

**BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION**

**OF OREGON**

UM 1212

In the Matter of	)	
	)	
WANTEL, INC, d/b/a ComspanUSA	)	ORDER
	)	
Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications	)	
Provider, Providing Services to Customers	)	
Under the Federal Lifeline/Link Up Program	)	
and the State of Oregon Telephone Assistance	)	
Program.	)	

**DISPOSITION: APPLICATION APPROVED**

On July 19, 2005, Wantel, Inc., d/b/a ComspanUSA (Wantel) filed an application with the Public Utility Commission of Oregon (Commission) requesting designation as a federal eligible telecommunications provider (ETP) pursuant to OAR 860-033-0005. Designation as a federal ETP will authorize Wantel to participate in the federal Lifeline/Link Up program, as well as the Oregon Telephone Assistance Program (OTAP). Wantel currently provides wireline services to over 4,307 customers in the Roseburg, Sutherlin and Winston service areas. A description of the filing and its procedural history is contained in the Staff Report, attached as Appendix A, and incorporated by reference.

In order to be designated as a federal ETP, a telecommunications service provider must be designated as a federal eligible telecommunications carrier (ETC) by a state public utility commission. Staff finds that Commission Order No. 05-856 designated Wantel as an ETC on July 14, 2005. In order to be designated as a state ETP, a telecommunications service provider must comply with the federal requirements contained in C.F.R. § 54.101. The applicant must also demonstrate that it will comply with OAR 860-033-0005 through OAR 860-033-0100. Staff finds that Wantel has satisfied the requirements to provide OTAP to qualifying customers, as further provided in Appendix A.

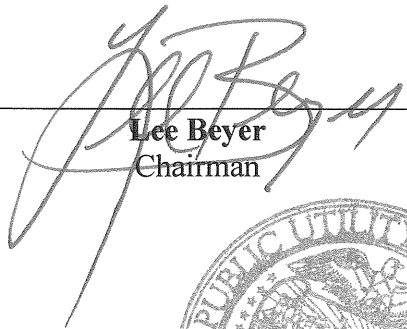
Staff recommends that the Commission grant Wantel's request to be designated as an ETP pursuant to OAR 860-033-0005. Granting the petition will authorize Wantel to participate in the federal Lifeline/Link Up program and OTAP.

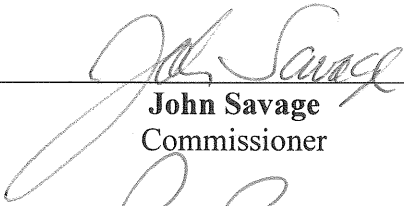
At its Public Meeting on August 16, 2005, the Commission adopted Staff's recommendation and approved Wantel's application for designation as an ETP in the proposed designated service area.

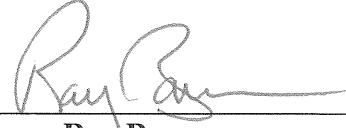
**ORDER**

IT IS ORDERED that Wantel's application for designation as a federal Eligible Telecommunications Provider in the wire centers listed in Appendix A is approved.

Made, entered, and effective AUG 18 2005.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**Lee Beyer**  
Chairman

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**John Savage**  
Commissioner

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**Ray Baum**  
Commissioner



A party may request rehearing or reconsideration of this order pursuant to ORS 756.561. A request for rehearing or reconsideration must be filed with the Commission within 60 days of the date of service of this order. The request must comply with the requirements in OAR 860-014-0095. A copy of any such request must also be served on each party to the proceeding as provided by OAR 860-013-0070(2). A party may appeal this order to a court pursuant to applicable law.

ITEM NO. CA1



**PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION OF OREGON  
STAFF REPORT  
PUBLIC MEETING DATE: August 16, 2005**

REGULAR \_\_\_\_\_ CONSENT  X  EFFECTIVE DATE \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: July 21, 2005

TO: Public Utility Commission

FROM: Damara Paris, RSPF 

THROUGH: Rick Willis, PUC Executive Director   
Victoria McLean, CSD Administrator 

SUBJECT: Wantel, Inc.: (Docket No. UM 1212) Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Provider, Providing Services to Customers Under the Federal Lifeline/Link Up Program and the State of Oregon Telephone Assistance Program (OTAP).

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends that the Commission grant Wantel, Inc.'s request to be designated an Eligible Telecommunications Provider (ETP) pursuant to Oregon Administrative Rule (OAR) 860-033-0005. Granting the petition will authorize Wantel, Inc. to participate in the federal Lifeline/Link Up program, as well as the Oregon Telecommunications Assistance Program.

