

DT 02-118

NEW HAMPSHIRE'S 511 TRAVEL INFORMATION SERVICE

**Petition of New Hampshire Department of Transportation for
Designation as Lead Implementing Agency for 511 Services**

**Order Nisi Granting Petition and Designating the New Hampshire
Department of Transportation as Lead Agency for 511 Services**

O R D E R N O. 24,011

July 15, 2002

On June 6, 2002, the State of New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT) filed with the New Hampshire Public Utilities Commission (Commission) a letter petition requesting that the NHDOT be formally designated as the lead implementing agency for 511 service in New Hampshire. The request of the NHDOT follows a petition, filed on March 8, 1999, by the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), for assignment of a nationwide N11 code for use by state and local governments to deliver traffic-related information to the public.

The USDOT explained in its FCC petition that intelligent transportation systems (ITS), including advanced traveler information systems, are state-of-the-art information networks that provide real-time, route-specific information on all types of surface travel, which allows commuters and other travelers to make more efficient use of the nation's transportation infrastructure. Despite the existence of

substantial funding for ITS and travel information currently provided by state and local governments across the country, the resources are currently under-utilized because travelers have difficulty remembering the numerous telephone numbers to access the information, particularly as they travel across jurisdictions. Accordingly, the USDOT contended that the assignment of a single, nationwide, three-digit code would enable more travelers to remember the number to access and use the travel-related information. The USDOT further contended that widespread use of this information would reduce vehicular congestion and pollution, lower fuel consumption, provide superior traffic management, and enhance roadway safety.

On July 31, 2000, the FCC designated 511 as the standard national traveler information number, finding that the assignment of an N11 code to be used exclusively for access to travel information services, as requested by the USDOT, was in the public interest. *Petition by U.S. Department of Transportation for Assignment of Abbreviated Dialing Code (N11) to Access Intelligent Transportation System Services Nationwide (ITS Order)*, 15 F.C.C.R. 16,753, 15 FCC Rcd. 16,753, 21 Communications Reg.1. Now, the USDOT is working with state

1 The FCC stated "[w]e conclude that the U.S. DOT has demonstrated that assignment of an N11 dialing code for nationwide access to travel information services is in the public interest, and we therefore assign 511 for this purpose. In the past, the

departments of transportation and other state organizations and agencies to facilitate implementation of 511 service across the country. The instant petition from the NHDOT is part of that effort.

The NHDOT has already been taking responsibility for implementing 511 in New Hampshire, coordinating with other state agencies, including the Department of Safety (DOS), Department of Resources and Economic Development (DRED), and the Division of Travel and Tourism (DTTD), to improve the information that is provided to travelers in the state. Additionally, the NHDOT plans to work with wireline and wireless carriers in the state to complete switch translation of 511 to New Hampshire's traveler information phone number or another designated number. NHDOT represents that it is assuming all costs associated with the development, operation, and maintenance of the 511 service in New Hampshire. The NHDOT states that its designation as the lead implementing agency in New Hampshire will efficiently implement the benefits of the FCC's 511 assignment, improving safety, efficiency, and convenience for travelers within the state.

Commission has assigned N11 codes upon a finding that the assignment serves the public interest. . . . The U.S. DOT Petition meets the standard we have previously employed for assigning N11 codes by demonstrating that there are substantial public benefits in assigning 511 for nationwide access to travel information services. We believe that assignment of 511 will assist state and local governments in their efforts to improve local transportation conditions." *ITS Order at 16759.*

In its *ITS Order*, the FCC did not specify parameters for cost recovery and other technical issues. Instead, the FCC granted discretion to federal, state, and local government transportation agencies to determine a deployment schedule and the nature of the transportation information that will be provided. 15 FCC Rcd, 16,753, 16,762 (2000). We understand that the NHDOT's plans include a launch of the 511 service in New Hampshire on September 1, 2002. The service will provide access to comprehensive information on statewide road and weather conditions, as well as other pertinent traveler aid information.

Consistent with the FCC's Order, we will grant the petition of the NHDOT and designate the NHDOT as the lead implementing agency for 511 service in New Hampshire. We find the designation of the NHDOT as the lead implementing agency to be in the public interest.

Pursuant to the FCC's Order, state public utilities commissions retain jurisdiction over N11 codes to the extent necessary to ensure that carriers comply with transportation agencies' requests to deploy 511 expeditiously. We will support the NHDOT and encourage wireline and wireless providers to cooperate fully to enable the provision of 511 travel-related information services to the New Hampshire public.

We are aware that the Enhanced 911 Commission has passed a motion at its June 14, 2002 meeting requesting that it and the Bureau of Emergency Communications (Bureau) be involved in any discussions of N-1-1 requests. Accordingly, we will instruct NHDOT to use its best efforts to work with the Enhanced 911 Commission, the Bureau and other state agencies in the development of the 511 service.

Based upon the foregoing, it is hereby

ORDERED NISI, that the petition of the NHDOT to be designated as the lead implementing agency for 511 service in New Hampshire is hereby GRANTED; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that the NHDOT shall assume all costs associated with the development, operation, and maintenance of the 511 service in New Hampshire; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that the NHDOT shall use its best efforts to coordinate with other state agencies, including the DOS, DRED, DTTD, the Bureau of Emergency Communications and the Enhanced 911 Commission in the development, implementation and operation of 511 service to improve the information that is provided to travelers in the state; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that wireline and wireless providers shall cooperate with the NHDOT in its endeavor to provide 511 travel-related information services to the public and comply with NHDOT's requests to deploy 511 expeditiously; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that the Petitioner shall cause a copy of this Order Nisi to be published once in a statewide newspaper of general circulation, such publication to be no later than July 25, 2002 and to be documented by affidavit filed with this office on or before August 8, 2002; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that all persons interested in responding to this petition may submit their comments or file a written request for a hearing on this matter before the Commission no later than August 1, 2002; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that any party interested in responding to such comments or request for hearing shall do so no later than August 8, 2002; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that this Order Nisi shall be effective August 15, 2002, unless the NHDOT fails to satisfy the publication obligation set forth above or the Commission provides otherwise in a supplemental order issued prior to the effective date.

By order of the Public Utilities Commission of New
Hampshire this fifteenth day of July, 2002.

Thomas B. Getz
Chairman

Susan S. Geiger
Commissioner

Nancy Brockway
Commissioner

Attested by:

Claire D. DiCicco
Assistant Secretary