

INTERCONNECTION AGREEMENT

BETWEEN

WINDSTREAM MISSOURI, INC.

&

AURORA COMMUNICATION, INC.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS.....	1
1.0 <u>INTRODUCTION</u>	1
2.0 <u>EFFECTIVE DATE</u>	1
3.0 <u>INTERVENING LAW</u>	1
4.0 <u>TERM OF AGREEMENT</u>	2
5.0 <u>ASSIGNMENT</u>	3
6.0 <u>CONFIDENTIAL AND PROPRIETARY INFORMATION</u>	3
7.0 <u>LIABILITY AND INDEMNIFICATION</u>	5
7.1 <i>Limitation of Liabilities</i>	5
7.2 <i>No Consequential Damages</i>	5
7.3 <i>Obligation to Indemnify</i>	5
7.4 <i>Obligation to Defend; Notice; Cooperation</i>	6
8.0 <u>PAYMENT OF RATES AND LATE PAYMENT CHARGES</u>	6
9.0 <u>DISPUTE RESOLUTION</u>	8
9.5 <i>Conflicts</i>	11
10.0 <u>INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK</u>	11
11.0 <u>NOTICES</u>	11
12.0 <u>TAXES</u>	12
13.0 <u>FORCE MAJEURE</u>	13
14.0 <u>PUBLICITY</u>	14
15.0 <u>NETWORK MAINTENANCE AND MANAGEMENT</u>	14
16.0 <u>LAW ENFORCEMENT AND CIVIL PROCESS</u>	14
16.1 <i>Intercept Devices</i>	14
16.2 <i>Subpoenas</i>	15
16.3 <i>Law Enforcement Emergencies</i>	15
17.0 <u>CHANGES IN SUBSCRIBER CARRIER SELECTION</u>	15
18.0 <u>AMENDMENTS OR WAIVERS</u>	16
19.0 <u>AUTHORITY</u>	16
20.0 <u>BINDING EFFECT</u>	16
21.0 <u>CONSENT</u>	17
22.0 <u>EXPENSES</u>	17
23.0 <u>HEADINGS</u>	17
24.0 <u>RELATIONSHIP OF PARTIES</u>	17
25.0 <u>CONFLICT OF INTEREST</u>	17
26.0 <u>MULTIPLE COUNTERPARTS</u>	17
27.0 <u>THIRD PARTY BENEFICIARIES</u>	17
28.0 <u>REGULATORY APPROVAL</u>	18
29.0 <u>TRADEMARKS AND TRADE NAMES</u>	18
30.0 <u>REGULATORY AUTHORITY</u>	18
31.0 <u>VERIFICATION REVIEWS</u>	18
32.0 <u>COMPLETE TERMS</u>	19
33.0 <u>COOPERATION ON PREVENTING END USER FRAUD</u>	19
34.0 <u>NOTICE OF NETWORK CHANGES</u>	20
35.0 <u>MODIFICATION OF AGREEMENT</u>	20
36.0 <u>RESPONSIBILITY OF EACH PARTY</u>	20
37.0 <u>INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK</u>	20
38.0 <u>GOVERNMENTAL COMPLIANCE</u>	20
39.0 <u>RESPONSIBILITY FOR ENVIRONMENTAL CONTAMINATION</u>	21
40.0 <u>SUBCONTRACTING</u>	21

41.0	<u>REFERENCED DOCUMENTS</u>	21
42.0	<u>SEVERABILITY</u>	22
43.0	<u>SURVIVAL OF OBLIGATIONS</u>	22
44.0	<u>GOVERNING LAW</u>	22
45.0	<u>OTHER OBLIGATIONS OF AURORA</u>	22
46.0	<u>CUSTOMER INQUIRIES</u>	23
47.0	<u>DISCLAIMER OF WARRANTIES</u>	23
48.0	<u>INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK</u>	23
49.0	<u>INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK</u>	23
50.0	<u>INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK</u>	23
51.0	<u>INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK</u>	23
52.0	<u>INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK</u>	23
53.0	<u>DEFINITIONS AND ACRONYMS</u>	23
53.1	<i>Definitions</i>	23
53.2	<i>Acronyms</i>	24
54.0	<u>INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK</u>	24
55.0	<u>INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK</u>	24
56.0	<u>INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK</u>	24
58.0	<u>OTHER REQUIREMENTS AND ATTACHMENTS</u>	24
ATTACHMENT 1: INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK		26
ATTACHMENT 2: RESALE		27
1.0	<u>GENERAL PROVISIONS</u>	27
2.0	<u>GENERAL OBLIGATIONS</u>	29
3.0	<u>ESTABLISHMENT OF SERVICE</u>	30
4.0	<u>MAINTENANCE OF SERVICES</u>	31
5.0	<u>DISCONTINUANCE OF SERVICE</u>	32
5.1	<i>End User Disconnect Procedures</i>	32
6.0	<u>DISPUTE RESOLUTION</u>	32
6.5	<i>Conflicts</i>	35
7.0	<u>TERMINATION OF SERVICE TO AURORA</u>	36
8.0	<u>BILLING AND PAYMENTS</u>	36
9.0	<u>CUSTOMER USAGE DATA</u>	37
ATTACHMENT 3: INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK		39
ATTACHMENT 4: NETWORK INTERCONNECTION ARCHITECTURE		40
1.0	<u>SCOPE</u>	40
2.0	<u>INTERCONNECTION</u>	40
3.0	<u>SIGNALING REQUIREMENTS</u>	41
4.0	<u>INTERCONNECTION AND TRUNKING REQUIREMENTS</u>	42
4.1	<i>Local Traffic and IntraLATA Traffic</i>	43
4.2	<i>Trunking and Facilities</i>	43
5.0	<u>NETWORK MANAGEMENT</u>	43
5.1	<i>Protective Protocols</i>	43
5.2	<i>Expansive Protocols</i>	44
5.3	<i>Mass Calling</i>	44
6.0	<u>FORECASTING/SERVICING RESPONSIBILITIES</u>	44
7.0	<u>TRUNK SERVICING</u>	44
ATTACHMENT 5: INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK		46
ATTACHMENT 6: INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK		47

ATTACHMENT 7: INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK.....	48
ATTACHMENT 8: INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK.....	49
ATTACHMENT 9: DIRECTORIES	50
1.0 INTRODUCTION	50
2.0 SERVICE PROVIDED - RESALE.....	50
3.0 SERVICE PROVIDED - OTHER	51
4.0 LIMITATION OF LIABILITY AND INDEMNIFICATION.....	53
5.0 PRICING	53
EXHIBIT A: DIRECTORIES PRICE LIST.....	54
ATTACHMENT 10: INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK.....	60
ATTACHMENT 11: INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK.....	61
ATTACHMENT 12: INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK.....	62
ATTACHMENT 13: NUMBERING.....	63
1.0 NUMBERING.....	63
2.0 NXX MIGRATION	63
ATTACHMENT 14: INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK.....	64
ATTACHMENT 15: INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK.....	65
ATTACHMENT 16: INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK.....	66
ATTACHMENT 17: INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK.....	67
ATTACHMENT 18: PERFORMANCE MEASURES.....	68
1.0 GENERAL	68
2.0 INTERCONNECTION	68
2.1 Trunk Provisioning Intervals.....	68
2.2 Trunking Grade of Service.....	68
2.3 Trunk Service Restoration	69
3.0 MAINTENANCE INTERVALS.....	69
4.0 LOCAL SERVICE PROVISIONING INTERVALS	69
4.1 Local Service Request (LSR).....	69
4.2 Local Service Request Confirmation (LSCN).....	70
4.3 Performance Expectation	70
ATTACHMENT 19: BONA FIDE REQUEST (BFR) PROCESS.....	71
ATTACHMENT 20: DEFINITIONS	72
ATTACHMENT 21: ACRONYMS	76
APPENDIX A – BILLING DISPUTE FORM.....	78

GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS

This Agreement ("Agreement") is between, Aurora Communications, Inc. ("AURORA") a Missouri corporation, having an office at 214 Elm Street Suite 101 Washington, Missouri 63090 and Windstream Missouri, Inc. ("Windstream") a Missouri corporation, having an office at 4001 Rodney Parham Road, Little Rock, Arkansas, 72212, hereinafter referred to collectively as the "Parties".

WHEREAS, pursuant to the Telecommunications Act of 1996 (the "Act"), the Parties wish to establish terms for the provision of certain services and Ancillary Functions as designated in the Attachments hereto for the purpose of determining the rates, terms, and conditions for the interconnection of the Parties' Telecommunications networks within the State of Missouri.

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the premises and the mutual covenants of this Agreement, the Parties hereby agree as follows:

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Agreement, in accordance with §§251 and 252 of the Act, sets forth the terms, conditions and prices under which Windstream may provide (a) services for interconnection, and (b) Ancillary Functions to AURORA. The specific services, functions, or facilities that Windstream agrees to provide are those specifically identified in appendixes attached to this Agreement, and executed simultaneously with this general terms and conditions. Further this Agreement sets forth the terms, conditions, and prices under which AURORA will provide services to Windstream, where applicable.
- 1.2 This Agreement includes and incorporates herein the Attachments of this Agreement, and all accompanying Appendices, Addenda and Exhibits.
- 1.3 The Parties acknowledge and agree that by entering into and performing in accordance with this Agreement, the Parties have not waived or relinquished any applicable exemptions that are provided by or available under the Act, including but not limited to those described in §251(f) of the Act, or under state law.
- 1.4 Prior to execution of this Agreement, AURORA agrees to provide Windstream in writing AURORA's CLEC certification for the state covered by this Agreement prior to the filing of this Agreement with the appropriate Commission for approval.

2.0 Effective Date

- 2.1 The effective date of this Agreement will be the first business day following receipt of final approval of this Agreement by the relevant state Commission or, where approval by such state Commission is not required, the date that both Parties have executed the Agreement.

3.0 Intervening Law

- 3.1 In the event that any effective legislative, regulatory, judicial or other legal action materially changes any rule, law or judicial or administrative decision that was the basis of the requirement, obligation or right upon which any provision of this Agreement was negotiated, or materially impairs the ability of Windstream or AURORA to perform any material terms of this Agreement, AURORA or Windstream may, on thirty (30) days' written notice require that such terms be renegotiated, and the Parties shall

renegotiate in good faith such mutually acceptable new terms as may be required. In the event that such new terms are not renegotiated within ninety (90) days after such notice, the Dispute shall be referred to the Dispute Resolution procedure set forth in Section 9.0.

