



Telecom Decision CRTC 2018-58

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Reference: Telecom Notice of Consultation 2016-208

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Relief for area codes 236, 250, 604, and 778 in British Columbia

Introduction

1. On 11 March 2016, the Canadian Numbering Administrator (CNA) informed the Commission that, based on the results of the latest numbering resource utilization forecast (NRUF),¹ the numbering plan area (NPA) served by area codes 236, 250, 604, and 778 is projected to exhaust by April 2021. Area codes 236 and 778 cover the whole province of British Columbia, while area code 604 covers the Lower Mainland and area code 250 covers the rest of British Columbia.
2. The Commission subsequently issued Telecom Notice of Consultation 2016-208, in which it established a CRTC Interconnection Steering Committee (CISC) ad hoc relief planning committee (RPC) for the NPA served by area codes 236, 250, 604, and 778 to examine options and make recommendations for providing additional numbering resources in the areas served by those area codes. The Commission also directed the CNA to chair the RPC.

The report

3. On 22 November 2017, the Commission received a consensus report (236/250/604/778RE01A) regarding the area codes in question from the RPC (the report). The report included a planning document and a relief implementation plan.
4. In the planning document, the RPC recommended that
 - area code relief be provided by implementing a distributed overlay of a new area code on the NPA served by area codes 236, 250, 604, and 778;
 - area code 672 be used as the new area code; and
 - the relief date be 4 May 2019, which is 12 months before the revised projected exhaust date of May 2020.²

¹ The CNA began its yearly NRUF activities for Canadian area codes in January 2016 in accordance with the Commission-approved Canadian Numbering Resource Utilization Forecast (C-NRUF) Guideline.

² The CNA conducts a relief NRUF (R-NRUF) twice a year for NPAs that enter the relief planning window, which, in this case, is 72 months. The January and July 2017 R-NRUFs both indicated that the projected exhaust date had moved up to May 2020 from the April 2021 time frame determined in early 2016.

5. In the relief implementation plan, the RPC proposed a public communications framework and a time frame for implementing relief for the NPA. The RPC also addressed the activities, deliverables, and issues affecting more than one telecommunications service provider (TSP).
6. The RPC requested that the Commission approve the report, including the planning document and the relief implementation plan.

Issues

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

What relief method should be used?

8. In the planning document, the RPC evaluated four relief options: a distributed overlay and three concentrated overlay options. The distributed overlay option would introduce a new area code as an overlay on all 311 exchange areas in the NPA. The concentrated overlay options would each overlay a new area code over different geographical areas covering specific exchange areas.
9. The Commission considers that implementing concentrated overlays would increase the number of separate relief planning areas from one to two, which would, in the future, result in additional work since the planning areas would exhaust at different dates and would require separate relief implementation plans.
10. Accordingly, the Commission determines that the entire area served by area codes 236, 250, 604, and 778 is to be overlaid with a new area code.

Which area code should be used for relief?

11. In Telecom Decision 2011-451, the Commission directed the CNA to set aside area code 672 for area code relief in British Columbia. The Commission therefore determines that area code 672 is to be used for the relief of area codes 236, 250, 604, and 778.

When should relief be implemented?

12. The Commission considers that the proposed relief implementation date of 4 May 2019 will provide customers and TSPs with sufficient notification and time to implement relief before the projected exhaustion in May 2020. Accordingly, the Commission determines that relief will take effect on 4 May 2019.

Is the relief implementation plan appropriate?

13. The relief implementation plan includes a schedule for relief implementation as well as the network and consumer communications activities that would need to be completed as part of the relief implementation process. The Commission considers that the relief implementation plan includes steps that are consistent with the steps identified in the Canadian NPA Relief Planning Guideline and sets out implementation timelines that TSPs can follow to meet the relief implementation date. Accordingly, the Commission finds that the relief implementation plan is appropriate.

Conclusion

14. In light of all the above, the Commission **approves** the report, including the proposed planning document and relief implementation plan.

Secretary General

Related documents

- *Establishment of a CISC ad hoc committee for relief planning for area codes 236, 250, 604, and 778 in British Columbia*, Telecom Notice of Consultation 2016-208, 31 May 2016
- *Area code relief for area codes 250, 604, and 778 in British Columbia*, Telecom Decision CRTC 2011-451, 28 July 2011