Docket #: 1037

IN THE UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT FOR THE DISTRICT OF DELAWARE

In re:)
FOCAL COMMUNICATIONS CORPORATION, et al.,) Case No. 02-13709 (KJC)
) Chapter 11) (Jointly Administered)
Debtors.)
	R COMPENSATION AND EMENT OF EXPENSES

Name of Applicant: Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP Authorized to Provide

Professional Services to: Official Committee of Unsecured Creditors

Date of Retention: February 19, 2003 (nunc pro tunc to January 7, 2003)

Period for which compensation and reimbursement is sought: January 7, 2003 through July 1, 2003

Amount of Compensation sought as actual, reasonable, and necessary: \$863,411.00

Amount of Expense Reimbursement sought as actual, reasonable, and necessary: \$41,232.64

This is the final fee application.

Prior Fee Applications:

Time Period	Fees	Expenses	Status
01/7/03 - 01/31/03	\$171,848.25	\$3,691.02	Payment received pursuant to Administrative Fee Order.
02/01/03 - 02/28/03	\$163,789.25	\$9,805.30	Payment received pursuant to Administrative Fee Order.
03/01/03 - 03/31/03	\$181,287.00	\$6,415.19	Payment received pursuant to Administrative Fee Order.
04/01/03 - 04/30/03	\$179,090.00	\$9,629.31	Payment received pursuant to Administrative Fee Order.
05/01/03 - 05/31/03	\$71,501.00	\$6,695.03	Pending.
06/01/03 - 07/01/03	\$95,895.50	\$4,996.79	Pending.

ATTACHMENT B TO INTERIM FEE APPLICATION FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY 7, 2003 THROUGH JULY 1, 2003

Name of Professional Person	Position of the Applicant, Number of Years in that Position at Current or Prior Firms, Year of Obtaining License to Practice, Area of Expertise	Total Hours Billed	Hourly Billing Rate	Total Compensation
Robert Johnson	Partner for 6 years; Admitted in 1988; Litigation Department	231.60	\$500	\$115,800.00
Kim Koppersmith	Partner for 11 years; Admitted in 1985; Litigation Department	11.10	\$550	\$6,105.00
Adrienne Scerbak	Partner for 1 year; Admitted in 1993; ERISA Department	7.90	\$435	\$3,436.50
Michael S. Stamer	Partner for 5 years; Admitted in 1989; Financial Restructuring Department	264.40	\$625	\$165,250.00
John Strickland	Partner for 23 years; Admitted in 1974; Corporate Department	229.55	\$600	\$137,730.00
Patrick Cox	Counsel for 2 year; Admitted in 1995; Tax Department	15.90	\$390	\$6,201.00
Jonathan Gold	Counsel for 3 years; Admitted in 1994; Financial Restructuring Department	477.45	\$390	\$186,205.50
Patrick Schmitter	Counsel for 1 year; Admitted in 1997; Litigation Department	145.40	\$390	\$56,706.00
Scott Alberino	Associate for 3 years; Admitted in 2000, Financial Restructuring Department	59.60	\$250	\$14,900.00
Tess Autrey	Associate for 1 year; Admitted in 2002; Litigation Department	16.50	\$225	\$3,712.50
David Berch	Associate for 3 years; Admitted in 2000; Corporate Department	7.50	\$315	\$2,362.50
Angela Ferrante	Associate for 3 years; Admitted in 2001; Financial Restructuring Department	31.30	\$375	\$11,737.50
Allison Hagey	Associate for 1 year; Admitted in 2003; Litigation Department	8.00	\$250	\$2,000.00
Allan Hill	Associate for 2 years; Admitted in 2002; Financial Restructuring			000.010.00
Hyungsoon Kim	Department Associate for 1 year; Not Yet Admitted; Litigation Department	274.80 17.00	\$325 \$250	\$89,310.00 \$4,250.00