4.0 Term of Agreement

- 4.1 The Parties agree to the provisions of this Agreement for an initial term of two (2) years from the Effective Date of this Agreement, and thereafter on a month to month basis, unless terminated or modified pursuant to the terms and conditions of this Agreement.
- 4.2 Either Party may request for this Agreement to be renegotiated upon the expiration of the initial two (2) year term or upon any termination of this Agreement. The Party desiring renegotiation shall provide written notice to the other Party. Not later than thirty (30) days from receipt of said notice, the receiving Party will acknowledge receipt of the written notice and the Parties will commence negotiation, which shall be conducted in good faith, except in cases in which this Agreement has been terminated for Default pursuant to Section 4.6 or has been terminated for any reason not prohibited by law pursuant to Section 4.5.
- 4.3 If, within one hundred and thirty-five (135) days of commencing the negotiation referred to in Section 4.2 above, the Parties are unable to negotiate new terms, conditions and prices for a Subsequent Agreement, either Party may petition the applicable state Commission to establish appropriate terms, conditions and prices for the Subsequent Agreement pursuant to 47 U.S.C. 252. Should the Commission decline jurisdiction, either Party may petition the FCC under the Act or resort to a commercial provider of arbitration services.
- 4.4 If either Party has requested negotiations and the Parties have not executed a subsequent agreement or filed arbitration at the applicable state commission, then this Agreement will terminate upon the date the arbitration window closes (the 160th day). AURORA will execute Windstream's then current standard interconnection agreement with an effective date of the next day following the close of the arbitration window. Failure by AURORA to execute Windstream's then current standard interconnection agreement, will result in termination of all services provided by Windstream to AURORA.
- 4.5 After completion of the initial two (2) year term, this Agreement may be terminated by either Party for any reason not prohibited by law upon sixty (60) days written notice to the other Party. By mutual Agreement, the Parties may amend this Agreement in writing to modify its terms.
- 4.6 In the event of Default, as defined in this §4.6, the non-defaulting Party may terminate this Agreement provided that the non-defaulting Party so advises the defaulting Party in writing ("Default Notice") of the event of the alleged Default and the defaulting Party does not cure the alleged Default with sixty (60) after receipt of the Default Notice thereof. Default is defined as:
 - 4.6.1 Either Party's insolvency or initiation of bankruptcy or receivership proceedings by or against the Party; or
 - 4.6.2 A decision under §9.0, Dispute Resolution that a Party has materially breached any of the terms or conditions hereof, or
 - 4.6.3 A Party has notified the other Party in writing of the other Party's material breach of any of the material terms hereof, and the default remains uncured for sixty (60) days from receipt of such notice, provided, however, that if the alleged material breach involves a material interruption to, or a material degradation of, the E911 services provided under this Agreement, the cure period shall be five (5) days from receipt of such notice.

5.0 Assignment

- 5.1 Any assignment by either Party to any non-affiliated entity of any right, obligation or duty, or of any other interest hereunder, in whole or in part, without the prior written consent of the other Party shall be void. A Party may assign this Agreement in its entirety to an Affiliate of the Party without the consent of the other Party; provided, however, that the assigning Party shall notify the other Party in writing of such assignment thirty (30) days prior to the Effective Date thereof and, provided further, if the assignee is an assignee of AURORA, the assignee must provide evidence of Commission CLEC certification. The Parties shall amend this Agreement to reflect such assignments and shall work cooperatively to implement any changes required due to such assignment. All obligations and duties of any Party under this Agreement shall be binding on all successors in interest and assigns of such Party. No assignment or delegation hereof shall relieve the assignor of its obligations under this Agreement in the event that the assignee fails to perform such obligations. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in this Section, AURORA shall not assign this Agreement to any Affiliate or non-affiliated entity unless either (1) AURORA pays all bills, past due and current, under this Agreement, or (2) AURORA's assignee expressly assumes liability for payment of such bills.
- 5.2 As a minimum condition of any assignment or transfer of this Agreement (or any rights hereunder) that is permitted under or consented to by Windstream pursuant to this Section 5, AURORA agrees that any change, modification or other activity required for Windstream to accommodate or recognize the successor to or assignee of AURORA shall be a CLEC Change. Windstream shall have no obligation to proceed with such activities nor shall any otherwise acceptable assignment or transfer be effective against Windstream until the Parties agree upon the charges that apply to such CLEC Change.
- 5.3 In the event that AURORA makes any corporate name change (whether it involves a merger, consolidation, assignment or transfer, and including addition or deletion of a d/b/a), change in OCN/AECN, or makes or accepts a transfer or assignment of interconnection trunks or facilities (including leased facilities), or a change in any other CLEC identifier (collectively, a "CLEC Change"), AURORA shall submit written notice to Windstream within thirty (30) days of the first action taken to implement such CLEC Change. Within thirty (30) days following receipt of that notice, the Parties shall negotiate rates to compensate Windstream for the expenses to be incurred by Windstream to make the CLEC Change to the applicable Windstream databases, systems, records and/or recording announcement(s) for AURORA branded/repair calls. In addition, AURORA shall compensate Windstream for any service order charges and/or service request charges, as specified in Appendix B, associated with such CLEC Change. Windstream's Agreement to implement a CLEC Change is conditioned upon AURORA's Agreement to pay all reasonable charges billed to AURORA for such CLEC Change.

6.0 Confidential and Proprietary Information

- 6.1 For the purposes of this Agreement, confidential information means confidential or proprietary technical, Customer, End User, network, or business information disclosed by one Party (the "Discloser") to the other Party (the "Recipient"), which is disclosed by one Party to the other in connection with this Agreement, during negotiations or the term of this Agreement ("Confidential Information"). Such Confidential Information shall automatically be deemed proprietary to the Discloser and subject to this §6.0, unless otherwise confirmed in writing by the Discloser. All other information which is indicated and marked, as Confidential Information at the time of disclosure shall also be treated as Confidential Information under §6.0 of this Agreement. The Recipient agrees (i) to use Confidential Information only for the purpose of performing under this Agreement, (ii) to hold it in confidence and disclose it to no one other than its employees or agents having a need to know for the purpose of performing under this Agreement, and (iii) to safeguard it

from unauthorized use or disclosure using at least the same degree of care with which the Recipient safeguards its own Confidential Information. If the Recipient wishes to disclose the Discloser's Confidential Information to a third-party agent or consultant, such disclosure must be agreed to in writing by the Discloser, and the agent or consultant must have executed a written Agreement of nondisclosure and nonuse comparable to the terms of this Section.

- 6.2 The Recipient may make copies of Confidential Information only as reasonably necessary to perform its obligations under this Agreement. All such copies will be subject to the same restrictions and protections as the original and will bear the same copyright and proprietary rights notices as are contained on the original.
- 6.3 The Recipient agrees to return all Confidential Information to the Discloser in tangible form received from the Discloser, including any copies made by the Recipient within thirty (30) days after a written request is delivered to the Recipient, or to destroy all such Confidential Information if directed to do so by Discloser except for Confidential Information that the Recipient reasonably requires to perform its obligations under this Agreement. If either Party loses or makes an unauthorized disclosure of the other Party's Confidential Information, it will notify such other Party immediately and use reasonable efforts to retrieve the lost or wrongfully disclosed information.
- 6.4 The Recipient will have no obligation to safeguard Confidential Information: (i) which was in the possession of the Recipient free of restriction prior to its receipt from the Discloser; (ii) after it becomes publicly known or available through no breach of this Agreement by the Recipient, (iii) after it is rightfully acquired by the Recipient free of restrictions on its disclosure, or (iv) after it is independently developed by personnel of the Recipient to whom the Discloser's Confidential Information had not been previously disclosed. In addition, either Party will have the right to disclose Confidential Information to any mediator, arbitrator, state or federal regulatory body, or a court in the conduct of any mediation, arbitration or approval of this Agreement, as long as, in the absence of an applicable protective order, the Discloser has been previously notified by the Recipient in time sufficient for the Recipient to undertake lawful measures to avoid disclosing such information and for Discloser to have reasonable time to seek or negotiate a protective order before or with any applicable mediator, arbitrator, state or regulatory body or a court.
- 6.5 The Parties recognize that an individual End User may simultaneously seek to become or be a Customer of both Parties. Nothing in this Agreement is intended to limit the ability of either Party to use Customer specific information lawfully obtained from End Users or sources other than the Discloser, subject to applicable rules governing use of Customer Propriety Network Information (CPNI).
- 6.6 Each Party's obligations to safeguard Confidential Information disclosed prior to expiration or termination of this Agreement will survive such expiration or termination.
- 6.7 Except as otherwise expressly provided elsewhere in this Agreement, no license is hereby granted with respect to any patent, trademark, or copyright, nor is any such license implied solely by virtue of the disclosure of any Confidential Information.
- 6.8 Each Party agrees that the Discloser may be irreparably injured by a disclosure in breach of this Agreement by the Recipient or its representatives and the Discloser will be entitled to seek equitable relief, including injunctive relief and specific performance, in the event of any breach or threatened breach of the confidentiality provisions of this Agreement. Such remedies will not be deemed to be the exclusive remedies for a breach of this Agreement, but will be in addition to all other remedies available at law or in equity.

7.0 Liability and Indemnification

7.1 Limitation of Liabilities

With respect to any claim or suit for damages arising out of mistakes, omissions, defects in transmission, interruptions, failures, delays or errors occurring in the course of furnishing any service hereunder, the liability of the Party furnishing the affected service, if any, shall not exceed a credit for the actual cost of the services or functions not performed or improperly performed for the period of that particular service during which such mistakes, omissions, defects in transmission, interruptions, failures, delays or errors occurs and continues; provided, however, that any such mistakes, omissions, defects in transmission, interruptions, failures, delays, or errors which are caused by the gross negligence or willful, wrongful act or omission of the complaining Party or which arise from the use of the complaining Party's facilities or equipment shall not result in the imposition of any liability whatsoever upon the other Party furnishing service.

7.2 No Consequential Damages

EXCEPT AS SPECIFICALLY PROVIDED IN THIS AGREEMENT, NEITHER PARTY WILL BE LIABLE TO THE OTHER PARTY FOR ANY INDIRECT, INCIDENTAL, CONSEQUENTIAL, OR SPECIAL DAMAGES SUFFERED BY SUCH OTHER PARTY (INCLUDING WITHOUT LIMITATION DAMAGES FOR HARM TO BUSINESS, LOST REVENUES, LOST SAVINGS, OR LOST PROFITS SUFFERED BY SUCH OTHER PARTY), REGARDLESS OF THE FORM OF ACTION, WHETHER IN CONTRACT, WARRANTY, STRICT LIABILITY, OR TORT, INCLUDING WITHOUT LIMITATION NEGLIGENCE OF ANY KIND WHETHER ACTIVE OR PASSIVE, AND REGARDLESS OF WHETHER THE PARTIES KNEW OF THE POSSIBILITY THAT SUCH DAMAGES COULD RESULT. EACH PARTY HEREBY RELEASES THE OTHER PARTY (AND SUCH OTHER PARTY'S SUBSIDIARIES AND AFFILIATES, AND THEIR RESPECTIVE OFFICERS, DIRECTORS, EMPLOYEES, AND AGENTS) FROM ANY SUCH CLAIM. NOTHING CONTAINED IN THIS SECTION WILL LIMIT EITHER PARTY'S LIABILITY TO THE OTHER PARTY FOR (i) WILLFUL OR INTENTIONAL MISCONDUCT (INCLUDING GROSS NEGLIGENCE) OR (ii) BODILY INJURY, DEATH, OR DAMAGE TO TANGIBLE REAL OR TANGIBLE PERSONAL PROPERTY.

7.3 Obligation to Indemnify

7.3.1 Each Party shall be indemnified and held harmless by the other Party against claims, losses, suits, demands, damages, costs, expenses, including reasonable attorneys' fees ("Claims"), asserted, suffered, or made by third parties arising from (i) any act or omission of the indemnifying Party in connection with its performance or non-performance under his Agreement; and (ii) provision of the indemnifying Party's services or equipment, including but not limited to claims arising from the provision of the indemnifying Party's services to its End Users (e.g., claims for interruption of service, quality of service or billing disputes) unless such act or omission was caused by the negligence or willful misconduct of the indemnified Party. Each Party shall also be indemnified and held harmless by the other Party against claims and damages of persons for services furnished by the indemnifying Party or by any of its subcontractors, under worker's compensation laws or similar statutes.

7.3.2 Each Party, as an Indemnifying Party agrees to release, defend, indemnify, and hold harmless the other Party from any claims, demands or suits that asserts any infringement or invasion of privacy or confidentiality of any person or persons caused or claimed to be caused, directly or indirectly, by the Indemnifying Party's employees and equipment

associated with the provision of any service herein. This provision includes but is not limited to suits arising from unauthorized disclosure of the End User's name, address or telephone number.

- 7.3.3 Windstream makes no warranties, express or implied, concerning AURORA's (or any third party's) rights with respect to intellectual property (including without limitation, patent, copyright and trade secret rights) or contract rights associated with AURORA's interconnection with Windstream's network use or receipt of Windstream services.
- 7.3.4 When the lines or services of other companies and carriers are used in establishing connections to and/or from points not reached by a Party's lines, neither Party shall be liable for any act or omission of the other companies or carriers.

