



Telecom Decision CRTC 2017-32

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Reference: Telecom Notice of Consultation 2016-207

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CISC Canadian Steering Committee on Numbering – Relief planning committee recommendation for area codes 418 and 581 in eastern Quebec

Introduction

1. On 22 April 2016, the Canadian Numbering Administrator (CNA) informed the Commission that the results of a special numbering resource utilization forecast (S-NRUF) indicated that area codes 418 and 581 serving eastern Quebec would exhaust by March 2019.
2. The Commission subsequently issued *Establishment of a CISC ad hoc committee for relief planning for area codes 418 and 581 in eastern Quebec*, Telecom Notice of Consultation CRTC 2016-207, 31 May 2016 (Telecom Notice of Consultation 2016-207), in which it established a relief planning committee (RPC) to examine options and make recommendations for providing additional numbering resources in the area served by area codes 418 and 581. The Commission directed the CNA to chair the RPC.
3. In Telecom Notice of Consultation 2016-207, the Commission also declared a jeopardy condition for area codes 418 and 581.¹ It directed the RPC to set aside, at a minimum, ten central office (CO) codes for initial code assignments for carriers also providing service in the area served by area codes 418 and 581, and three CO codes for initial code assignments for new entrants.
4. The Commission received a consensus report from the RPC, dated 25 November 2016, which included a planning document and a relief implementation plan.
5. In view of the jeopardy condition in area codes 418 and 581, the RPC requested that the Commission approve, on an expedited basis, the planning document and the relief implementation plan.

¹ A jeopardy condition exists when the future demand for central office (CO) codes may exceed the available supply of CO codes. Paragraph 8.1 of the Canadian NPA Relief Planning Guideline lists the various conditions used to determine when a jeopardy condition should be declared.

6. The Commission considers that the RPC's recommendations raise the following issues:
- What relief method should be used and when should it be implemented?
 - What area code should be used for relief?
 - Is the relief implementation plan appropriate?

What relief method should be used and when should it be implemented?

7. In the planning document, the RPC evaluated five relief options: a distributed overlay option, three concentrated overlay options, and a boundary extension option.² The RPC recommended that area code relief be provided by implementing a distributed overlay of a new area code on area codes 418 and 581, with an effective date of 24 November 2018.
8. The Commission considers that implementing concentrated overlays would increase the number of separate number planning areas (NPAs)³ in Quebec from four to five, which would result in additional work since the new NPAs would exhaust on different dates and would each require separate relief implementation plans. Further, a boundary extension overlay would twice require relief by the projected exhaust date for the distributed overlay option. Accordingly, the distributed overlay method is the preferable option.
9. Given the jeopardy condition in area codes 418 and 581, the Commission considers that the proposed relief date of 24 November 2018 is reasonable because it will provide telecommunications service providers (TSPs) with enough time to implement relief and inform customers of the change.
10. Accordingly, the Commission determines that the region served by area codes 418 and 581 is to be overlaid with a new area code, effective 24 November 2018.

What area code should be used for relief?

11. The RPC initially selected eight area codes using the NPA Code Selection Tool on the CNA website. However, of these area codes, one was previously set aside and three were requested to be set aside.
12. Of the remaining four codes that the RPC selected, the RPC's analysis determined that area code 367 would allow for the continuation of local dialing and would minimize the cost impacts on carriers due to the use of legacy switches. The RPC therefore recommended that area code 367 be used as the new area code for relief.

² A distributed overlay superimposes a new area code on the area served by the area code to be relieved; a concentrated overlay superimposes a new area code on a portion of the area to be relieved; and a boundary extension overlay extends the boundaries of an adjacent area code to include the area to be relieved.

³ An NPA is a discrete geographic area within the area served by the North American numbering plan to which one or more area codes may be assigned.

13. In light of the above, the Commission determines that area code 367 is to be used for relief of area codes 418 and 581.

Is the relief implementation plan appropriate?

14. In the relief implementation plan, the RPC proposed a schedule for relief implementation and included the network and consumer communications activities that would need to be completed as part of the relief implementation process. It also addressed the activities, deliverables, and issues affecting more than one TSP.

15. The Commission notes that the relief implementation plan includes steps that are consistent with those identified in the Canadian NPA Relief Planning Guidelines. The plan also sets out implementation timelines that a TSP should follow to meet the relief date.

16. Accordingly, the Commission finds the relief implementation plan to be appropriate.

Conclusion

17. In light of the above, the Commission **approves** the RPC's consensus report, including the planning document and relief implementation plan.

Secretary General