Name of Professional Person	Position of the Applicant, Number of Years in that Position at Current or Prior Firms, Year of Obtaining License to Practice, Area of Expertise	Total Hours Billed	Hourly Billing Rate	Total Compensation
Wendy Lau	Associate for 1 year; Not Yet Admitted; Real Estate Department	132.40	\$230	\$30,452.00
Cynthia Fitzpatrick	Legal Assistant for 13 years; Financial Restructuring Department	28.20	\$160	\$4,512.00
Tami Harris	Legal Assistant for 4 years; Financial Restructuring Department	53.50	\$110	\$5,885.50
Christiana Jung	Legal Assistant for 3 years; Financial Restructuring Department	15.70	\$160	\$2,512.00
Peter J. Sprofera	Legal Assistant for 27 years; Financial Restructuring Department	60.00	\$175	\$10,500.00
Attorneys and Legal Assistants Billing Less Than Five Hours		14.60	\$100 - \$525	\$3,843.00

Total Amount of Fees:

\$863,411.00

Total Number of Hours:

2,102.40

Blended Hourly Rate:

\$410.79

COMPENSATION BY PROJECT CATEGORY FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY 7, 2003 THROUGH JULY 1, 2003

Project Category	Total Hours	Total Fees
General Case Administration	188.10	\$77,648.00
Akin Gum Fee Applications	47.20	\$9,954.00
Analysis of Other Professionals Fee Applications	29.60	\$9,534.00
Review of Schedules and SOFAs	1.40	\$875.00
Retention of Professionals	288.20	\$107,526.50
Creditors Committee Meeting	103.00	\$53,128.00
Court Hearings	174.20	\$72,180.50
Financial Reports and Analysis	4.10	\$1,469.00
DIP and Exit Financing	127.70	\$31,167.00
Executory Contracts/License Agreements	20.00	\$7,191.00
General Claims Analysis/Claims Objections	90.30	\$31,990.00
Analysis for Prepetition Transactions	11.40	\$6,353.50
Analysis of Secured Claim	64.40	\$25,123.00
Lift Stay Motions	8.20	\$2,078.00
General Adversary Proceedings/Insurance Issues	262.30	\$113,930.50
Tax Issues	15.90	\$6,201.00
Labor Issues	56.70	\$24,342.00
Real Estate Issues	13.10	\$3,049.00
Exclusivity	1.30	\$422.50
Plan and Disclosure Statement	538.30	\$255,813.50
Asset/Stock Transactions/Business Liquidation	1.80	\$676.00

Project Category	Total Hours	Total Fees
Travel (billed at 50% of actual time)	55.20	\$22,759.00
TOTAL	2,102.40	\$863,411.00

FOCAL COMMUNICATIONS CORPORATION DISBURSEMENT SCHEDULE JANUARY 7, 2003 THROUGH JULY 1, 2003

OVERNIGHT COURIER/POSTAGE	\$255.68
LONG DISTANCE TELEPHONE & CONFERENCE CALLS	\$10,658.70
DUPLICATING COSTS/THIRD PARTY DUPLICATING COSTS	\$1,861.08
FACSIMILE	\$86.50
MEALS/COMMITTEE MEETING EXPENSES	\$2,441.15
SECRETARIAL OVERTIME	\$320.51
WITNESS FEE	\$45.00
TRANSCRIPT EXPENSES	\$2,554.50
TRAVEL EXPENSES	\$11,661.36
COMPUTERIZED RESEARCH	\$11,348.26
TOTAL	\$41,232.64

IN THE UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT FOR THE DISTRICT OF DELAWARE

In re:)	Chapter 11
)	
FOCAL COMMUNICATIONS)	
CORPORATION, et al.,)	Case No. 02-13709 (KJC)
)	
)	Jointly Administered
Debtors.)	·

APPLICATION OF AKIN GUMP STRAUSS
HAUER & FELD LLP, CO-COUNSEL FOR THE OFFICIAL
COMMITTEE OF UNSECURED CREDITORS, FOR FINAL
ALLOWANCE OF COMPENSATION AND FOR
THE REIMBURSEMENT OF EXPENSES FOR SERVICES
RENDERED DURING THE PERIOD FROM
JANUARY 7, 2003 THROUGH JULY 1, 2003

TO: THE HONORABLE KEVIN J. CAREY, UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT JUDGE:

Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP ("Akin Gump" or "Applicant"), co-counsel to the Official Committee of Unsecured Creditors (the "Committee") of Focal Communications Corporation ("Focal") and its affiliated debtors and debtors-in-possession (collectively, the "Debtors"), for its final fee application (the "Application") pursuant to 11 U.S.C. § 330 for final allowance and award of compensation for services rendered and for reimbursement of expenses incurred in connection therewith, respectfully represents:

