.m.
Cadillac	Tuesday	September 26, 2000	6:00 p.m.
Wyandotte	Tuesday	October 3, 2000	6:00 p.m.
Royal Oak	Thursday	October 5, 2000	6:00 p.m.

D. Interested persons may submit written comments concerning the issues raised in this order by filing them with the Commission's Executive Secretary no later than Monday, October 9, 2000.

The Commission reserves jurisdiction and may issue further orders as necessary.

MICHIGAN PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

/s/ John G. Strand  
Chairman

( S E A L )

/s/ David A. Svanda  
Commissioner

/s/ Robert B. Nelson  
Commissioner

By its action of August 17, 2000.

/s/ Dorothy Wideman  
Its Executive Secretary

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MICHIGAN PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

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Chairman

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Commissioner

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Commissioner

By its action of August 17, 2000.

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Its Executive Secretary

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Suggested Minute:

“Adopt and issue order dated August 17, 2000 initiating a legislative-type inquiry into the quality of telecommunication services of Ameritech Michigan, as set forth in the order.”