**DISCUSSION:**

**A. The Application of Wantel, Inc.**

Commission Order No. 05-856 designated Wantel, Inc. a federal eligible telecommunications carrier (ETC) on July 14, 2005. The company now seeks designation as an ETP in order to participate in the federal Lifeline/Link Up telephone subsidy program and the State of Oregon Telephone Assistance Program (OTAP). The corporation submitted their application to provide OTAP services on July 19, 2005. Wantel, doing business as ComspanUSA, is a Southern Oregon based telecommunications provider. Wantel currently provides wireline services to over 4,307 customers in Roseburg, Sutherlin and Winston service areas.

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### **B. The Federal Lifeline/Link UP Program**

The federal Lifeline/Link Up program is a universal service fund (USF) supported mechanism designed to increase the availability of telecommunications services to low-income customers.

The Lifeline portion of the Lifeline/Link Up program reimburses telephone companies for providing low-income consumers with a discount on the cost of residential basic local exchange service. Lifeline support enables low-income consumers to save up to \$13.50. Of this amount, the OTAP program contributes \$3.50 per month. Consumers living on tribal lands may qualify for alternate Lifeline discounts based on their area of tribal residence.

The Link Up portion of the Lifeline/Link Up program reimburses telephone companies for providing low-income consumers with a discount on the cost of connecting their residential basic local exchange service. Link Up support enables low-income consumers to save up to 50% on connection fees, or \$30, whichever is less. Participants may also establish a deferred payment schedule for remaining connection charges of up to \$200. Consumers living on tribal lands may qualify for tribal Link Up discounts.

Telecommunications service providers provide funding for federal Lifeline/Link Up. Carriers are required to contribute a percentage of their interstate revenues towards federal USF support mechanisms, including high cost support and rural healthcare programs. Most telecommunications service providers pass this cost on to their customers via a surcharge on end user bills.

### **C. Oregon Telephone Assistance Program**

In 1987, the Commission established OTAP in response to the law enacted by the Oregon Legislature stating that all Oregonians have a right to access to basic telecommunication services under the Residential Service Protection Fund (RSPF). OTAP is one of four telecommunication assistance programs outlined in Chapter 290, Oregon Laws 1987.

OTAP is administered by Commission staff and serves as an additional source of support to the Lifeline portion of the federal Lifeline/Link Up program. The state contributes \$3.50 per eligible consumer for basic local exchange telephone service, while the federal government contributes up to \$10 per consumer.

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At present, 34 ILEC companies, 1 CLEC and 2 wireless companies currently participate in the OTAP and federal Lifeline/Link UP program. Approximately 62,000 low-income customers in Oregon currently receive OTAP and Lifeline support.

#### **D. Consumer Eligibility for Lifeline, Link Up and OTAP**

In states that maintain their own low-income support programs, the FCC requires consumers to meet state eligibility requirements in order to receive federal Lifeline/Link Up support. In states that do not have their own income support programs, consumers are required to meet default federal eligibility requirements. In Oregon, consumers are eligible to receive OTAP and Lifeline/Link Up assistance if they are currently receiving federal food stamps or assistance from another low-income program for which eligibility requirements do not exceed 135% of the federal poverty level. In addition to food stamps, consumers receiving assistance such as Temporary Assistance to Needy Families, Supplemental Security Income or coverage under an approved medical program may qualify.

#### **E. The Federal ETC Designation Process**

Before a telecommunications service provider can receive federal USF support (whether high cost support or Lifeline/Link Up), it must be designated as a federal ETC by a state public utility commission. On July 14, 2005, Wantel, Inc. was granted an ETC designation by the Commission through Order No. 05-856, Docket UM 1202.

#### **F. State ETP Designation Process**

In order to be designated as a state ETP to participate in OTAP, a telecommunications service provider must comply with the federal requirements contained in C.F.R. § 54.101. The applicant must also demonstrate that it will comply with OAR 860-033-0005 through OAR 860-033-0100, which includes the rules applicable to OTAP.

#### **G. Analysis of Wantel, Inc.'s Application**

Wantel filed its OTAP application on July 19, 2005, which included a cover letter and a completed OTAP ETP Provider Application Form. These documents are attached to this memo.

Staff found that the application was complete and responsive. As part of the application, Wantel agreed to abide by the PUC Oregon Administrative Rules pertaining to OTAP. These rules specifically apply to procedures for approving, denying and terminating OTAP recipients, timelines for submitting reports, requirements regarding

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client confidentiality and expectations pertaining to Link Up. In summary, Wantel has satisfied the requirements to provide OTAP to their qualifying consumers.

**PROPOSED COMMISSION MOTION:**

Approve Wantel, Inc.'s application for designation as an ETP, so it can provide services to customers under the federal Lifeline/Link Up program and the State of Oregon OTAP program.