I. <u>INTRODUCTION</u>

1. By this Application, Akin Gump seeks (i) final allowance and award of compensation for the professional services rendered by Akin Gump as attorneys for the Committee for the period from January 7, 2003 through July 1, 2003 (the "Compensation Period") in the amount of \$863,411.00, representing 1,940.90 hours in professional services and 161.50 hours in paraprofessional services; and (ii) reimbursement of actual and necessary expenses incurred by Akin Gump during the Compensation Period in connection with the rendition of such professional services and paraprofessional services in the amount of \$41,232.64.

II. BACKGROUND

- 2. On December 17, 2002 (the "Petition Date"), the Debtors filed with this Court their voluntary petitions for relief under Chapter 11 of the Bankruptcy Code. The Debtors have continued in possession of their property and have continued to operate and manage their businesses as debtors-in-possession pursuant to §§ 1107(a) and 1108 of the Bankruptcy Code.
- 3. On June 19, 2003, this Court entered an Order Pursuant to Section 1129 of the Bankruptcy Code Confirming the Debtors' Second Amended Joint Plan of Reorganization. On July 1, 2003, the Plan went effective.
- 4. This Court has jurisdiction over the Application pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §§ 157 and 1334. Venue is proper in this district pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §§ 1408 and 1409. This is a core proceeding pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 157(b)(2). The statutory

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predicates for the relief sought herein are 11 U.S.C. §§ 330 and 331 and Federal Rules of Bankruptcy Procedure 2002(a) and 2016.

- 5. On January 7, 2003 (the "Committee Formation Date"), pursuant to Section 1102 of the Bankruptcy Code, the United States Trustee appointed the Committee. The Committee was originally comprised of five members. On the Committee Formation Date, the Committee selected Akin Gump to serve as co-counsel to the Committee pursuant to Section 1103(a) of the Bankruptcy Code.
- 6. Akin Gump respectfully submits that the services it rendered on behalf of the Committee were necessary, resulted in the effective administration of these cases, and directly benefited the Debtors' unsecured creditors. Akin Gump advised and counseled the Committee on formulating an effective strategy, which led to the successful reorganization of the Debtors.
- 7. Except for applications pursuant to the Administrative Fee Order, Applicant has received no payment and no promises for payment from any source for services rendered in connection with these cases. There is no agreement or understanding.
- 8. During the Compensation Period, Akin Gump filed six applications for interim allowance of compensation and reimbursement of expenses in the aggregate amounts of \$863,411.00 for fees and \$41,232.61 for expenses (the "Interim Fee"

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The Committee was originally comprised of the following entities: The Bank of New York, as Indenture Trustee; Morgan Stanley Investment Management; Romulus Holdings; Conseco Capital Management, Inc. and Brian F. Addy.

Applications"). The Interim Fee Applications are on file with this Court and are incorporated herein by reference. A schedule listing the Interim Fee Applications and the payments made with respect thereto is annexed to this Application as Exhibit "A."

9. As stated in the Affirmation of Michael S. Stamer, Esq., annexed hereto as Exhibit "B," all of the services for which interim compensation is sought herein were rendered for or on behalf of the Committee solely in connection with these cases.

III. SUMMARY OF SERVICES RENDERED

- 10. Since January 7, 2003, Akin Gump has rendered professional services to the Committee as requested and as necessary and appropriate in furtherance of the interests of the Debtors' unsecured creditors. The variety and complexity of these cases and the need to act or respond on an expedited basis in furtherance of the Committee's needs have required the expenditure of substantial time by personnel from several legal disciplines, on an as-needed basis.
- attorneys and paraprofessionals in the rendition of their professional services to the Committee. Such time records were made contemporaneously with the rendition of services by the person rendering such services and in the ordinary course of Akin Gump's practice, and are presented in a form which is in compliance with the Local Rules for the District of Delaware. A compilation showing the name of the attorney or paraprofessional, the date on which the services were performed, a description of the

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services rendered, and the amount of time spent in performing the services during the Compensation Period is annexed hereto as Exhibit "C".

