

**Before the
Federal Communications Commission
Washington, D.C. 20554**

In the Matter of)
)
Lifeline and Link Up Reform and Modernization) WC Docket No. 11-42

ORDER

Adopted: August 10, 2017

Released: August 10, 2017

By the Chief, Wireline Competition Bureau:

1. In this Order, the Wireline Competition Bureau (Bureau) denies the motions of TruConnect, Cox Communications, Inc. (Cox), and Tag Mobile LLC (Tag) (collectively Carriers) filed in this docket seeking an extension of time to submit a copy of their respective final attestation reports pursuant to the Lifeline Program Biennial Audit Plan.¹

2. The Commission's rules require that all eligible telecommunications carriers (ETCs) that receive \$5 million or more annually from the Lifeline Program obtain an independent biennial audit of their compliance with the Lifeline Program rules.² ETCs that were required to complete the current independent biennial audits were notified on August 10, 2016. The carriers were given until August 10, 2017 to conduct the required audit procedures and file the final attestation report with the Commission, Universal Service Administration Company (USAC), and any relevant state and Tribal governments.

3. On August 8, 2017, TruConnect filed a motion for an extension of the filing deadline for its final attestation report.³ On August 9, 2017, Cox and Tag filed a motion for an extension of the filing deadline for their final attestation reports.⁴ Tag requests a 5-day extension, TruConnect requests a 14-day extension, and Cox requests a 6-week extension.⁵ Tag states that "good cause" exists for the extension because Tag "needs additional time."⁶ TruConnect states that during the yearlong engagement period the carrier had an initial independent auditor end a contract, requiring the engagement of a second audit firm.⁷ TruConnect also states that this transition was made more difficult by employee turnover, causing historical knowledge to be lost and delaying the completion of the report.⁸ Cox states that it has engaged Deloitte & Touche LLP (Deloitte) for the "past seven months" to complete Cox's audit.⁹ Cox adds that Deloitte submitted its "draft Agreed-Upon Procedures Lifeline Audit Report of Cox and Cox's response

¹ TruConnect Motion for Extension, WC Docket No. 11-42 (filed Aug. 8, 2017) (*TruConnect Motion*); Cox Communications Motion for Extension, WC Docket No. 11-42 (filed Aug. 9, 2017) (*Cox Motion*); Tag Mobile LLC Motion for Extension, WC Docket No. 11-42 (filed Aug. 9, 2017) (*Tag Motion*).

² 47 CFR § 54.420.

³ *TruConnect Motion*, at 1.

⁴ *Cox Motion*, at 1; *Tag Motion*, at 1.

⁵ *Tag Motion*, at 1; *TruConnect Motion*, at 1; *Cox Motion*, at 1.

⁶ *Tag Motion*, at 1.

⁷ *TruConnect Motion*, at 1.

⁸ *Id.*

⁹ *Cox Motion*, at 1.

to [USAC] on August 8, 2017.”¹⁰ However, due to the required 30-day USAC review period, Cox will not be able to submit the final audit report to the Commission by the deadline.¹¹

4. We conclude that granting an extension of the Carriers’ deadlines to file their final attestation reports is not warranted under the present circumstances. Extensions of time are not routinely granted,¹² and we do not believe that circumstances cited by the Carriers warrant a grant of additional time. The Carriers were notified by USAC of their obligation to complete a Lifeline biennial audit on August 10, 2016 and given one year to complete the audit. Especially considering the ample time the Carriers received to plan for and conduct the biennial audit, delays caused by disputes with contractors and employee churn do not warrant an extension of the one-year time period originally given. Additionally, the procedures and required review and response periods were communicated to the Carriers at the beginning to the yearlong engagement process. That time period has been more than sufficient for other carriers required to fulfill the biennial audit requirement. We expect the Carriers to file their respective final attestation reports by August 10, 2017.

5. Accordingly, IT IS ORDERED that, pursuant to sections 4(i), 4(j), and 5(c) of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended, 47 U.S.C. §§ 154(i), 154(j), and 155(c), and Sections 0.91, 0.291, and 1.46 of the Commission’s Rules, 47 CFR §§ 0.91, 0.291, and 1.46, the motions of TruConnect and Cox Communications ARE DENIED.

6. IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that, pursuant to section 1.102(b)(1) of the Commission’s rules, 47 CFR § 1.102(b)(1), this Order SHALL BE EFFECTIVE upon release.

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

Kris Anne Monteith
Chief
Wireline Competition Bureau

¹⁰ *Id.*

¹¹ *Id.*

¹² 47 CFR § 1.46.