



## Telecom Decision CRTC 2020-362

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Ottawa, 28 October 2020

*Public record: 8621-C12-01/08*

### Relief for area codes 289, 365, and 905 in southern Ontario

*The Commission determines that relief for area codes 289, 365, and 905 in southern Ontario is to be provided by implementing a distributed overlay of new area code 742, effective **16 October 2021**. In addition, the Commission **approves** the 289/365/905 relief planning committee's report, including the proposed planning document and relief implementation plan.*

#### Introduction

1. On 1 March 2018, the Canadian Numbering Administrator (CNA)<sup>1</sup> advised the Commission that, based on the results of the latest numbering resource utilization forecast (NRUF), area codes 289, 365, and 905 were projected to exhaust by November 2022. These area codes cover an area surrounding Toronto in southern Ontario.
2. In Telecom Notice of Consultation 2018-235 the Commission established a CRTC Interconnection Steering Committee (CISC)<sup>2</sup> ad hoc relief planning committee (the 289/365/905 relief planning committee) that was to examine options and make recommendations regarding the provision of additional numbering resources in the area served by area codes 289, 365, and 905.
3. A relief NRUF<sup>3</sup> conducted in July 2018 indicated that the projected exhaust date for area codes 289, 365, and 905 had advanced to November 2021.
4. On 2 November 2018, the CNA issued an initial planning document<sup>4</sup> to the 289/365/905 relief planning committee for its review.

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<sup>1</sup> In making assignment decisions, the CNA follows regulatory directives and industry-developed guidelines. As necessary, it participates in and contributes to the technical requirements associated with the planning, administration, allocation, assignment, and use of North American Numbering Plan numbering resources.

<sup>2</sup> CISC is an organization established by the Commission to assist in developing information, procedures, and guidelines as may be required in various aspects of the Commission's regulatory activities.

<sup>3</sup> A relief NRUF is conducted every six months by the CNA for area codes that are within the relief planning window of 72 months.

5. The results of the January 2019 relief NRUF delayed the projected exhaust date to June 2022. The July 2019 relief NRUF resulted in a further delay, to 22 December 2022.
6. The projected exhaust date remained unchanged in a relief NRUF report released in April 2020. The 289/365/905's relief planning committee's report and recommendations are therefore based on the projected exhaust date of 22 December 2022 for area codes 289, 365, and 905.

## Report

7. On 27 July 2020, the CISC approved and forwarded to the Commission, for its approval, the 289/365/905 relief planning committee's Task Information Form (TIF)<sup>5</sup> Report #1 (the report).
8. The report included a planning document and a relief implementation plan that sets out a relief implementation schedule. The relief implementation plan also includes documents that detail a consumer awareness program, a network implementation plan and the responsibilities of individual telecommunications service providers (TSPs). These documents are available on the [CNA's](#) website.
9. In the planning document, the 289/365/905 relief planning committee made the following recommendations:
  - the method of relief in the area served by area codes 289, 365, and 905 should be the introduction of a distributed overlay area code;
  - the new area code should be 742, in accordance with the Commission's determination in Telecom Decision 2010-213; and
  - the relief implementation date should be 16 October 2021.
10. The relief implementation plan includes the recommendations from the planning document, and sets out a public framework and time frame for the steps required to implement area code relief. It also includes activities, deliverables, and issues that affect more than one telecommunications service provider (TSP). It does not address activities internal to individual TSPs.

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<sup>4</sup> The initial planning document contains, among other things, an analysis of the various relief options and the CNA's suggestions for the relief method, the timing for implementation, and the new area code to be used.

<sup>5</sup> Within CISC, a TIF is a standardized form that describes an issue to be worked on by a CISC working group. All CISC activities are initiated by the completion and acceptance of a TIF. When an activity is completed, the working group prepares a TIF Report to document its activities, analysis, and recommendations for the issue initiated by the TIF.