7.4 Obligation to Defend; Notice; Cooperation

Whenever a claim arises for indemnification under this Section (the "Claim"), the relevant Indemnitee, as appropriate, will promptly notify the Indemnifying Party and request the Indemnifying Party to defend the same. Failure to so notify the Indemnifying Party will not relieve the Indemnifying Party of any liability that the Indemnifying Party might have, except to the extent that such failure prejudices the Indemnifying Party's ability to defend such Claim. The Indemnifying Party will have the right to defend against such Claim in which event the Indemnifying Party will give written notice to the Indemnitee of acceptance of the defense of such Claim and the identity of counsel selected by the Indemnifying Party. Except as set forth below, such notice to the relevant Indemnitee will give the Indemnifying Party full authority to defend, adjust, compromise, or settle such Claim with respect to which such notice has been given, except to the extent that any compromise or settlement might prejudice the Intellectual Property Rights of the relevant Indemnities. The Indemnifying Party will consult with the relevant Indemnitee prior to any compromise or settlement that would affect the Intellectual Property Rights or other rights of any Indemnitee, and the relevant Indemnitee will have the right to refuse such compromise or settlement and, at such Indemnitee's sole cost, to take over such defense of such Claim. Provided, however, that in such event the Indemnifying Party will not be responsible for, nor will it be obligated to indemnify the relevant Indemnitee against any damages, costs, expenses, or liabilities, including without limitation, attorneys' fees, in excess of such refused compromise or settlement. With respect to any defense accepted by the Indemnifying Party, the relevant Indemnitee will be entitled to participate with the Indemnifying Party in such defense if the Claim requests equitable relief or other relief that could affect the rights of the Indemnitee and also will be entitled to employ separate counsel for such defense at such Indemnitee's expense. In the event the Indemnifying Party does not accept the defense of any indemnified Claim as provided above, the relevant Indemnitee will have the right to employ counsel for such defense at the expense of the Indemnifying Party, and the Indemnifying Party shall be liable for all costs associated with Indemnitee's defense of such Claim including court costs, and any settlement or damages awarded the third party. Each Party agrees to cooperate and to cause its employees and agents to cooperate with the other Party in the defense of any such Claim.

8.0 Payment of Rates and Late Payment Charges

- 8.1 Windstream, at its discretion may require AURORA to provide Windstream a security deposit to ensure payment of AURORA's account. The security deposit must be an amount equal to three (3) months anticipated charges (including, but not limited to, recurring, non-recurring, termination charges and advance payments), as reasonably determined by Windstream, for the interconnection, resale services, network elements, collocation or any other functions, facilities, products or services to be furnished by Windstream under this Agreement.

- 8.1.1 Such security deposit shall be a cash deposit or other form of security acceptable to Windstream. Any such security deposit may be held during the continuance of the service as security for the payment of any and all amounts accruing for the service.
- 8.1.2 If a security deposit is required, such security deposit shall be made prior to the activation of service.
- 8.1.3 The fact that a security deposit has been provided in no way relieves AURORA from complying with Windstream's regulations as to advance payments and the prompt payment of bills on presentation nor does it constitute a waiver or modification of the regular practices of Windstream providing for the discontinuance of service for non-payment of any sums due Windstream.
- 8.1.4 Windstream reserves the right to increase the security deposit requirements when, in its sole judgment, circumstances so warrant and/or gross monthly billing has increased beyond the level initially used to determine the security deposit.
- 8.1.5 In the event that AURORA is in breach of this Agreement, service to AURORA may be terminated by Windstream; any security deposits applied to its account and Windstream may pursue any other remedies available at law or equity.
- 8.1.6 In the case of a cash deposit, interest at a rate as set forth in the appropriate Windstream tariff shall be paid to AURORA during the possession of the security deposit by Windstream. Interest on a security deposit shall accrue annually and, if requested, shall be annually credited to AURORA by the accrual date.
- 8.2 Windstream may, but is not obligated to, draw on the cash deposit, as applicable, upon the occurrence of any one of the following events.
 - 8.2.1 AURORA owes Windstream undisputed charges under this Agreement that are more than thirty (30) calendar days past due; or
 - 8.2.2 AURORA admits its inability to pay its debts as such debts become due, has commenced a voluntary case (or has had an involuntary case commenced against it) under the U.S. Bankruptcy Code or any other law relating to insolvency, reorganization, wind-up, composition or adjustment of debts or the like, has made an assignment for the benefit of creditors or, is subject to a receivership or similar proceeding; or
 - 8.2.3 The expiration or termination of this Agreement.
- 8.3 If Windstream draws on the security deposit, upon request by Windstream, AURORA will provide a replacement deposit conforming to the requirements of Section 8.1.
- 8.4 Except as otherwise specifically provided elsewhere in this Agreement, the Parties will pay all rates and charges due and owing under this Agreement within thirty (30) days of the invoice date in immediately available funds. The Parties represent and covenant to each other that all invoices will be promptly processed and mailed in accordance with the Parties' regular procedures and billing systems.
 - 8.4.1 If the payment due date falls on a Sunday or on a Holiday which is observed on a Monday, the payment due date shall be the first non-Holiday following such Sunday or Holiday. If the payment due date falls on a Saturday or on a Holiday which is observed on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, or Friday, the payment due date shall be the last non-

Holiday preceding such Saturday or Holiday. If payment is not received by the payment due date, a late penalty, as set forth in §8.5 below, will be assessed.

- 8.5 If the amount billed is received by the billing Party after the payment due date or if any portion of the payment is received by the billing Party in funds which are not immediately available to the billing Party, then a late payment charge will apply to the unpaid balance.
- 8.6 Except as otherwise specifically provided in this Agreement interest on overdue invoices will apply at the lesser of the highest interest rate (in decimal value) which may be levied by law for commercial transactions, compounded daily and applied for each month or portion thereof that an outstanding balance remains, or shall not exceed 0.0004930% compounded daily and applied for each month or portion thereof that an outstanding balance remains.

9.0 Dispute Resolution

9.1 Notice of Disputes

Notice of a valid contractual dispute must be in writing, specifically documenting the nature of the dispute, and must include a detailed description of the underlying dispute (the "Dispute Notice"). Billing disputes must be submitted on the Billing Dispute Form contained in Appendix A or the dispute will not be accepted as a valid billing dispute and therefore rejected by the billing Party. The billing dispute form must be completed with all fields populated by the disputing Party or the form will be rejected by the billing Party.

9.1.1 Billing Disputes

The disputing Party must submit billing disputes ("Billing Disputes") to the billing Party on the Billing Dispute Form contained in Appendix A by the due date on the disputed bill. The dispute form must be complete, with all fields populated with the required information for the billable element in dispute. If the billing dispute form is not complete with all information, the dispute will be rejected by the billing Party. After receipt of a completed dispute, the billing Party will review to determine the accuracy of the billing dispute. If the billing Party determines the dispute is valid, the billing Party will credit the disputing Party's bill by the next bill date. If the billing Party determines the billing dispute is not valid, the disputing Party may escalate the dispute as outlined in section 9.1.1.1. If escalation of the billing dispute does not occur within the 30 days as outlined below, the disputing Party must remit payment for the disputed charge, including late payment charges, to the billing Party by the next bill date and these charges are no longer considered disputed charges. The Parties will endeavor to resolve all Billing Disputes within sixty (60) calendar days from receipt of the Dispute Form.

9.1.1.1 Resolution of the dispute is expected to occur at the first level of management, resulting in a recommendation for settlement of the dispute and closure of a specific billing period. If the issues are not resolved within the allotted time frame, the following resolution procedure will be implemented:

9.1.1.1.1 If the dispute is not resolved within thirty (30) calendar days of receipt of the Dispute Notice, the dispute will be escalated to the second level of management for each of the respective Parties for resolution. If the dispute is not resolved within sixty (60) calendar days of the notification date, the dispute will be escalated to the third level of management for each of the respective Parties for resolution.

9.1.1.1.2 If the dispute is not resolved within ninety (90) calendar days of the receipt of the Dispute Form, the dispute will be escalated to the fourth level of management for each of the respective Parties for resolution.

9.1.1.1.3 Each Party will provide to the other Party an escalation list, for resolving billing disputes. The escalation list will contain the name, title, phone number, fax number and email address for each escalation point identified in this section 9.1.1.1. A Party's failure to pay all undisputed amounts by the due date listed on the bill, is a material breach of this Agreement.

9.1.1.1.4 If the dispute is not resolved within one hundred twenty (120) days of receipt of the Dispute Form or either Party is not operating in good faith to resolve the dispute, the Formal Dispute Resolution process, outlined in section 9.4, may be invoked.

9.1.1.2 If the disputing Party disputes a charge and does not pay such charge by the payment due date, such charges shall be subject to late payment charges as set forth in subsection 8.3 above. If the disputing Party disputes charges and the dispute is resolved in favor of the disputing Party, the billing Party shall credit the bill of the disputing Party for the amount of the disputed charges, along with any late payment charges assessed, by the next billing cycle after the resolution of the dispute. Accordingly, if the disputing Party disputes charges and the dispute is resolved in favor of the billing Party, the disputing Party shall pay the billing Party the amount of the disputed charges and any associated late payment charges, by the next billing due date after the resolution of the dispute.

9.1.1.3 For purposes of this subsection 9.1.1, a billing dispute shall not include the refusal to pay other amounts owed to a Party pending resolution of the dispute. Claims by the disputing Party for damages of any kind will not be considered a Bona Fide Dispute for purposes of this subsection 9.1.1. Parties failure to pay all undisputed amounts by the due date listed on the bill, is a material breach of this agreement.

9.1.1.4 Once the billing dispute has been processed in accordance with this subsection 9.1.1, the disputing Party will make immediate payment on any of the disputed amount owed to the billing Party, or the billing Party shall have the right to pursue normal treatment procedures. Any credits due to the disputing Party resulting from the Dispute process will be applied to the disputing Party's account by the billing Party immediately upon resolution of the dispute.

9.1.1.5 Neither Party shall bill the other Party for charges incurred more than twelve (12) months after the service is provided to the non-billing Party.

9.1.2 All Other Disputes

All other disputes (*i.e.*, contractual disputes) shall be valid only if reasonable within the scope of this Agreement, and the applicable statute of limitations shall govern such disputes

9.2 Alternative to Litigation

9.2.1 The Parties desire to resolve disputes arising out of this Agreement without litigation. Accordingly, except for action seeking a temporary restraining order, an injunction, or similar relief from the PUC related to the purposes of this Agreement, or suit to compel compliance with this Dispute Resolution process, the Parties agree to use the following

Dispute Resolution procedure with respect to any controversy or claim arising out of or relating to this Agreement or its breach.

- 9.2.2 Each Party agrees to promptly notify the other Party in writing of a dispute and may in the Dispute Notice invoke the informal dispute resolution process described in §9.4. The Parties will endeavor to resolve the dispute within thirty (30) days after the date of the Dispute Notice.

9.3 **Informal Resolution of Disputes**

In the case of any dispute and upon receipt of the Dispute Notice each Party will appoint a duly authorized representative knowledgeable in telecommunications matters, to meet and negotiate in good faith to resolve any dispute arising under this Agreement. The location, form, frequency, duration, and conclusion of these discussions will be left to the discretion of the representatives. Upon Agreement, the representatives may, but are not obligated to, utilize other alternative dispute resolution procedures such as mediation to assist in the negotiations. Discussions and the correspondence among the representatives for purposes of settlement are exempt from discovery and production and will not be admissible in the arbitration described below or in any lawsuit without the concurrence of both Parties. Documents identified in or provided with such communications, which are not prepared for purposes of the negotiations, are not so exempted and, if otherwise admissible, may be admitted in evidence in the arbitration or lawsuit. Unless otherwise provided herein, or upon the Parties' Agreement, either Party may invoke formal dispute resolution procedures including arbitration or other procedures as appropriate, not earlier than thirty (30) days after the date of the Dispute Notice, provided the Party invoking the formal dispute resolution process has in good faith negotiated, or attempted to negotiate, with the other Party.

