



## Telecom Decision CRTC 2012-528

PDF version

Ottawa, 1 October 2012

### Area code relief for area code 902 in Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island

File number: 8698-C12-201206152

*In this decision, the Commission determines that area code relief for area code 902 is to be provided by implementing a distributed overlay using new area code 782, effective 30 November 2014.*

#### Introduction

1. On 29 March 2012, the Canadian Numbering Administrator informed the Commission that the results of a general numbering resource utilization forecast indicated that area code 902 in Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island would exhaust by January 2016.
2. The Commission subsequently issued *Establishment of a CISC ad hoc committee for relief planning for area code 902 in Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island*, Telecom Notice of Consultation CRTC 2012-309, 24 May 2012 (Telecom Notice of Consultation 2012-309), in which it established a relief planning committee (RPC) to examine options and make recommendations for providing relief for area code 902 in Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island.
3. In Telecom Notice of Consultation 2012-309, the Commission directed the RPC to set aside seven central office (CO) codes for initial code assignments for carriers already providing service in the area served by area code 902, and 10 CO codes for initial code assignments exclusively for new entrants. The Commission noted that the creation of these CO code pools would advance the exhaust date for area code 902 to April 2015. As a result, in accordance with the criteria set out in the Canadian NPA [Numbering Plan Area] Relief Planning Guidelines, area code 902 was declared to be in a jeopardy condition.<sup>1</sup>

#### The RPC's submission

4. The RPC filed a planning document and a relief implementation plan with the Commission, both dated 23 July 2012.

---

<sup>1</sup> Paragraph 8.1 of the Canadian NPA Relief Planning Guidelines lists the conditions used to determine when a jeopardy condition should be declared.

5. In the planning document, the RPC evaluated various relief options for area code 902 and, based on its analysis, the RPC recommended that
  - a) area code relief be provided by a distributed overlay of a new area code on the area served by area code 902, with an effective date of 30 November 2014;
  - b) area code 782 be used as the new area code, and area code 942 be reserved for subsequent relief;
  - c) a 7- to 10-digit permissive local dialing period be phased in between 23 and 30 August 2014, with network announcements and automatic call completion for calls dialed using 7 digits;
  - d) mandatory 10-digit local dialing be phased in between 16 and 30 November 2014, with network announcements for calls dialed using 7 digits stating that the caller must hang up and dial the area code with the 7-digit number;
  - e) standard network announcements stating that calls made using 7 digits cannot be completed as dialed be phased in between 2 March and 2 April 2015; and
  - f) the proposed relief implementation plan be approved.
6. The Commission considers that the RPC's recommendations raise the following issues:
  - I. What relief method should be used and when should it be implemented?
  - II. Which area code should be used for relief?
  - III. Should the Commission approve the relief implementation plan?

**I. What relief method should be used and when should it be implemented?**

7. The Commission notes that one of the benefits of area code relief by distributed overlay, as recommended by the RPC, is that it enables subscribers to retain their current telephone numbers when relief is provided. The Commission considers that, in comparison with other relief options evaluated by the RPC, such as geographic splits and concentrated overlays, a distributed overlay is less disruptive to subscribers. The Commission also notes that this method costs less to implement than other options evaluated by the RPC and provides long-term relief.
8. Accordingly, the Commission determines that the area served by area code 902 is to be overlaid with a new area code, effective 30 November 2014.
9. The Commission notes that area code overlays require the use of 10-digit local dialing to ensure proper local call routing between the overlaid area codes. The Commission also notes that consumers require a permissive dialing period during which calls are completed regardless of whether they are dialed using 7 or 10 digits.

During the permissive dialing period, when a consumer makes a local call using 7 digits, the call is first directed to a standard short recorded announcement about the change to 10-digit local dialing before it is automatically completed.

10. With respect to the transition to 10-digit dialing for area code 902, the Commission determines that
  - the permissive dialing period is to take place between 23 August and 16 November 2014, with network announcements and automatic call completion for calls made using 7 digits being phased in between 23 and 30 August 2014;
  - mandatory 10-digit local dialing is to be implemented beginning on 16 November 2014, with network announcements for calls dialed using 7 digits stating that the caller must hang up and dial the area code with the 7-digit number being phased in between 16 and 30 November 2014; and
  - standard network announcements stating that calls made using 7 digits cannot be completed as dialed are to be phased in between 2 March and 2 April 2015.

## **II. Which area code should be used for relief?**

11. The Commission considers that it is a good assignment practice to use an area code that has not been used as a CO code within the area to be served, or in areas adjacent to it, because this reduces the potential for customer confusion during dialing. Since area codes 782 and 942 both meet this criterion, the Commission determines that area code 782 is to be used for current area code relief and that area code 942, for planning purposes, is to be set aside as the most suitable area code for future area code relief in Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island.

## **III. Should the Commission approve the relief implementation plan?**

12. The Commission notes that the relief implementation plan includes a detailed implementation activity schedule, a network implementation plan, and a consumer awareness plan. The Commission also notes that the recommendations and milestones included in the relief implementation plan are in accordance with the Commission's determinations in this decision.
13. Accordingly, the Commission **approves** the relief implementation plan.

Secretary General