## **Should the Commission approve the report?**

### **Relief method**

11. The [Canadian NPA Relief Planning Guideline](#) states that a distributed overlay area code is the only method that should now be considered in planning area code relief.<sup>6</sup> An overlay area code does not necessitate changes to customers' telephone numbers, as was the case with some other methods used in the past,<sup>7</sup> and creates fewer separate areas that may require separate relief activities in the future.
12. The use of overlay area codes requires 10-digit local dialing because of the need to differentiate between the same central office codes in each of the area codes within the same geographical area. In the area served by area codes 289, 365, and 905, 10-digit local dialing is already in place.
13. There are already two additional distributed overlay area codes in the area originally served by area code 905. Thus, the addition of another distributed overlay area code is the logical method for the provision of further relief.
14. Accordingly, the Commission determines that the area codes 289, 365, and 905 are to be overlaid with a new area code.

### **Relief area code**

15. In Telecom Decision 2010-213, the Commission set aside area code 742 for future use as a relief area code for area codes 289, 365 and 905.
16. Accordingly, the Commission determines that area code 742 is to be used for the relief of area codes 289, 365, and 905.

### **Implementation date**

17. The 289/365/905 relief planning committee recommended that the new relief area code be activated by 16 October 2021, 14 months before the current projected exhaust date in December 2022. That implementation date should provide sufficient lead time for carriers and customers to make the necessary changes to their systems to support the new area code. The scheduled lead time also provides a buffer should the exhaust date be earlier than expected due to changes in carriers' requirements for central office codes.
18. Accordingly, the Commission determines that relief is to be implemented by 16 October 2021.

### **Planning Document and Relief Implementation Plan**

19. The Commission notes that the planning document and relief implementation plan set out how area code relief is to be provided and include, among other things, a

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<sup>6</sup> See Article 5.1 of the Guideline.

<sup>7</sup> These methods included area code splits, area code boundary re-alignments, and concentrated overlay area codes.

schedule for relief implementation as well as consumer communications and network provider activities that are consistent with the steps identified in the Canadian NPA Relief Planning Guideline. As such, these documents set out implementation timeframes that TSPs can follow to meet the relief implementation date.

## Conclusion

20. In light of all the above, the Commission **approves** the report, including the proposed planning document and relief implementation plan and its attachments, and determines that

- the regions served by area codes 289, 365, and 905 are to be overlaid with a new area code, effective **16 October 2021**; and
- area code 742 is to be used as the new distributed overlay area code.

## Policy Direction

21. In accordance with subparagraph 1(b)(1) of the 2006 Policy Direction<sup>8</sup>, the Commission considers that approval of the report will advance the policy objective set out in paragraph 7(f) of the *Telecommunications Act*.<sup>9</sup>

22. In accordance with the 2019 Policy Direction,<sup>10</sup> the Commission considers that its decision can promote competition, affordability, and consumer interests, since it ensures that carriers and other TSPs will have an adequate supply of telephone numbers and can continue to provide existing and new, innovative communications services to Canadian consumers.

Secretary General

## Related documents

- *Establishment of a CISC ad hoc committee for relief planning for area codes 289, 365, and 905 in southern Ontario*, Telecom Notice of Consultation CRTC 2018-235, 11 July 2018
- *Code relief for area codes 289 and 905 in southern Ontario*, Telecom Decision CRTC 2010-213, 13 April 2010

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<sup>8</sup> *Order issuing a Direction to the CRTC on Implementing the Canadian Telecommunications Policy Objectives* SOR/2006-355, 14 December 2006

<sup>9</sup> The cited policy objective is: 7(f) to foster increased reliance on market forces for the provision of telecommunications services and to ensure that regulation where required is efficient and effective.

<sup>10</sup> *Order Issuing a Direction to the CRTC on Implementing the Canadian Telecommunications Policy Objectives to Promote Competition, Affordability, Consumer Interests and Innovation*, SOR/2019-227, 17 June 2019