9.4 **Formal Dispute Resolution**

- 9.4.1 The Parties agree that all unresolved disputes arising under this Agreement, including without limitation, whether the dispute in question is subject to arbitration, may be submitted to PUC for resolution in accordance with its dispute resolution process and the outcome of such process will be binding on the Parties, subject to any right to appeal a decision reached by the PUC under applicable law.
- 9.4.2 If the PUC does not have or declines to accept jurisdiction over any dispute arising under this Agreement, either Party may proceed with any remedy available to it pursuant to law, equity or agency mechanisms; provided that, upon mutual agreement of the Parties, such disputes may also be submitted to binding arbitration by a single arbitrator pursuant to the Commercial Arbitration Rules of the American Arbitration Association. A Party may demand such arbitration in accordance with the procedures set out in those rules. Discovery shall be controlled by the arbitrator and shall be permitted to the extent set out in this section or upon approval or order of the arbitrator. Each Party may submit in writing to a Party, and that Party shall so respond, to a maximum of any combination of thirty-five (35) (none of which may have subparts) of the following: interrogatories; demands to produce documents; requests for admission. Additional discovery may be permitted upon mutual Agreement of the Parties. The arbitration hearing shall be commenced within ninety (90) days of the demand for arbitration. The arbitration shall be held in Missouri, unless otherwise agreed to by the Parties or required by the FCC. The arbitrator shall control the scheduling so as to process the matter expeditiously. The Parties shall submit written briefs five days before the hearing. The arbitrator shall rule on the dispute by issuing a written opinion within thirty (30) days after the close of hearings. The arbitrator has no authority to order punitive or consequential damages. The times specified in this section may be extended upon mutual Agreement of the Parties or by the

arbitrator upon a showing of good cause. Judgment upon the award rendered by the arbitrator may be entered in any court having jurisdiction.

- 9.4.3 Each Party shall bear its own costs of these procedures unless the Missouri PUC or other presiding arbitrator, if any, rules otherwise. A Party seeking discovery shall reimburse the responding Party for the costs of production of documents (including search time and reproduction costs).

9.5 Conflicts

- 9.5.1 The Parties agree that the Dispute Resolution procedures set forth in this Agreement are not intended to conflict with applicable requirements of the Act or the state commission with regard to procedures for the resolution of disputes arising out of this Agreement and do not preclude a Party from seeking relief under applicable rules or procedures of the PUC.

10.0 INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

11.0 Notices

- 11.1 Except as otherwise specifically provided in this Agreement, all notice, consents, approvals, modifications, or other communications to be given under this Agreement shall be in writing and sent postage prepaid by registered mail return receipt requested. Notice may also be effected by personal delivery or by overnight courier. All notices will be effective upon receipt, and should be directed to the following:

If to AURORA:

Aurora Communications, Inc.
Attn: Zachary Boschert
214 Elm Street, Suite 101
Washington, MO 63090
(636) 239-1066

Copy to:

Aurora Communications, Inc.
Attn: Fred Becker
214 Elm Street, Suite 101
Washington, MO 63090
(636) 239-1066

If to Windstream:

Windstream
Staff Manager – Interconnection Services
4001 Rodney Parham Road
1170 B3F03-84A
Little Rock, AR 72212

Copy to:

Windstream
Attn: Windstream Legal Department

1170 B1F03-53A
Little Rock, AR 72212

- 11.2 Either Party may unilaterally change its designated representative and/or address, telephone contact number or facsimile number for the receipt of notices by giving seven (7) days' prior written notice to the other Party in compliance with this Section.

12.0 Taxes

- 12.1 Each Party purchasing services hereunder shall pay or otherwise be responsible for all federal, state, or local sales, use, excise, gross receipts, transaction or similar taxes, fees or surcharges (hereinafter "Tax") levied against or upon such purchasing Party (or the providing Party when such providing Party is permitted to pass along to the purchasing Party such taxes, fees or surcharges), except for any tax on either Party's corporate existence, status or income. Whenever possible, these amounts shall be billed as a separate item on the invoice. Purchasing Party may be exempted from certain taxes if purchasing Party provides proper documentation, e.g., reseller certificate, from the appropriate taxing authority. Failure to timely provide said resale tax exemption certificate will result in no exemption being available to the purchasing Party until such time as the purchasing Party presents a valid certification.
- 12.2 With respect to any purchase of services, facilities or other arrangements, if any Tax is required or permitted by applicable law to be collected from the purchasing Party by the providing Party, then (i) the providing Party shall bill the purchasing Party for such Tax, (ii) the purchasing Party shall remit such Tax to the providing Party and (iii) the providing Party shall remit such collected Tax to the applicable taxing authority, except as otherwise indicated below.
- 12.3 The Parties agree that each Party shall generally be responsible for collecting and remitting to the appropriate city, any franchise fees or taxes for use of city rights of way, in accordance with the terms of that Party's franchise Agreement. In the event a city attempts to require both Parties to pay franchise fees on the same revenues with respect to resold services or unbundled network elements then the Parties agree to cooperate in opposing such double taxation.
- 12.4 With respect to any purchase hereunder of services, facilities or arrangements that are resold to a third party, if any Tax is imposed by applicable law on the End User in connection with any such purchase, then (i) the purchasing Party shall be required to impose and/or collect such Tax from the End User and (ii) the purchasing Party shall remit such Tax to the applicable taxing authority. The purchasing Party agrees to indemnify and hold harmless the providing Party on an after-tax basis for any costs incurred by the providing Party as a result of actions taken by the applicable taxing authority to collect the Tax from the providing Party due to the failure of the purchasing Party to pay or collect and remit such tax to such authority.
- 12.5 If the providing Party fails to collect any Tax as required herein, then, as between the providing Party and the purchasing Party, (i) the purchasing Party shall remain liable for such uncollected Tax and (ii) the providing Party shall be liable for any penalty and interest assessed with respect to such uncollected Tax by such authority. However, if the purchasing Party fails to pay any taxes properly billed, then, as between the providing Party and the purchasing Party, the purchasing Party will be solely responsible for payment of the taxes, penalty and interest.
- 12.6 If the purchasing Party fails to impose and/or collect any Tax from End Users as required herein, then, as between the providing Party and the purchasing Party, the purchasing Party shall remain liable for such uncollected Tax and any interest and penalty assessed thereon with respect to the uncollected Tax by the applicable taxing authority. With respect to any Tax that the purchasing Party has agreed to pay or impose on and/or collect from End Users, the purchasing Party agrees to

indemnify and hold harmless the providing Party on an after-tax basis for any costs incurred by the providing Party as a result of actions taken by the applicable taxing authority to collect the Tax from the providing Party due to the failure of the purchasing Party to pay or collect and remit such Tax to such authority.

- 12.7 All notices, affidavits, exemption certificates or other communications required or permitted to be given by either Party to the other Party under this §12.0, shall be made in writing and sent postage prepaid by registered mail return receipt requested. All notices shall be effective upon receipt. All notices sent pursuant to this Section shall be directed to the following:

To Windstream:

Windstream

Attn: Director State and Local Taxes
4001 Rodney Parham Road
1170 B1F03-70A
Little Rock, AR 72212

Copy to:

Windstream

Attn: Staff Manager - Interconnection Services
4001 Rodney Parham Road
1170 B3F03-84A
Little Rock, AR 72212

To AURORA:

Aurora Communications, Inc.
Attn: Zachary Boschert
214 Elm Street, Suite 101
Washington, MO 63090
(636) 239-1066

Copy to:

Aurora Communications, Inc.
Attn: Fred Becker
214 Elm Street, Suite 101
Washington, MO 63090
(636) 239-1066

- 12.8 Either Party may unilaterally change its designated representative and/or address, telephone contact number or facsimile number for the receipt of notices by giving seven (7) days' prior written notice to the other Party in compliance with this Section.

13.0 Force Majeure

- 13.1 Except as otherwise specifically provided in this Agreement, neither Party shall be liable for delays or failures in performance resulting from acts or occurrences beyond the reasonable control of such Party, regardless of whether such delays or failures in performance were foreseen or foreseeable as of the date of this Agreement, including, without limitation: fire, explosion, power failure, acts of God, war, revolution, civil commotion, or acts of public enemies; epidemics, riots, insurrections, earthquakes, tornadoes, hurricanes, nuclear accidents, floods, or labor unrest, including, without limitation strikes, slowdowns, picketing or boycotts or delays caused by the other Party or by other service or equipment vendors; or any other similar circumstances beyond the Party's reasonable control. In such event, the Party affected shall, upon giving prompt notice to the other Party, be

excused from such performance on a day-to-day basis to the extent of such interference (and the other Party shall likewise be excused from performance of its obligations on a day-for-day basis to the extent such Party's obligations relate to the performance so interfered with). The affected Party shall use its reasonable commercial efforts to avoid or remove the cause of nonperformance and both Parties shall proceed to perform with dispatch once the causes are removed or cease.

14.0 Publicity

- 14.1 The Parties agree not to use in any advertising or sales promotion, press releases or other publicity matters, any endorsements, direct or indirect quotes or pictures implying endorsement by the other Party or any of its employees without such Party's prior written approval. The Parties will submit to each other for written approval, prior to publication, all such publicity endorsement matters that mention or display the other's name and/or marks or contain language from which a connection to said name and/or marks may be inferred or implied.
- 14.2 Neither Party will offer any services using the trademarks, service marks, trade names, brand names, logos, insignia, symbols or decorative designs of the other Party or its affiliates without the other Party's written authorization.

15.0 Network Maintenance and Management

- 15.1 The Parties will work cooperatively to implement this Agreement. The Parties will exchange appropriate information (e.g., maintenance contact numbers, network information, information required to comply with law enforcement and other security agencies of the Government, etc.) to achieve this desired reliability, subject to the confidentiality provisions herein.
- 15.2 Each Party will provide a 24-hour contact number for Network Traffic Management issues to the other's surveillance management center. A facsimile (FAX) number must also be provided to facilitate event notifications for planned mass calling events. Additionally, both Parties agree that they will work cooperatively to ensure that all such events will attempt to be conducted in such a manner as to avoid disruption or loss of service to other End Users.

15.2.1 24 Hour Network Management Contact:

For Windstream:

Contact Number: 800-800-6609

For AURORA:

Contact Number: (636) 239-1066

- 15.3 Neither Party will use any service provided under this Agreement in a manner that impairs the quality of service to other carriers or to either Party's subscribers. Either Party will provide the other Party notice of said impairment at the earliest practicable time.

16.0 Law Enforcement and Civil Process

16.1 Intercept Devices

Local and federal law enforcement agencies periodically request information or assistance from local telephone service providers. When either Party receives a request associated with a Customer of the other Party, the receiving Party will refer such request to the appropriate Party, unless the request directs the receiving Party to attach a pen register, trap-and-trace or form of intercept on the Party's own facilities, in which case that Party will comply with any valid requirement, to the extent the receiving Party is able to do so; if such compliance requires the assistance of the other Party such assistance will be provided.

16.2 Subpoenas

If a Party receives a subpoena for information concerning an End User the Party knows to be an End User of the other Party, the receiving Party will refer the subpoena to the requesting entity with an indication that the other Party is the responsible company.

16.3 Law Enforcement Emergencies

If a Party receives a request from a law enforcement agency to implement at its switch a temporary number change, temporary disconnect, or one-way denial of outbound calls for an End User of the other Party, the receiving Party will comply so long as it is a valid emergency request. Neither Party will be held liable for any claims or damages arising from compliance with such requests, and the Party serving the End User agrees to indemnify and hold the other Party harmless against any and all such claims.