- 12. Akin Gump also maintains records of all actual and necessary outof-pocket expenses incurred in connection with the rendition of its professional services, all of which are also available for inspection. A schedule of the categories of expenses and amounts for which reimbursement is requested is annexed hereto as Exhibit "D".
- 13. Akin Gump respectfully submits that the professional services that it rendered on behalf of the Committee were necessary and have directly contributed to the effective administration of these cases.
- 14. Akin Gump respectfully submits that the professional services that it rendered on behalf of the Committee were necessary and have directly contributed to the effective administration of these cases and the successful reorganization of the Debtors.
- Compensation Period is not intended to be a detailed description of the work performed, as those day-to-day services and the time expended in performing such services are fully set forth in Exhibit "B." Rather, it is merely an attempt to highlight certain of those areas in which services were rendered to the Committee, as well as to identify some of the problems and issues that Akin Gump was required to address.

(i) Case Administration

16. At the request of the Committee, Akin Gump assisted in or took the lead in analyzing all motions filed by the Debtors and third parties and advised the

Committee on its own initiatives and directions for the cases. In addition, Akin Gump coordinated all Committee activities, including attending to member issues and interacting with the Committee's co-chairs in setting agendas for Committee meetings and conference calls. Akin Gump reviewed, analyzed and apprised the Committee of all motions and objections related thereto filed by the Debtors and other parties in interest with this Court.

- 17. Due to Akin Gump's experience in counseling creditors' committees, Akin Gump believes it was able to efficiently address all issues relating to case administration that have arisen during the pendency of these cases.
 - (ii) Committee Meetings and Other Meetings with Professionals
- During the Compensation Period, Akin Gump held meeting with this full Committee and had numerous telephonic conferences with the Debtors and their professionals and with various third parties and their professionals to discuss and address material issues relating to the Debtors' Chapter 11 cases. Prior to its meetings with the Committee, Akin Gump reviewed each pending matter requiring the Committee's attention and all underlying documentation in connection therewith. Thereafter, Akin Gump discussed each of these matters with the full Committee, as well as individual Committee members, and assisted the Committee in formulating a position thereon. In addition, Akin Gump prepared memoranda to the Committee during the Compensation Period discussing the status of important matters in these proceedings.

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19. Through the meetings, telephone conferences and correspondence, Akin Gump assisted the Committee in fulfilling its statutory duties to make informed decisions regarding the various issues which have arisen in these cases, to monitor closely the Debtors' management of these proceedings, and to reach independent conclusions on the merits of specific matters, as well as regarding the prospects of reorganization.

(iii) Court Hearings

20. Akin Gump attorneys appeared at hearings before the Court and actively asserted the Committee's position at such hearings. Akin Gump's advocacy on behalf of the Committee in hearings before the Court is discussed more specifically below in the descriptions of some of the specific areas of these cases that required Akin Gump's attention.

(iv) Plan and Disclosure Statement

21. Akin Gump performed extensive work in connection with the formulation of the Plan and related documents (the "Plan Documents"). Akin Gump was active in reviewing the Debtors' drafts of the Plan and Documents, providing comments to the Debtors and negotiating key terms of the Plan throughout the pendancy of these cases. Akin Gump participated in significant negotiations with the Debtors over many provisions of the Plan and drafted certain of the Plan Documents. On June 19, 2003, this Court entered an order confirming the Plan. The Plan went effective on July 1, 2003. In

addition, Akin Gump attended the hearings with respect to confirmation of the Plan and participated in all discussions regarding Plan objections and resolution of same.

- 22. On the commencement date of these Chapter 11 cases, the Debtors filed (i) an application to retain and employ Miller Buckfire Lewis & Co., LLC as the Debtors' Financial Advisor and Investment Banker (the "Miller Buckfire Application") and (ii) an application to retain and employ Kirkland & Ellis as special counsel (the "K&E Application"). Akin Gump reviewed and analyzed both retention applications and discussed its findings with the Committee.
- 23. At the instruction of the Committee, Akin Gump prepared and filed formal objections to both the Miller Buckfire Application and the K & E Application. In connection with the Committee's objection to the Miller Buckfire Application, Akin Gump conducted its discovery process with respect to the retention of Miller Buckfire. The Court subsequently granted the Miller Buckfire Application over the Committee's objections. The Committee has appealed the Court's order approving Miller Buckfire's retention and, during the Compensation Period, Akin Gump has prepared pleadings related to the appeal and has continued to negotiate with the Debtors over the terms of a consensual settlement relating to Miller Buckfire's retention. The Debtors, the Committee and Miller Buckfire subsequently agreed to resolve the issues raised in the Committee's appeal of the order authorizing the retention of Miller Buckfire in exchange for a \$400,000 reduction of the fees payable to Miller Buckfire.