UM 1212

**PROPOSED COMMISSION MOTION:**

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ORDER NO. 05-926

**ATERWYNNE** LLP  
ATTORNEYS AT LAW

**COPY**

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Arthur A. Butler  
E-Mail: aab@aterwynne.com

July 18, 2005

**RECEIVED**

**JUL 20 2005**

Public Utility Commission of Oregon  
Administrative Hearings Division

**RECEIVED**

**JUL 19 2005**

**P.U.C**

VIA UPS NEXT DAY AIR

Damara Paris, Manager  
Telecommunications Assistance Programs  
Oregon Public Utility Commission  
550 Capitol Street NE, STE 215  
Salem, Oregon 97308-2148

Re: Wantel, Inc's Application for OTAP

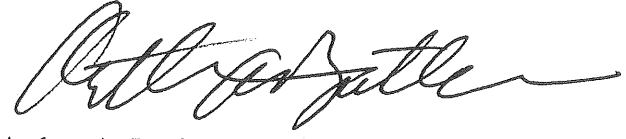
Dear Damara:

Attached please find Wantel, Inc.'s Application for Eligible Telecommunication Provider to Provide Oregon Telephone Assistance Program Services, this follows an electronic version sent via email on July 18, 2005.

If you have any questions please let me know.

Sincerely,

ATER WYNNE LLP



Arthur A. Butler

Enclosure

APPENDIX A  
PAGE 5 OF 10

**DOCKETED**

**Oregon Telephone Assistance Program (OTAP)**  
Application for Eligible Telecommunications Provider (ETP) to Provide OTAP Services

**Part I. Application Information and Service Plan**

1. Legal name of applicant: Wantel, Inc.
2. Name or names that applicant is doing business as: ComspanUSA

3. Contact information pertaining to your designated staff who would be handling OTAP communication:

Name: Marty Patrovsky

Address: 1016 SE Oak Avenue

City: Roseburg State: OR Zip: 97470-4917

Phone Number: 541-229-2101 Fax: 541-229-2148

E-Mail: marty.patrovsky@comspanusa.net

4. Are you authorized to provide telecommunications services in the State of Oregon?

Yes Oregon PUC Telecommunications Service Provider ID No. 7439

No **STOP.** You must apply for and obtain Oregon PUC approval to offer telecommunications services in the State of Oregon before you can participate in the OTAP Program.

5. Are you currently designated as a federal Eligible Telecommunications Carrier (ETC) by the Oregon Public Utility Commission in the service areas where you intend to participate in OTAP?

Yes Docket No. UM 1202 Order No. 05-856

No **STOP.** OTAP is an adjunct to the federal universal service fund Lifeline and Linkup programs. You must apply for and obtain designation as a federal Eligible Telecommunications Carrier (ETC) in those service areas where you intend to participate in OTAP.



6. List the specific Oregon exchanges where you seek to participate in OTAP. If your current federal ETC service area is not coextensive with specific Oregon exchanges, please list the Incumbent Local Exchange Carrier (ILEC) wire centers where you are authorized as a federal ETC and intend to participate in OTAP. If additional space is required, please use a separate sheet of paper.

<u>Exchange or Wire Center</u>	<u>Incumbent ILEC</u>
<u>Roseburg</u>	<u>Qwest</u>
<u>Sutherlin</u>	<u>Qwest</u>
<u>Winston</u>	<u>Qwest</u>

7. OAR 860-033-0005 states that an ETP must offer services under 47 CFR §54.101 using either its own facilities or a combination of its own facilities and resale of another carrier's services (including the services offered by another eligible telecommunications provider throughout the service area). Pursuant to 47 C.F.R. §54.201(f), the requirement of using their "own facilities" includes, but is not limited to, purchasing unbundled network elements from another carrier. Please provide the following for the service area in which the applicant seeks to participate in OTAP.

- a. A general description of the telecommunications facilities owned and operated by the applicant (for example, switches, outside plant assets, fiber optic transmission equipment, ILEC collocations, etc.);

**Wantel has a NORTEL DMS-500 switch, which acts as both a line-side and a tandem switch. Wantel will be adding a new soft switch this year. Outside plant assets include approximately ten (10) miles of 24-strand fiber, some aerial and some in underground vaults and conduits. There are four (4) Field Connection Points in Douglas County, Oregon. Copper plant includes approximately frive (5) miles of 300, 200, 100, 50 and 25 pair cable. Copper plant also includes several hundred 4 pair drops to individual end-users. Other outside plant assets include add/drop multiplexers, Addtran 600 series (624, 612, 608, 604) CPE boxes. Wantel also has fiber optic transmission equipment. That equipment includes OC3 and OC 12 optical transceivers, patch panels, and analyzers. ILEC collocations include twelve (12) collocation racks in the Qwest Roseburg Central Office (RSBGOR57HG1) with over 5000 DS0s, 84 DS1s and 6DS3s. Wantel has interconnection agreements with Qwest and Verizon.**