- 16.4 The Parties will provide five (5) day a week 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. installation and information retrieval pertaining to lawful, manual traps and information retrieval on Customer invoked CLASS services pertaining to non-emergency calls such as annoyance calls. The Parties will provide assistance twenty-four (24) hours per day for situations involving immediate threat of life or at the request of law enforcement officials. The Parties will provide a twenty-four (24) hour contact number to administer this process.

17.0 Changes in Subscriber Carrier Selection

- 17.1 Each Party will abide by applicable state or federal laws and regulations in obtaining End User authorization prior to changing End User's Local Service Provider to itself and in assuming responsibility for any applicable charges as specified in §258 (b) of the Telecommunications Act of 1996. Either Party shall make authorization available to the other Party upon reasonable requests and at no charge.
- 17.2 Either Party can initiate a challenge to a change in its local exchange service provider. If an End User notifies either Party that the End User requests local exchange service, the Party receiving such request shall be free to immediately provide service to such End User.
- 17.3 When an End User changes or withdraws authorization, each Party will release Customer specific facilities in accordance with the Customers' direction or the End User's authorized agent.
- 17.4 Subject to applicable rules, orders, and decisions, Windstream will provide AURORA with access to Customer Proprietary Network Information (CPNI) for Windstream End Users upon AURORA providing Windstream a signed Letter of Agency (LOA) for Windstream's Customer of record, based on AURORA's representation that subscriber has authorized AURORA to obtain such CPNI.

- 17.4.1 The Parties agree that they will conform to FCC and/or state regulations regarding the provisioning of CPNI between the Parties, and regarding the use of that information by the requesting Party.
- 17.4.2 The requesting Party will document End User permission obtained to receive CPNI, whether or not the End User has agreed to change Local Service Providers. For End Users changing service from one Party to the other, specific End User LOAs may be requested by the Party receiving CPNI requests to investigate possible slamming incidents, and for other reasons agreed to by the Parties. The receiving Party may also request documentation of an LOA if CPNI is requested and a subsequent service order for the change of local service is not received.
- 17.4.3 CPNI requests will be processed in accordance with the following:
- 17.4.3.1 For Customers with 1-25 lines: two (2) business days.
- 17.4.3.2 For Customers with 26+ lines: three (3) business days.
- 17.4.4 If the Parties do not agree that AURORA requested CPNI for a specific End User, or that Windstream has erred in not accepting proof of an LOA, the Parties may immediately request dispute resolution in accordance with General Terms & Conditions, §9.0, Dispute Resolution.
- 17.5 Windstream will only accept an LOA for an Windstream Customer of record. AURORA may not delegate its obligation to obtain written authorization from Windstream's Customer of record to a third party.

18.0 Amendments or Waivers

- 18.1 Except as otherwise provided in this Agreement, no amendment to this Agreement will be effective unless the same is in writing and signed by an authorized representative of each Party. In addition, no course of dealing or failure of a Party strictly to enforce any term, right or condition of this Agreement will be construed as a waiver of such term, right, or condition. The Parties recognize that Windstream is a 2 % Rural Telephone Company and is entitled to all rights afforded 2% Rural Telephone Companies under the Act including, but not limited to, exemptions, suspensions, and modifications under 47 USC § 251(f). This Agreement does not affect, and Windstream does not waive, any rights including, but not limited to, the rights afforded Windstream under 47 USC § 251(f). The Parties enter into this Agreement without prejudice to any positions they have taken previously, or may take in the future in any legislative, regulatory, other public forum, contract negotiation, bona fide request, or arbitration addressing any matters, including matters related to the types of arrangements prescribed by this Agreement.

19.0 Authority

- 19.1 Each person whose signature appears below represents and warrants that they have the authority to bind the Party on whose behalf they executed this Agreement.

20.0 Binding Effect

- 20.1 This Agreement will be binding on and inure to the benefit of the respective successors and permitted assigns of the Parties.

21.0 Consent

- 21.1 Where consent, approval, or mutual Agreement is required of a Party, it will not be unreasonably withheld or delayed.

22.0 Expenses

- 22.1 Except as specifically set out in this Agreement, each Party will be solely responsible for its own expenses involved in all activities related to the subject of this Agreement.

23.0 Headings

- 23.1 The headings in this Agreement are inserted for convenience and identification only and will not be considered in the interpretation of this Agreement.

24.0 Relationship of Parties

- 24.1 This Agreement will not establish, be interpreted as establishing, or be used by either Party to establish or to represent their relationship as any form of agency, partnership or joint venture. Neither Party will have any authority to bind the other Party, nor to act as an agent for the other Party unless written authority, separate from this Agreement, is provided. Nothing in the Agreement will be construed as providing for the sharing of profits or losses arising out of the efforts of either or both of the Parties. Nothing herein will be construed as making either Party responsible or liable for the obligations and undertakings of the other Party.

25.0 Conflict of Interest

- 25.1 The Parties represent that no employee or agent of either Party has been or will be employed, retained, paid a fee, or otherwise received or will receive any personal compensation or consideration from the other Party, or any of the other Party's employees or agents in connection with the arranging or negotiation of this Agreement or associated documents.

26.0 Multiple Counterparts

- 26.1 This Agreement may be executed in multiple counterparts, each of which will be deemed an original but all of which will together constitute but one, and the same document.

27.0 Third Party Beneficiaries

- 27.1 Except as may be specifically set forth in this Agreement, this Agreement does not provide and will not be construed to provide third parties with any remedy, claim, liability, reimbursement, cause of action, or other privilege.

28.0 Regulatory Approval

- 28.1 Each Party agrees to cooperate with the other Party and with any regulatory agency to obtain regulatory approval. During the term of this Agreement, each Party agrees to continue to cooperate with the other Party and any regulatory agency so that the benefits of this Agreement may be achieved.
- 28.2 Upon execution of this Agreement, it shall be filed with the appropriate state regulatory agency pursuant to the requirements of §252 of the Act. If the state regulatory agency imposes any filing(s) or public interest notice(s) regarding the filing or approval of the Agreement, AURORA shall assume sole responsibility in making such filings or notices. All costs associated with the aforementioned filing(s) or notice(s) shall borne by AURORA. Notwithstanding the foregoing, this Agreement shall not be submitted for approval by the appropriate state regulatory agency unless and until such time as AURORA is duly certified as a local exchange carrier in such state, except as otherwise required by a Commission.

29.0 Trademarks and Trade Names

- 29.1 Each Party warrants that, to the best of its knowledge, the services provided under this Agreement do not or will not violate or infringe upon any patent, copyright, trademark, or trade secret rights of any other persons.
- 29.2 Except as specifically set out in this Agreement, nothing in this Agreement will grant, suggest, or imply any authority for one Party to use the name, trademarks, service marks, or trade names of the other Party for any purpose whatsoever, absent written consent of the other Party.

30.0 Regulatory Authority

- 30.1 Each Party will be responsible for obtaining and keeping in effect all Federal Communications Commission, state regulatory commission, franchise authority and other regulatory approvals that may be required in connection with the performance of its obligations under this Agreement. Each Party will reasonably cooperate with the other Party in obtaining and maintaining any required approvals necessary for fulfilling its obligations under this Agreement.

31.0 Verification Reviews

- 31.1 Subject to each Party's reasonable security requirements and except as may be otherwise specifically provided in this Agreement, either Party may audit the other Party's relevant books, records and other documents pertaining to services provided under this Agreement once in each Contract Year solely for the purpose of evaluating the accuracy of the other Party's billing and invoicing. Such audit will take place at a time and place agreed on by the Parties no later than sixty (60) days after notice thereof.
- 31.2 The review will consist of an examination and verification of data involving records, systems, procedures and other information related to the services performed by either Party as related to settlement charges or payments made in connection with this Agreement as determined by either Party to be reasonably required. Each Party shall maintain reasonable records for a minimum of

twelve (12) months and provide the other Party with reasonable access to such information as is necessary to determine amounts receivable or payable under this Agreement.

- 31.3 Adjustments, credits, or payments shall be made and any corrective action shall commence within thirty (30) days from the Requesting Party's receipt of the final audit report to compensate for any errors or omissions which are disclosed by such audit and are agreed to by the Parties. Audit findings may be applied retroactively for no more than twelve (12) months from the date the audit began. Interest shall not exceed one and one-half (1 ½%) of the highest interest rate allowable by law for commercial transactions shall be assessed and shall be computed by compounding daily from the time of the overcharge, not to exceed twelve (12) months from the date the audit began to the day of payment or credit. Any disputes concerning audit results will be resolved pursuant to the Dispute Resolution procedures described in §9.0 of this Agreement.
- 31.4 Each Party will cooperate fully in any such audit, providing reasonable access to any and all appropriate employees and books, records and other documents reasonably necessary to assess the accuracy of the Party's bills.
- 31.5 Verification reviews will be limited in frequency to once per twelve (12) month period, with provision for staged reviews, as mutually agreed, so that all subject matters are not required to be reviewed at the same time. Verification reviews will be scheduled subject to the reasonable requirements and limitations of the audited Party and will be conducted in a manner that will not interfere with the audited Party's business operations.
- 31.6 The Party requesting a verification review shall fully bear its costs associated with conducting a review. The Party being reviewed will provide access to required information, as outlined in this Section, at no charge to the reviewing Party. Should the reviewing Party request information or assistance beyond that reasonably required to conduct such a review, the Party being reviewed may, at its option, decline to comply with such request or may bill actual costs incurred in complying subsequent to the concurrence of the reviewing Party.
- 31.7 For purposes of conducting an audit pursuant to this Agreement, the Parties may employ other persons or firms for this purpose (so long as said Parties are bound by this Agreement). The Parties will bear their own reasonable expenses associated with the audit.
- 31.8 Information obtained or received by either Party in conducting the audit described in §31.0 shall be subject to the confidentiality provisions of §6.0 of this Agreement, whether or not marked as confidential.

32.0 Complete Terms

- 32.1 This Agreement sets forth the entire understanding and supersedes prior Agreements between the Parties relating to the subject matter contained herein and merges all prior discussions between them, and neither Party shall be bound by any definition, condition, provision, representation, warranty, covenant or promise other than as expressly stated in this Agreement or as is contemporaneously or subsequently set forth in writing and executed by a duly authorized officer or representative of the Party to be bound thereby.

33.0 Cooperation on Preventing End User Fraud

- 33.1 The Parties agree to cooperate with one another to investigate, minimize, and take corrective action in cases of fraud. The Parties' fraud minimization procedures are to be cost-effective and implemented so as not to unduly burden or harm one Party as compared to the other Party.

- 33.2 In cases of suspected fraudulent activity by an End User, at a minimum, the cooperation referenced in the above paragraph will include providing to the other Party, upon request, information concerning End Users who terminate services to that Party without paying all outstanding charges. The Party seeking such information is responsible for securing the End User's permission to obtain such information.

34.0 Notice of Network Changes

- 34.1 The Parties agree to provide each other with reasonable notice consistent with applicable FCC rules of changes in the information necessary for the transmission and routing of services using the other Party's facilities or networks, as well as other changes that affect the interoperability of those respective facilities and networks. Nothing in this Agreement is intended to limit either Party's ability to upgrade or modify its network, including without limitation, the incorporation of new equipment, new software or otherwise so long as such upgrades are not inconsistent with the Parties' obligations under this Agreement.

35.0 Modification of Agreement

- 35.1 If AURORA changes its name or makes changes to its company structure or identity due to a merger, acquisition, transfer or any other reason, it is the responsibility of AURORA to notify Windstream of said change and request that an amendment to this Agreement, if necessary, be executed to reflect said change.

