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Docket No. 34878

In Re: Application of Q LINK WIRELESS LLC for Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier in the State of Georgia

ORDER ADOPTING HEARING OFFICER'S RECOMMENDED ORDER

I. Statement of Proceedings

On January 28, 2025, the Commission issued an order initiating a Rule Nisi, Assignment to Hearing Officer and Procedural Order to Q LINK WIRELESS LLC for the purpose of hearing evidence to determine whether Q LINK WIRELESS LLC ("Q LINK") has violated the conditions of its ETC designation. On January 30, 2025, pursuant to the Commission order, correspondence was sent to Q LINK specifying the time, place, and nature of the hearing, as well as reference to the statutes and regulations involved. The correspondence was sent via certified mail to the principal place of business of Q LINK.

An evidentiary hearing was held before a Hearing Officer on March 20, 2025. No representative of Issa Asad or Q LINK presented testimony or made an appearance. Staff asserted that Q LINK failed to comply with applicable state law, applicable Commission rules and orders, and applicable federal law, rules, and regulations. Staff based its allegations on Q LINK's guilty plea to counts of conspiring to commit wire fraud, theft of government funds, and money laundering in the United States District Court of the Southern District of Florida. On March 1, 2025 the Hearing Officer issued a Recommended Order in this Docket finding that Q LINK is in violation of the Commission's Order granting its Application as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier. The Hearing Officer further recommended that the Commission revoke Q LINK's ETC designation made by the Commission.

II. Legal Authority

This hearing was held under the authority and jurisdiction conferred upon the Commission by O.C.G.A. §§ 46-2-20, 46-2-21, 46-5-163, and 46-5-168; and in accordance with the Georgia Administrative Procedure Act and the Rule and Regulations of the Commission. The Commission has the authority to designate telecommunication companies as ETCs for operation in Georgia, to

adopt reasonable rules governing certification of local exchange companies, and to grant, modify, impose conditions upon, or revoke an ETC designation for a telecommunications company. The Commission is authorized to perform the duties imposed upon it of its own initiative. O.C.G.A. § 46-2-20(b), 47 USC 214(e)(2).

III. Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law

On April 15, 2025, the Commission adopted Staff's recommendation to adopt the Hearing Officer's findings that Q LINK is in violation of the Commission's Order granting its Application as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier. These findings are consistent with the testimony of Staff witnesses Patrick Reinhardt and Erica Wilson. The Commission concludes that the Hearing Officer's recommendation to revoke Q LINK's ETC designation is within the Commission's authority and warranted in this case. Therefore, the Commission orders the revocation of Q LINK's ETC designation, effective immediately.

IV. Ordering Paragraphs

WHEREFORE, IT IS ORDERED that the Commission hereby revokes Q LINK's ETC designation made by the Commission, who has the authority and the grounds to revoke such designation.

ORDERED FURTHER, that the Commission hereby adopts the findings, conclusions, schedule, and procedures set forth within this Order.

ORDERED FURTHER, that a motion for reconsideration, rehearing, oral argument, or any other motion shall not stay the effective date of this Order, unless otherwise ordered by the Commission.

ORDERED FURTHER, that jurisdiction over this matter is expressly retained for the purpose of entering such further Order(s) as this Commission may deem just and proper.

The above action of the Commission in Administrative Session on the 15th Day of April 2025.

Sallie Tanner
Executive Secretary

4-17-25
DATE

Jason Shaw
Chairman

4-17-25
DATE