(text box: 1)BEFORE THE IDAHO PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

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| IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION OF ALBION TELEPHONE COMPANY AND WESTEL, INC. FOR AN ORDER AUTHORIZING THE MERGER OF THE TWO COMPANIES | )  )  )  )  )  )  )  ) | CASE NO.  ALB-T-98-3  NOTICE OF APPLICATION  NOTICE OF MODIFIED           PROCEDURE  ORDER NO.  27815 |

YOU ARE HEREBY NOTIFIED that on November 13, 1998, an Application was filed by Albion Telephone Company and Westel, Inc. requesting an order from the Commission authorizing the merger of the two companies.  Westel currently is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Albion.  Albion would be the surviving corporation following the merger.

YOU ARE FURTHER NOTIFIED that Albion is a regulated telephone company that provides basic local exchange and other telecommunication services in Cassia and Oneida Counties, Idaho.  Westel is a regulated telephone company that provides basic local exchange and other telecommunication services to the Malad, Arco, Howe and Moore exchanges in southeastern Idaho.

YOU ARE FURTHER NOTIFIED that, according to the joint Application, Westel was created as a subsidiary of Albion to acquire the Westel exchanges from U S WEST pursuant to a 1994 asset purchase agreement.  The purchase agreement required Westel to maintain U S WEST’s then existing local exchange rates for a period of three years.  The Application further states that the rate freeze for Westel has expired and both companies are subject to the same rate making criteria.  The Application further states that a merger will provide a number of cost saving advantages to both companies.  Merger of the companies may affect access charges to interexchange carriers, and certain custom calling feature charges.

YOU ARE FURTHER NOTIFIED that the Application together with supporting workpapers and exhibits, have been filed with the Commission and are available for public inspection during regular business hours at the Commission offices.

YOU ARE FURTHER NOTIFIED that all proceedings in this case will be held pursuant to the Commission's jurisdiction under Title 61 of the Idaho Code and that the Commission may enter any final Order consistent with its authority under Title 61.

YOU ARE FURTHER NOTIFIED that all proceedings in this matter will be conducted pursuant to the Commission's Rules of Procedure, IDAPA 31.01.01.000 et seq.

YOU ARE FURTHER NOTIFIED that the Commission has reviewed the filings of record in Case No. ALB-T-98-3.  The Commission has preliminarily determined that the public interest may not require a hearing to consider the issues presented and that the issues raised by the Application may be processed under Modified Procedure, i.e., by written submission rather than by hearing.  Reference Commission Rules of Procedure, IDAPA 31.01.01.201-.204.

YOU ARE FURTHER NOTIFIED that the Commission may not hold a hearing in this proceeding unless it receives written protests or comments opposing the use of Modified Procedure and stating why Modified Procedure should not be used.  Reference IDAPA 31.01.01.203.

YOU ARE FURTHER NOTIFIED that any person desiring to state a position on this Application may file a written comment in support or opposition with the Commission within twenty-one (21) days from the date of this Notice.  The comment must contain a statement of reasons supporting the comment.  Persons desiring a hearing must specifically request a hearing in their written comments.

YOU ARE FURTHER NOTIFIED that if no written comments or protests are received within the deadline, the Commission will consider the matter on its merits and enter its Order without a formal hearing.  If comments or protests are filed within the deadline, the Commission will consider them and in its discretion may set the matter for hearing or may decide the matter and issue its Order on the basis of the written positions before it.  Reference IDAPA 31.01.01.204.

YOU ARE FURTHER NOTIFIED that written comments concerning Case No. ALB-T-98-3 should be mailed to the Commission and the Company at the addresses reflected below:

COMMISSION SECRETARYCONLEY WARD

IDAHO PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSIONGIVENS PURSLEY, LLP

PO BOX 83720PO BOX 2720

BOISE, IDAHO  83720-0074BOISE, ID 83701

Street Address for Express Mail:Attorney for Albion Telephone and Westel, Inc.

472 W WASHINGTON ST

BOISE, IDAHO  83702-5983

All comments should contain the case caption and case number shown on the first page of this document.

YOU ARE FURTHER NOTIFIED that the Application in Case No. ALB-T-98-3 can be reviewed at the Commission’s office and Albion Telephone Company and Westel, Inc. during regular business hours.

O R D E R

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED, upon review of the filings in this case and the determination of the Commission, that the Application of Albion Telephone Company and Westel, Inc. requesting an order authorizing the merger of the two companies be processed by Modified Procedure, pursuant to Commission Rules of Procedure 201-204; IDAPA 31.01.01.201-04.

DONE by Order of the Idaho Public Utilities Commission at Boise, Idaho this                  day of December 1998.

                                                                                                                                      DENNIS S. HANSEN, PRESIDENT

                                                                                           RALPH NELSON, COMMISSIONER

MARSHA H. SMITH, COMMISSIONER

ATTEST:

Myrna J. Walters

Commission Secretary

bls/O-albt983.ws

**COMMENTS AND ANNOTATIONS**

Text Box 1:

**TEXT BOXES**

Office of the Secretary

Service Date

December 7, 1998