36.0 Responsibility of Each Party

- 36.1 Each Party is an independent contractor, and has and hereby retains the right to exercise full control of and supervision over its own performance of its obligations under this Agreement and retains full control over the employment, direction, compensation and discharge of its employees assisting in the performance of such obligations. Each Party will be solely responsible for all matters relating to payment of such employees, including compliance with social security taxes, withholding taxes and all other regulations governing such matters. Each Party will be solely responsible for proper handling, storage, transport and disposal at its own expense of all (i) substances or materials that it or its contractors or agents bring to, create or assume control over at Work Locations or, (ii) waste resulting therefrom or otherwise generated in connection with its or its contractors' or agents' activities at the Work Locations. Subject to the limitations on liability and except as otherwise provided in this Agreement, each Party will be responsible for (i) its own acts and performance of all obligations imposed by applicable law in connection with its activities, legal status and property, real or personal and, (ii) the acts of its own affiliates, employees, agents and contractors during the performance of the Party's obligations hereunder.

37.0 INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

38.0 Governmental Compliance

- 38.1 Each Party will comply at its own expense with all applicable law that relates to i) its obligations under or activities in connection with this Agreement; of ii) its activities undertaken at, in connection with or relating to Work Locations. The Parties agree to indemnify, defend, (at the other Party's request) and save harmless the other Party, each of its officers, directors and employees from and against any losses, damages, claims, demands, suits, liabilities, fines, penalties, and

expenses (including reasonable attorneys' fees) that arise out of or result from i) its failure or the failure of its contractors or agents to so comply or ii) any activity, duty or status of it or its contractors or agents that triggers any legal obligation to investigate or remediate environmental contamination.

39.0 Responsibility for Environmental Contamination

- 39.1 AURORA will in no event be liable to Windstream for any costs whatsoever resulting from the presence or release of any Environmental Hazard that AURORA did not introduce to the affected work location. Windstream will indemnify, defend (at AURORA's request) and hold harmless AURORA, each of its officers, directors and employees from and against any losses, damages, claims, demands, suits, liabilities, fines, penalties and expenses (including reasonable attorneys' fees) that arise out of or result from (i) any Environmental Hazard that Windstream, its contractors or agents introduce to the Work Locations or (ii) the presence or release of any Environmental Hazard for which Windstream is responsible under applicable law.
- 39.2 Windstream will in no event be liable to AURORA for any costs whatsoever resulting from the presence or release of any Environmental Hazard that Windstream did not introduce to the affected work location. AURORA will indemnify, defend (at Windstream's request) and hold harmless Windstream, each of its officers, directors and employees from and against any losses, damages, claims, demands, suits, liabilities, fines, penalties and expenses (including reasonable attorneys' fees) that arise out of or result from i) any Environmental Hazard that AURORA, its contractors or agents introduce to the Work Locations or ii) the presence or release of any Environmental Hazard for which AURORA is responsible under applicable law.

40.0 Subcontracting

- 40.1 If a Party through a subcontractor performs any obligation under this Agreement, such Party will remain fully responsible for the performance of this Agreement in accordance with its terms, including any obligations either Party performs through subcontractors, and each Party will be solely responsible for payments due the Party's subcontractors. No subcontractor will be deemed a third party beneficiary for any purposes under this Agreement. Any subcontractor who gains access to Confidential Information covered by this Agreement will be required by the subcontracting Party to protect such Confidential Information to the same extent the subcontracting Party is required to protect the same under the terms of this Agreement.

41.0 Referenced Documents

- 41.1 Whenever any provision of this Agreement refers to a technical reference, technical publication, any publication of telecommunications industry administrative or technical standards, Windstream handbooks and manuals, or any other document specifically incorporated into this Agreement, it will be deemed to be a reference to the most recent version or edition (including any amendments, supplements, addenda, or successors) of each document that is in effect, and will include the most recent version or edition (including any amendments, supplements, addenda, or successors) of each document incorporated by reference in such a technical reference, technical publication, or publication of industry standards. However, if such reference material is substantially altered in a more recent version to significantly change the obligations of either Party as of the Effective Date of this Agreement and the Parties are not in Agreement concerning such modifications, the Parties agree to negotiate in good faith to determine how such changes will impact performance of the Parties under this Agreement, if at all. Until such time as the Parties agree, the provisions of the last accepted and unchallenged version will remain in force.

42.0 Severability

- 42.1 If any term, condition or provision of this Agreement is held to be invalid or unenforceable for any reason, such invalidity or unenforceability will not invalidate the entire Agreement, unless such construction would be unreasonable. The Agreement will be construed as if it did not contain the invalid or unenforceable provision or provisions, and the rights and obligations of each Party will be construed and enforced accordingly; provided, however, that in the event such invalid or unenforceable provision or provisions are essential elements of this Agreement and substantially impair the rights or obligations of either Party, the Parties will promptly negotiate a replacement provision or provisions. If impasse is reached, the Parties will resolve said impasse under §9.0, Dispute Resolution.

43.0 Survival of Obligations

- 43.1 Any liabilities or obligations of a Party for acts or omissions prior to the cancellation or termination of this Agreement, any obligation of a Party under the provisions regarding indemnification, Confidential Information, limitations on liability, and any other provisions of this Agreement which, by their terms, are contemplated to survive (or to be performed after) termination of this Agreement, will survive cancellation or termination thereof.

44.0 Governing Law

- 44.1 This Agreement shall be governed by and construed in accordance with federal law, the Act, and the FCC's Rules and Regulations, except insofar as state law may control any aspect of this Agreement, in which case the domestic laws of Missouri, without regard to its conflicts of laws principles, shall govern. The Parties submit to personal jurisdiction in Missouri.

45.0 Other Obligations of "AURORA"

- 45.1 To establish service and provide efficient and consolidated billing to AURORA, AURORA is required to provide a CLEC Profile, which includes its authorized and nationally recognized Operating Company Number ("OCN"), to establish AURORA's billing account. AURORA will be provided with a billing account number ("BAN") for each CLEC Profile submitted. AURORA will pay Windstream \$380.00 for the establishment of each billing account number ("BAN").
- 45.2 AURORA shall use Windstream's electronic operations support system access platform (Windstream Express) to submit orders and requests for maintenance and repair of services, and to engage in other pre-ordering, ordering, provisioning, maintenance and repair transactions and billing disputes for resale services. If Windstream Express is not available, AURORA shall use such other processes as Windstream has made available for performing such transaction (including, but not limited, to submission of orders by telephonic facsimile transmission and placing trouble reports by voice telephone transmission). If AURORA chooses to submit orders, requests for maintenance and repair of services and resale billing disputes manually, when Windstream's electronic operations support system access platform (Windstream Express) is available, AURORA will pay a manual order charge as reflected in the applicable Windstream tariff.
- 45.3 AURORA represents and covenants that it will only use Windstream Express pursuant to this Agreement for services related to UNEs, resold services or other services covered by this

Agreement, for which this Agreement contains explicit terms, conditions and rates and will not provide its access to a third party.

- 45.4 A service order processing charge (Service Order Charge), listed in Appendix B, will be applied to each service order issued by Windstream to process a request for installation, disconnection, rearrangement, or changes to orders or existing service pursuant to this Agreement.

46.0 Customer Inquiries

- 46.1 Each Party will refer all questions regarding the other Party's services or products directly to the other Party at a telephone number specified by that Party.
- 46.2 Each Party will ensure that all of their representatives who receive inquiries regarding the other Party's services or products: (i) provide the numbers described in §47.1; and (ii) do not in any way disparage or discriminate against the other Party or its services or products.

47.0 Disclaimer of Warranties

- 47.1 EXCEPT AS OTHERWISE SPECIFICALLY PROVIDED IN THIS AGREEMENT, NEITHER PARTY MAKES ANY REPRESENTATIONS OR WARRANTIES, EXPRESS OR IMPLIED, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO ANY WARRANTY AS TO MERCHANTABILITY OR FITNESS FOR INTENDED OR PARTICULAR PURPOSE WITH RESPECT TO SERVICES PROVIDED HEREUNDER. ADDITIONALLY, NEITHER PARTY ASSUMES ANY RESPONSIBILITY WITH REGARD TO THE CORRECTNESS OF DATA OR INFORMATION SUPPLIED BY THE OTHER PARTY WHEN THIS DATA OR INFORMATION IS ACCESSED AND USED BY A THIRD PARTY.

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53.0 Definitions and Acronyms

53.1 Definitions

For purposes of this Agreement, certain terms have been defined in Attachment 20: Definitions and elsewhere in this Agreement to encompass meanings that may differ from, or be in addition to, the

normal connotation of the defined word. Unless the context clearly indicates otherwise, any term defined or used in the singular will include the plural. The words "will" and "shall" are used interchangeably throughout this Agreement and the use of either connotes a mandatory requirement. The use of one or the other will not mean a different degree of right or obligation for either Party. A defined word intended to convey its special meaning is capitalized when used.

53.2 Acronyms

Other terms that are capitalized and not defined in this Agreement will have the meaning in the Act. For convenience of reference only, Attachment 21: Acronyms provides a list of acronyms used throughout this Agreement.

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58.0 Other Requirements and Attachments

58.1 This Agreement incorporates a number of listed Attachments, which, together with their associated Appendices, Exhibits, and Addenda, constitute the entire Agreement between the Parties.

58.1.1 Each Party agrees that if at anytime a discrepancy arises between the General Terms and Conditions and one of the Attachments, the Attachments will control.

58.1.2 Appended to this Agreement and incorporated herein are the Attachments listed below. To the extent that any definitions, terms or conditions in any given Attachment differ from those contained in the main body of this Agreement, those definitions, terms or conditions will supersede those contained in the main body of this Agreement, but only in regard to the services or activities listed in that particular Attachment. In particular, if an Attachment contains a term length that differs from the term length in the main body of this Agreement, the term length of that Attachment will control the length of time that services or activities are to occur under the Attachment, but will not affect the term length of other attachments.

THIS AGREEMENT CONTAINS A BINDING ARBITRATION PROVISION, WHICH MAY BE ENFORCED BY THE PARTIES.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Parties hereto have caused this Agreement to be executed as of this 14th day of June, 2007.

Aurora Communications, Inc.

Windstream

Zachary Boschert

Print Name

William F. Kreutz

Print Name

Zachary Boschert 05/07/2007
Sign Name: Date

William F. Kreutz 6/14/07
Sign Name: Date

Vice President - Chief Executive Officer

Position/Title

Aurora Communications, Inc.

Vice President - Regulatory Strategies

Position/Title

Windstream

ATTACHMENT 1: INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

ATTACHMENT 2: RESALE

All services made available to AURORA by Windstream for resale by AURORA pursuant to the Agreement (Resale Services) will be subject to the terms and conditions set forth in the Agreement and in this Attachment 2: Resale.

1.0 General Provisions

- 1.1 Resale Services will be made available to AURORA by Windstream.
- 1.2 The applicable rules, regulations and rates in the Windstream Local Exchange Tariff shall be applicable to Resale Services and to the extent of conflict herewith this Agreement shall control.
- 1.3 AURORA will be the Customer of record for all services purchased from Windstream, pursuant to this Agreement. Except as specified herein, Windstream will take service orders from, bill and collect payment from AURORA for all services purchased pursuant to this Agreement.
- 1.4 AURORA will be Windstream's single point of contact for all services purchased pursuant to this Agreement.
- 1.5 AURORA may resell Windstream services only within the exchanges of Windstream local service area of Bellflower, Clubb, Crocker, Dixon, Doniphan, Eolia, Fairdealing, Grandin, Greenville, Iberia, Martinsburg, Middletown, Naylor, Neelyville, New Hartford, Olney, Oxly, Patterson, Piedmont, Ponder, Silex, Stover, Vandalia, Wappapello Park, Williamsville as specified in the appropriate Windstream tariff.
- 1.6 Except where otherwise explicitly provided in the Windstream Local Exchange Tariff, AURORA shall not permit the sharing of a service by multiple End Users or the aggregation of traffic from multiple End Users onto a single service.
- 1.7 AURORA shall resell telecommunications services only to the same class of Customers to which Windstream sells the services; e.g. residential service may not be resold to business Customers.
- 1.8 AURORA shall not use a resold service to avoid the rates, terms and conditions of Windstream's Local Exchange Tariff, as applicable.
- 1.9 AURORA shall not use resold local exchange telephone service to provide access services to Interexchange Carriers (IXCs), wireless carriers, competitive access providers (CAPs), or other telecommunication service providers.
- 1.10 Subject to the availability of facilities, Windstream shall provide Resale Services to AURORA pursuant to this Agreement.
- 1.11 AURORA has no right to the telephone number or any other call number designation associated with services furnished by Windstream, and no right to the continuance of service through any particular central office or number. Windstream reserves the right to change numbers or the central office designation associated with such numbers, or both, whenever Windstream deems it necessary to do so in the conduct of its business.
- 1.12 Service is furnished to AURORA on the condition that it will not be used for any unlawful purpose.
- 1.13 Service will be discontinued if any law enforcement agency advises that the service is being used in violation of the law.

