

Public Services Commission

APPLICATION OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS PUBLIC SERVICES COMMISSION FOR REAUTHORIZATION OF THE VIRIGIN ISLANDS TELECOMMUNICATIONS RELAY SERVICE

ORDER

WHEREAS, on March 26, 2018, the Virgin Islands Public Services Commission (hereinafter “Commission” or “PSC”) staff prepared the Telecommunications Relay Service (hereinafter “TRS”) Application for renewal of certification in Territory of the Virgin Islands pursuant to the rules and procedures set forth by the Federal Communications Commission (hereinafter “FCC”) with the assistance of the Virgin Islands Telephone Corporation (hereinafter “VITELCO”, d/b/a “Viva”); and

WHEREAS, TRS is the service provided to hearing-impaired telephone customers, which allows them to receive messages over the telephone utilizing a keyboard and a screen, as well as to make outgoing calls. For many of these customers, this service has been superseded by cellphones (particularly with text messaging) and email; however, there continue to be subscribers who rely on this service; and

WHEREAS, the Territory, acting through the Commission, is required to file an application with the FCC every five years regarding the provision of these services. That filing was due October 2017, but an extension was granted due to Hurricanes Irma and Maria; and

WHEREAS, in March 2018 the Commission received notice through VITELCO that the FCC was moving forward with the recertifications by the end of that month; and

WHEREAS, VITELCO has had an agreement with Sprint to provide these services, and that agreement was previously approved by the Commission, and is being renewed. VITELCO submitted a renewal agreement, and the PSC Staff has reviewed that contract and submitted comments which were addressed to the satisfaction of PSC Staff; and

WHEREAS, on March 27, 2018, the PSC staff filed its Application with the FCC for renewal of current certification in territory of the Virgin Islands; and

WHEREAS, on May 31, 2018, the PSC staff filed a supplemental application for renewal of the certification of TRS in the territory of the Virgin Islands. The supplemental application was prepared with the assistance of the Virgin Islands Telephone Corp. d/b/a Viya and Sprint Accessibility, formerly Sprint Relay; and

WHEREAS, on July 18, 2018, the FCC issued DA-18-733, which specifically approved the TRS for numerous states and territories, specifically including the Virgin Islands (File No. TRS-61-17); and

WHEREAS, PSC Staff has recommended that:

- (1) the Virgin Islands' TRS filing with the FCC be ratified; and
- (2) that the Commission direct Staff to undertake such TRS actions in the future, authorize Staff to make such filings, and report the actions to the Commission.

WHEREAS, on August 21, 2018, the Commission met in regular session in the Commission's offices on both St. Thomas and St. Croix, United States Virgin Islands;

NOW THEREFORE, the Commission hereby orders that:

- (1) the Virgin Islands' TRS filing with the FCC is ratified; and
- (2) Staff is directed to undertake such TRS actions in the future; and
- (3) Staff is authorized to make such filings, and report the compliance actions to the Commission.

So Ordered.

For the Commission,

Date: **September 21, 2018**


Raymond J. Williams, Chair