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IV. FACTORS TO BE CONSIDERED IN AWARDING ATTORNEYS' FEES

- 24. The factors to be considered in awarding attorneys fees have been enumerated in In re First Colonial Corporation of America, 544 F.2d 1291, 1298-99 (5th Cir. 1977), reh'g denied, 547 F.2d 573, cert. denied, 431 U.S. 904, which standards have been adopted by most courts. Akin Gump respectfully submits that a consideration of these factors should result in this Court's allowance of the full compensation sought.
 - (A) The Time and Labor Required. The professional services rendered by Akin Gump on behalf of the Committee have required the continuous expenditure of substantial time and effort, under significant time pressures. The services rendered required a high degree of professional competence and expertise in order to be administered with skill and dispatch.
 - (B) The Novelty and Difficulty of Questions. In this case, as in all others in which the firm is involved, Akin Gump's effective advocacy and creative approach have helped clarify and resolve such issues.
 - (C) The Skill Requisite to Perform the Legal Services Properly. Akin Gump believes that its recognized expertise in the area of corporate reorganization, its ability to draw from highly experienced professionals in other areas of Akin Gump's practice, and its creative approach to the resolution of issues will contribute to the maximization of distributions to the Debtors' unsecured creditors.

- (D) The Preclusion of Other Employment by Applicant Due to

 Acceptance of the Case. Due to the size of Akin Gump's insolvency
 department, Akin Gump's representation of the Committee has not
 precluded its acceptance of new clients.
- (E) The Customary Fee. The fee sought herein is based upon Akin Gump's normal hourly rates for services of this kind. Akin Gump respectfully submits that the fee sought herein is not unusual given the magnitude and complexity of these cases and the time expended in attending to the representation of the Committee, and is commensurate with fees Akin Gump has been awarded in other cases, as well as with fees charged by other attorneys of comparable experience.
- (F) Whether the Fee is Fixed or Contingent. Pursuant to sections 330 and 331 of the Bankruptcy Code, all fees sought by professionals employed under section 327 of the Code are contingent pending final approval by this Court, and are subject to adjustment dependent upon the services rendered and the results obtained.
- (G) <u>Time Limitations Imposed by Client or Other Circumstances</u>. As already indicated, Akin Gump has been required to attend to certain issues arising in these cases in a compressed and urgent time-frame.
- (H) <u>The Amount Involved and Results Obtained</u>. Through the efforts of Akin Gump, the Committee has been an active participant in these

Chapter 11 cases, and its constructive assistance, as well as criticism, has greatly contributed to enhancement of the recoveries available to the Debtors' creditors and to the efficient administration of these cases.

- (I) The Experience, Reputation and Ability of the Attorneys. Akin Gump has a large and sophisticated financial restructuring practice and is playing and has played a major role in numerous cases of national import including, for example, the reorganization proceedings of Carmike Cinemas, Inc., Hayes Lemmerz International, Inc., The LTV Corporation, Magellan Health Services, Inc., OpTel, Inc., Pillowtex Corporation, Scott Cable Communications, Inc., Genesis Health Ventures, Inc., and Golden Books Publishing Company, Inc. Akin Gump's experience enables it to perform the services described herein competently and expeditiously. In addition to its expertise in the area of corporate reorganization, Akin Gump has called upon the expertise of its partners and associates in other practice areas to perform the wide ranging scope of the legal work necessitated by these cases.
- (J) The "Undesirability" of the Case. These cases are not undesirable.
- (K) <u>Nature and Length of Professional Relationship</u>. Akin Gump was selected as counsel to the Committee on January 7, 2003. The Court entered an order on February 19, 2003 authorizing the, <u>nunc pro tunc</u>, employment and retention to Akin Gump to January 7, 2003. Akin Gump

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has been rendering services continuously to the Committee since January 7, 2003 and continuing through the Compensation Period, as necessary and appropriate.