- 1.14 Windstream can refuse service when it has grounds to believe that service will be used in violation of the law.
- 1.15 Windstream accepts no responsibility for any unlawful act committed by AURORA or its End Users as part of providing service to AURORA for purposes of resale or otherwise.
- 1.16 Windstream is authorized, but not required to cooperate with law enforcement agencies with respect to their investigation of any alleged unlawful activity of AURORA or its End Users. Law enforcement agency subpoenas and court orders regarding the End Users of AURORA will be directed to AURORA. Windstream shall be entitled to bill AURORA for any cost associated with complying with any requests by law enforcement agencies regarding AURORA or AURORA's End Users.
- 1.17 White Page Directory Services shall be provided as set forth in Attachment 9 - White Page Directories.
- 1.18 Interexchange carried traffic (e.g. sent-paid, information services and alternate operator services messages) received by Windstream with respect to AURORA end-user accounts will be returned to the IXC as unbillable, and will not be passed on to AURORA for billing. An unbillable code returned with those messages to the carrier will indicate that the messages originated from a resold account and will not be billed by Windstream.
- 1.19 All necessary information with respect to an end-user, including telephone number, requested service dates, and products and services desired will be provided to Windstream by AURORA in accordance with the practices and procedures established by Windstream.
- 1.20 Except as otherwise provided in this Agreement, if Windstream notifies AURORA in writing of a violation of a provision of this Agreement, AURORA shall have thirty (30) days from notice to correct the violation and notify Windstream in writing that the violation has been corrected.
- 1.21 Windstream shall continue to have the right to serve and market directly to any End User within Windstream's service area, including but not limited to AURORA's End Users. Windstream shall have the right to continue to directly market its own telecommunications products and services, and in doing so may establish independent relationships with AURORA's End Users.
- 1.22 AURORA shall not interfere with the right of any person or entity to obtain service directly from Windstream.
- 1.23 The circuits, facilities or equipment provided by any person or entity other than Windstream and use, operation, maintenance or installation thereof shall not:
 - 1.23.1 interfere with or impair service over any facilities of Windstream, its affiliates, or its connecting and concurring carriers involved in its service;
 - 1.23.2 cause damage to plant;
 - 1.23.3 impair the privacy of any communications; or
 - 1.23.4 create hazards to any employees or the public.
- 1.24 AURORA assumes the responsibility of notifying Windstream regarding any less than standard operations with respect to services provided by AURORA.

- 1.25 Facilities and/or equipment utilized by Windstream to provide service to AURORA shall remain the property of Windstream.
- 1.26 Windstream will provide Customer record information to AURORA, only after AURORA has provided Windstream the appropriate Letter(s) of Authorization (LOA) from the relevant Customer. Windstream may provide Customer record information to AURORA via Windstream Express.
- 1.27 All costs incurred by Windstream for providing services to AURORA that are not covered in the Windstream tariffs shall be recovered from AURORA for utilizing such services.
- 1.28 The Parties agree that this Agreement shall not be proffered by either Party in another jurisdiction or proceeding as evidence of any concession or as a waiver of any position taken by the other Party in that jurisdiction or for any other purpose.
- 1.29 The rates applicable to AURORA for purchase of services from Windstream for resale shall be the retail rate for the telecommunications services as provided in Windstream's applicable Local Exchange Tariff.

2.0 General Obligations

- 2.1 Windstream shall attempt to implement AURORA service orders within the same time intervals that Windstream uses to implement service orders for similar services for its own End Users.
- 2.2 The appropriate Windstream trouble reporting centers shall accept AURORA trouble reports with respect to AURORA End Users services 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. AURORA will be assigned a Customer contact center when initial service Agreements are made. AURORA End Users calling Windstream will be referred to AURORA at the number provided by AURORA.
- 2.3 If Windstream determines that an unauthorized change in local service by a local service provider has occurred, Windstream will reestablish service with the appropriate local service provider, and will assess against the local service provider an unauthorized change charge similar to that described in the Windstream F.C.C. Tariff No. 1. Appropriate nonrecurring charges, as set forth in the Local Exchange Tariff as applicable, will also be assessed to the local service provider.
- 2.4 To the extent allowable by law, AURORA shall be responsible for Primary Interexchange Carrier (PIC) change charges associated with such local exchange line. These charges will be assessed regardless if the AURORA or the End User made the change. AURORA shall pay for PIC changes at the tariffed rate.
- 2.5 AURORA shall resell the services provided herein only in those service areas in which such Resale Services or any feature or capability thereof are offered at retail by Windstream as the incumbent local exchange carrier to its End Users.
- 2.6 AURORA is solely responsible for the payment of charges for all service furnished under this Agreement, including, but not limited to, calls originated or accepted at AURORA location and its End Users' service locations, with the exception of any retail services provided directly by Windstream to the End User which Windstream is responsible for billing.
- 2.7 Windstream shall not be responsible for the manner in which the use of Resale Services or the associated charges are billed to others by AURORA. All applicable rates and charges for such services will be billed to and shall be the responsibility of AURORA, with the exception of other

retail services provided directly to the End User by Windstream as described in paragraph 2.6 above.

- 2.8 If AURORA does not wish to be responsible for toll, collect, third number billed, 900 and 976 calls, AURORA must order blocking services as outlined in the Windstream Local Exchange Tariff and pay any applicable charges.
- 2.9 AURORA shall be responsible for providing to its End Users, and to Windstream a telephone number or numbers that AURORA End Users can use to contact AURORA in the event of service or repair requests. In the event that AURORA End Users contact Windstream with regard to such requests, Windstream shall provide the End User AURORA's contact number and inform the End User to contact AURORA.

3.0 Establishment of Service

- 3.1 Upon receiving the applicable certification from the appropriate state regulatory agency, AURORA will provide Windstream with the necessary documentation to enable Windstream to establish a master account for AURORA. Such documentation shall include, but is not limited to, the Application for Master Account, proof of authority to provide telecommunications services, an Operating Company Number ("OCN") assigned by the National Exchange Carriers Association ("NECA"), and a tax exemption certificate, if applicable. When necessary deposit requirements are met, Windstream will begin taking orders from AURORA for Resale Services.
- 3.2 AURORA will be charged a Master Account Establishment charge of \$380.00. The Master Account Establishment charge is a one-time charge that will be applied for the establishment of each Billing Account Number ("BAN").
- 3.3 Service orders will be submitted in the format designated in Windstream handbooks and manuals.
- 3.4 When Windstream receives notification from AURORA that a current Windstream Customer will be subscribing to AURORA's services, standard service order intervals for the appropriate class of service will apply.
- 3.5 Except as required by applicable laws or rules, Windstream will not require End User confirmation prior to establishing service for AURORA's Customers. AURORA must, however, be able to demonstrate End User authorization upon request.
- 3.6 AURORA will be the single point of contact with Windstream for all subsequent ordering activity resulting in additions or changes to Resale Services, except that Windstream will accept a request directly from the End User for conversion of the End User's service from AURORA to Windstream, or will accept a request from another local service provider for conversion of the End User's service from AURORA to the other local service provider.
- 3.7 Windstream will provide AURORA at their request per Customer, blocking of calls (e.g., toll, 900, international calls, and third party or collect calls) by line or trunk on an individual switching element basis, to the extent that Windstream provides such blocking capabilities to its Customers and to the extent required by law.
- 3.8 When ordering Resale Services via a service order, AURORA may where available, order from Windstream separate InterLATA and IntraLATA service providers (i.e., two PICs) on a line or trunk basis where IntraLATA presubscription has been introduced. Windstream will accept PIC change orders for IntraLATA and long distance services through the Windstream service provisioning process.

- 3.9 Windstream will provide order format specifications to AURORA with respect to all services, features, and functions available and with respect to ancillary data required by Windstream to provision these services through Windstream manuals and handbooks.

4.0 Maintenance of Services

- 4.1 Windstream's facilities and equipment provided by Windstream shall be maintained by Windstream.
- 4.2 Windstream will attempt to provide maintenance for all Resale Services ordered under this Agreement at levels equal to the maintenance provided by Windstream in serving its Customers. Windstream technicians will attempt to provide repair service on Resale Services that is at least equal in quality to that provided to Windstream Customers; trouble calls from "AURORA" will receive response time and priorities that are at least equal to that of Windstream Customers.
- 4.3 AURORA or its End Users may not rearrange, move, disconnect, remove or attempt to repair any facilities owned by Windstream, other than by connection or disconnection to any interface means used, without the written consent of Windstream.
- 4.4 AURORA shall promptly notify Windstream of any situations that arise that may result in a service problem.
- 4.5 AURORA will be Windstream's single point of contact for all repair calls on behalf of AURORA's End Users with respect to Resale Services. All misdirected repair calls to Windstream from AURORA Customers will be given a recording (or live statement) directing them to call the number designated by AURORA. AURORA on a reciprocal basis will refer all misdirected repair calls that AURORA receives for Windstream Customers to Windstream.
- 4.6 AURORA will contact the appropriate Windstream repair center in accordance with procedures established by Windstream. AURORA will refer repair calls to Windstream via Windstream Express.
- 4.7 For all repair requests, AURORA shall adhere to Windstream's prescreening guidelines prior to referring the trouble to Windstream.
- 4.8 For purposes of this Section, Resale Services is considered restored or a trouble resolved when the quality of Resale Services is equal to that provided before the outage or the trouble occurred.
- 4.9 Windstream will bill AURORA for handling troubles that are found not to be in Windstream's network pursuant to its standard time and material charges. The standard time and material charges will be no more than what Windstream charges to its retail Customers for the same services.
- 4.10 Windstream will provide AURORA with written escalation procedures for maintenance resolution to be followed if, in AURORA's judgment, any individual trouble ticket or tickets are not resolved in a timely manner. The escalation procedures to be provided thereunder shall include names and telephone numbers of Windstream management personnel who are responsible for maintenance issues.
- 4.11 Windstream Maintenance of Service Charges, when applicable, will be billed by Windstream to AURORA, and not to AURORA's end-user Customers.

- 4.12 Dispatching of Windstream technicians to AURORA Customer premises shall be accomplished by Windstream pursuant to a request received from AURORA.
- 4.13 When an Windstream employee visits the premises of a AURORA local Customer, the Windstream employee will inform the Customer or occupant, directly or indirectly, that he or she is there acting on behalf of "their local service provider". Materials left at the Customer premises (e.g., a door hanger notifying the Customer of the service visit) must also inform the Customer that Windstream was on their premises acting on behalf of "their local service provider".
- 4.14 If trouble cannot be cleared without access to AURORA local Customer's premises and the Customer is not at home, the Windstream technician will leave at the Customer's premises a non-branded "no access" card requesting the Customer to call "their local service provider" for rescheduling of repair.
- 4.15 Windstream reserves the right, but is not required, to contact AURORA's Customers for any lawful purpose.
- 4.16 Windstream will perform testing (including trouble shooting to isolate any problems) of Resale Services purchased by AURORA in order to identify any new circuit failure performance problems.