- b. A list of the ILECs from whom the applicant purchases unbundled network elements;

**For the Roseburg, Sutherland and Winston service areas, Wantel purchases unbundled network elements from Qwest.**

- c. A list of the ILECs or other ETCs the applicant uses to provide resale service;  
**Qwest**

- d. A list of interconnection agreements the applicant maintains with Oregon ILECs and the effective date of such agreements;  
**For the Roseburg, Sutherland and Winston service areas, Wantel maintains an interconnection agreement with Qwest which has been effective since December 2, 1999.**
  - e. A list of interexchange carriers the applicant will use to provide interstate and intrastate toll services for its OTAP customers.  
**Wantel, Qwest, Global Crossing and any other IXC the customer chooses.**
8. The number of residential, business and tribal basic service customers served by the applicant as of December 31, of the most recent calendar year. Specify whether these customers are served by wireline service or wireless instruments.  
**As of December 31, 2004, Wantel served 4,307 customers by wireline service in the Roseburg, Sutherland and Winston wirecenter areas.**

**Part II. Conditions to Provide OTAP Services to Qualifying Oregonians**

These conditions apply in addition to the general conditions of certification. Violating these conditions, or misrepresenting information provided to PUC in the course of administering the OTAP programs may result in cancellation of your Telecommunications Provider's Certificate, your authority to provide OTAP Services and/or an order requiring you to refund with interest and penalties of any OTAP support distributed under false information.

1. The applicant agrees to offer reduced residential rates to eligible low-income customers pursuant to the Oregon Telephone Assistance program (OTAP). See OAR 860-033-0001 through 0046.
2. The applicant understands that only PUC may approve OTAP benefits for the consumer and provide benefits to OTAP consumers after PUC has notified the applicant of their eligibility. A telecommunication provider who grants OTAP benefits to ineligible customers will have the total amount of the OTAP benefits that were given to those customers deducted from the monthly or quarterly OTAP reimbursement invoices that the telecommunications provider submits to the Commission (OAR 860-033-0045 (1) (d)).
3. The applicant agrees that they will ensure the consumer will see their OTAP credit within 30 days from the date that the applicant has been notified of the consumer's eligibility status, and to remove consumers within 30 days after they no longer qualify for OTAP benefits.
4. The applicant agrees that if an OTAP consumer did not receive his or her benefits from the applicant after being approved by the Commission, that the applicant will reimburse the consumer up to a maximum of one year of OTAP benefits credited to their telephone line (OAR 860-033-0030 (7)).
5. The applicant agrees that they will submit reports for reimbursement quarterly (if they have less than 1,000 OTAP consumers) or monthly (if they have more than 1,000 OTAP consumers). Reports are expected to be submitted even if there are zero consumers (OAR 860-033-0045 (1)).
6. The applicant agrees that upon request, a qualifying OTAP recipient shall be entitled to toll limitation service from an eligible telecommunications carrier, when available, at no additional charge. Further, the applicant agrees not to deny or disconnect basic service to an OTAP customer for failure to pay toll charges, or require a deposit from OTAP consumers who voluntarily elect to receive toll-blocking services. (OAR 360-021-0200 (5), and 360-021-0335 (4) (b)).
7. An OTAP recipient is required to be the named subscriber to the local telecommunication service in order for that household to qualify for OTAP benefits. PUC may waive this requirement if it determines that good cause exists. Applicant agrees to comply with reimbursing OTAP consumers who are not named subscribers at the Commission's request.

- 8. The applicant agrees to ensure that confidential information (including phone number, addresses, contact information and social security numbers) of OTAP recipients is protected (OAR 360-033-0030 (5)). The applicant agrees to maintain a written policy to ensure that the applicant's staff does not breach the confidentiality of OTAP consumers, and to do background checks on employees who have access to customer records.
- 9. The applicant agrees to have in place database encryption and firewall technologies to protect customer service information stored electronically.

AAB

APPLICANT UNDERSTANDS ALL OF THE ABOVE CONDITIONS AND AGREES TO ABIDE BY ALL APPLICABLE COMMISSION RULES, STATE LAW AND THE CONDITIONS OF CERTIFICATION. PLEASE INITIAL BOX AT LEFT.



\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Person Authorized to Represent Applicant

**Attorney for Wantel, Inc.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title

**Arthur A. Butler**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name

**July 18, 2005**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date