V. <u>ALLOWANCE OF COMPENSATION</u>

- 25. The professional services rendered by Akin Gump required a high degree of professional competence and expertise so that the numerous issues requiring evaluation and determination by the Committee could be addressed with skill and dispatch and have, therefore, required the expenditure of substantial time and effort. It is respectfully submitted that the services rendered to the Committee were performed efficiently, effectively and economically, and the results obtained to date have benefited not only the members of the Committee, but also the unsecured creditor body as a whole and the Debtors' estates.
- 26. With respect to the level of compensation, 11 U.S.C. § 330(a)(1) provides, in pertinent part, that the Court may award to a professional person:

reasonable compensation for actual, necessary services rendered ...

Section 330(a)(3)(A), in turn, provides that

In determining the amount of reasonable compensation to be awarded, the court shall consider the nature, the extent, and the value of such services, taking into account all relevant factors, including –

- (A) the time spent on such services;
- (B) the rates charged for such services;
- (C) whether the services were necessary to the administration of, or beneficial at the time at which the service was rendered toward the completion of, a case under this title;

.

- (D) whether the services were performed within a reasonable amount of time commensurate with the complexity, importance, and nature of the problem, issue, or task addressed; and
- (E) whether the compensation is reasonable based on the customary compensation charged by comparably skilled practitioners in cases other than cases under this title.

11 U.S.C. §330(a)(3)(A). The clear Congressional intent and policy expressed in this statute is to provide for adequate compensation in order to continue to attract qualified and competent bankruptcy practitioners to bankruptcy cases.

- 26. The total time spent by Akin Gump attorneys and paraprofessionals during the Compensation Period was 2,102.40 hours. The work involved, and thus the time expended, was carefully assigned in light of the experience and expertise required for a particular task.
- 27. As shown by this application and supporting documents, Applicant spent its time economically and without unnecessary duplication of time. Attached hereto as Exhibit "E" is a schedule of the hours expended by the attorneys and paraprofessionals during the Compensation Period, their normal hourly rates, and the value of their services. In addition, Akin Gump incurred actual out-of-pocket expenses in connection with the rendition of the professional services to the Committee in the sum of \$41,232.64 for which Akin Gump respectfully requests reimbursement in full.
- 28. The disbursements and expenses have been incurred in accordance with Akin Gump's normal practice of charging clients for expenses clearly related to and

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required by particular matters. Akin Gump has endeavored to minimize these expenses to the fullest extent possible.

- 29. Akin Gump's billing rates do not include charges for photocopying, telephone and facsimile charges, computerized research, travel expenses, "working meals," secretarial overtime, postage and certain other office services, since the needs of each client for such services differ. Akin Gump believes that it is fairest to charge each client only for the services actually used in performing services for it. In these proceedings, Akin Gump charges \$.15 per page for internal duplicating and \$.25 per page for outgoing facsimile transmissions. Akin Gump does not charge for incoming facsimile transmissions.
- 30. No agreement or understanding exists between Akin Gump and any other person for the sharing of any compensation to be received for professional services rendered or to be rendered in connection with these cases.
- 31. No prior application has been made in this or in any other Court for the relief requested herein for the Compensation Period.

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WHEREFORE, Akin Gump respectfully requests that this Court enter an

order:

approving and awarding the final allowance of \$863,411.00 for (a)

compensation for professional services rendered to the Committee during the period from

January 7, 2003 through and including July 1, 2003;

approving and awarding the final reimbursement of Akin Gump's (b)

out-of-pocket expenses incurred in connection with the rendering of such services during

the period January 7, 2003 through and including July 1, 2003 in the amount of

\$41,232.64;

(c) authorizing and directing the Debtors to pay the amounts awarded

by this Court and

granting such other and further relief as this Court may deem just (d)

and proper.

Dated: New York, New York

July 30, 2003

AKIN GUMP STRAUSS HAUER & FELD LLP

Michael S. Stamer

A Member of the Firm

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New York, New York 10022-2524

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Co-Counsel to the Official Committee of

Unsecured Creditors

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