5.0 Discontinuance of Service

5.1 End User Disconnect Procedures

- 5.1.1 At the request of AURORA, Windstream will disconnect a AURORA Customer.
- 5.1.2 All requests by AURORA for denial or disconnection of an End User for nonpayment must be provided to Windstream in writing in the manner and format prescribed by Windstream.
- 5.1.3 AURORA will be solely responsible for notifying the End User of the proposed disconnection of service.
- 5.1.4 Upon restoration of the End User's service, charges will apply and will be the responsibility of AURORA.
- 5.1.5 Windstream will continue to process calls made to Windstream for annoyance calls and will advise AURORA when it is determined that annoyance calls are originated from one of their End User's locations. Windstream shall be indemnified, defended and held harmless by AURORA against any claim, loss or damage arising from providing this information to AURORA. It is the responsibility of AURORA to take the corrective action necessary with its Customers who make annoying calls. Failure to do so will result in Windstream's disconnecting the End User's service.

6.0 Dispute Resolution

6.1 Notice of Disputes

Notice of a valid contractual dispute must be made through the Windstream Express System's billing dispute form , specifically documenting the nature of the dispute, and must include a detailed description of the underlying dispute (the "Billing Dispute"). Billing Disputes must be

submitted via Windstream Express, on the billing dispute form or the dispute will not be accepted as a valid Billing Dispute and therefore denied by the billing Party. The billing dispute form must be completed with all fields populated by the disputing Party or the form will be denied by the billing Party.

6.1.1 **Billing Disputes**

The billing dispute form must be complete, with all fields populated with the required information for the billable element in dispute. If the billing dispute form is not complete with all information, the dispute will be denied by the billing Party. After receipt of a completed billing dispute form, the billing Party will review to determine the accuracy of the Billing Dispute. If the billing Party determines the dispute is valid, the billing Party will credit the disputing Party's bill within thirty (30) calendar days of receipt of the Billing Dispute. If the billing Party determines the Billing Dispute is not valid, the disputing Party may escalate the dispute as outlined in Section 6.1.1.1.

6.1.1.1 Resolution of the dispute is expected to occur at the first level of management, resulting in a recommendation for settlement of the dispute and closure of a specific billing period. If the issues are not resolved within the allotted time frame, the following resolution procedure will be implemented:

6.1.1.1.1 If the dispute is not resolved within thirty (30) calendar days of receipt of the billing dispute form, the dispute will be escalated to the second level of management for each of the respective Parties for resolution. If the dispute is not resolved within sixty (60) calendar days of the notification date, the dispute will be escalated to the third level of management for each of the respective Parties for resolution.

6.1.1.1.2 If the dispute is not resolved within ninety (90) calendar days of the receipt of the billing dispute form, the dispute will be escalated to the fourth level of management for each of the respective Parties for resolution.

6.1.1.1.3 Each Party will provide to the other Party an escalation list for resolving Billing Disputes. The escalation list will contain the name, title, phone number, fax number and email address for each escalation point identified in this section 6.1.1.1.

6.1.1.1.4 If the dispute is not resolved within one hundred twenty (120) days of receipt of the billing dispute form or either Party is not operating in good faith to resolve the dispute, the Formal Dispute Resolution process, outlined in section 6.4, may be invoked.

6.1.1.2 If the disputing Party disputes charges and the dispute is resolved in favor of the disputing Party, the billing Party shall credit the bill of the disputing Party for the amount of the disputed charges by the next billing cycle after the resolution of the dispute.

6.1.1.3 Claims by the disputing Party for damages of any kind will not be considered a Bona Fide Dispute for purposes of this subsection 6.1.1.

6.1.1.4 Any credits due to the disputing Party resulting from the Billing Dispute process will be applied to the disputing Party's account by the billing Party immediately upon resolution of the dispute.

6.1.1.5 Neither Party shall bill the other Party for charges incurred more than twelve (12) months after the service is provided to the non-billing Party.

6.1.2 All Other Disputes

All other disputes (*i.e.*, contractual disputes) shall be valid only if reasonable within the scope of this Agreement, and the applicable statute of limitations shall govern such disputes.

6.2 Alternative to Litigation

6.2.1 The Parties desire to resolve disputes arising out of this Agreement without litigation. Accordingly, except for action seeking a temporary restraining order, an injunction, or similar relief from the PUC related to the purposes of this Agreement, or suit to compel compliance with this Dispute Resolution process, the Parties agree to use the following Dispute Resolution procedure with respect to any controversy or claim arising out of or relating to this Agreement or its breach.

6.3 Informal Resolution of Disputes

In the case of any dispute and upon receipt of the billing dispute form each Party will appoint a duly authorized representative knowledgeable in telecommunications matters, to meet and negotiate in good faith to resolve any dispute arising under this Agreement. The location, form, frequency, duration, and conclusion of these discussions will be left to the discretion of the representatives. Upon Agreement, the representatives may, but are not obligated to, utilize other alternative dispute resolution procedures such as mediation to assist in the negotiations. Discussions and the correspondence among the representatives for purposes of settlement are exempt from discovery and production and will not be admissible in the arbitration described below or in any lawsuit without the concurrence of both Parties. Documents identified in or provided with such communications, which are not prepared for purposes of the negotiations, are not so exempted and, if otherwise admissible, may be admitted in evidence in the arbitration or lawsuit. Unless otherwise provided herein, or upon the Parties' Agreement, either Party may invoke formal dispute resolution procedures including arbitration or other procedures as appropriate, not earlier than thirty (30) days after the date of the billing dispute form, provided the Party invoking the formal dispute resolution process has in good faith negotiated, or attempted to negotiate, with the other Party.

6.4 Formal Dispute Resolution

6.4.1 The Parties agree that all unresolved disputes arising under this Agreement, including without limitation, whether the dispute in question is subject to arbitration, may be submitted to PUC for resolution in accordance with its dispute resolution process and the outcome of such process will be binding on the Parties, subject to any right to appeal a decision reached by the PUC under applicable law.

6.4.2 If the PUC does not have or declines to accept jurisdiction over any dispute arising under this Agreement, the dispute may be submitted to binding arbitration by a single arbitrator pursuant to the Commercial Arbitration Rules of the American Arbitration Association. A Party may demand such arbitration in accordance with the procedures set out in those rules. Discovery shall be controlled by the arbitrator and shall be permitted to the extent set out in this section or upon approval or order of the arbitrator. Each Party may submit in writing to a Party, and that Party shall so respond, to a maximum of any combination of thirty-five (35) (none of which may have subparts) of the following: interrogatories; demands to produce documents; requests for admission. Additional discovery may be

permitted upon mutual Agreement of the Parties. The arbitration hearing shall be commenced within ninety (90) days of the demand for arbitration. The arbitration shall be held in Missouri, unless otherwise agreed to by the Parties or required by the FCC. The arbitrator shall control the scheduling so as to process the matter expeditiously. The Parties shall submit written briefs five days before the hearing. The arbitrator shall rule on the dispute by issuing a written opinion within thirty (30) days after the close of hearings. The arbitrator has no authority to order punitive or consequential damages. The times specified in this section may be extended upon mutual Agreement of the Parties or by the arbitrator upon a showing of good cause. Judgment upon the award rendered by the arbitrator may be entered in any court having jurisdiction.

- 6.4.3 Each Party shall bear its own costs of these procedures unless the Missouri PUC or other presiding arbitrator, if any, rules otherwise. A Party seeking discovery shall reimburse the responding Party for the costs of production of documents (including search time and reproduction costs).

6.5 Conflicts

- 6.5.1 The Parties agree that the Dispute Resolution procedures set forth in this Agreement are not intended to conflict with applicable requirements of the Act or the state commission with regard to procedures for the resolution of disputes arising out of this Agreement and do not preclude a Party from seeking relief under applicable rules or procedures of the PUC.

6.6 Arbitration

- 6.6.1 Any disputes involving amounts which represent Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000) or less annually, not resolved pursuant to the informal dispute resolution procedures set forth in § 6.3 within ninety (90) days of the Dispute Notice shall be submitted to binding arbitration by a single arbitrator pursuant to the Commercial Arbitration Rules of the American Arbitration Association. A Party may demand such arbitration in accordance with the procedures set out in those rules. Discovery shall be controlled by the arbitrator and shall be permitted to the extent set out in this Section. Each Party may submit in writing to a Party, and that Party shall so respond, to a maximum of any combination of thirty-five (35) (none of which may have subparts) of the following: interrogatories; demands to produce documents; requests for admission.

- 6.6.2 Additional discovery may be permitted upon mutual Agreement of the Parties. The arbitration hearing shall be commenced within ninety (90) days of the demand for arbitration. The arbitration shall be held in the state capitol of the state where the Interconnection Services are provided. The arbitrator shall control the scheduling so as to process the matter expeditiously. The Parties shall submit written briefs five days before the hearing. The arbitrator shall rule on the dispute by issuing a written opinion within thirty (30) days after the close of hearings. The arbitrator shall have no authority to order punitive or consequential damages. The times specified in this Section may be extended upon mutual Agreement of the Parties or by the arbitrator upon a showing of good cause. Judgment upon the award rendered by the arbitrator may be entered in any court having jurisdiction.

6.7 Costs

Each Party shall bear its own costs of these procedures. A Party seeking discovery shall reimburse the responding Party for the costs of production of documents (including search time and reproduction costs).

7.0 Termination of Service to AURORA

- 7.1 Windstream reserves the right to suspend or terminate service for nonpayment or in the event of prohibited, unlawful or improper use of facilities or service, abuse of facilities, or any other violation or noncompliance by AURORA of the rules and regulations of the Windstream Local Exchange Tariff.
- 7.2 Disputes hereunder shall be resolved in accordance with the procedures identified in § 6.0 Dispute Resolution. Failure of AURORA to pay charges owed to Windstream shall be grounds for termination under this Agreement
- 7.3 Failure of AURORA to pay all charges, including disputed amounts, shall be grounds for suspension or termination of this Agreement. If AURORA fails to pay when due, all charges billed to AURORA under this Agreement, and any portion of such charges remain unpaid more than fifteen (15) days after the due date of such charges, Windstream will notify AURORA in writing that in order to avoid having service disconnected and or suspension of order acceptance, AURORA must remit all charges to Windstream within fifteen (15) days after receipt of said notice (the "Embargo Notice").
- 7.4 If any AURORA charges remain unpaid at the conclusion of the time period as set forth in § 7.3 above (15 days from the due date of such unpaid charges), Windstream will notify AURORA, (the "Disconnect Notice") and the appropriate commission(s) in writing, pursuant to state public service commission's rules and regulations, that AURORA's service will be disconnected and AURORA's End Users may be switched to Windstream local service and Windstream will suspend order acceptance. Applicable service establishment charges for switching End Users from AURORA to Windstream will be assessed to AURORA. In the case of such discontinuance, all billed charges, as well as applicable termination charges, shall become due. If Windstream does not discontinue the provision of the services involved on the date specified in the fifteen (15) day Embargo Notice, and AURORA's noncompliance continues, nothing contained herein shall preclude Windstream's right to discontinue the provisions of the services to AURORA without further notice.
- 7.5 Within five (5) calendar days of the transfer to Windstream's service, (30 days past AURORA's due date), Windstream will notify all affected End Users that because of a AURORA's failure to pay all charges, their service is now being provided by Windstream.
- 7.6 After disconnect procedures have begun, Windstream will not accept service orders from AURORA until all charges are paid in full, in immediately available funds. Windstream will have the right to require a deposit equal to three (3) months charges (based on the highest previous month of service from Windstream) prior to resuming service to AURORA after disconnect for nonpayment.
- 7.7 Beyond the specifically set out limitations in this Section, nothing herein will be interpreted to obligate Windstream to continue to provide service to any such End Users or to limit any and all disconnection rights Windstream may have with regard to such End Users.

8.0 Billing and Payments