

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

Issued by the authority of the Australian Communications and Media Authority

Telecommunications Act 1997

Telecommunications Numbering Plan Variation 2007 (No. 2)

Statutory basis

Subsection 455(1) of the *Telecommunications Act 1997* (the Act) provides that the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) must, by written instrument, make a plan for the numbering of carriage services in Australia and the use of numbers in connection with the supply of such services. This is the *Telecommunications Numbering Plan 1997* (the Plan).

Purpose of variation

The purpose of this variation is to specify additional geographic numbers for:

- Camperdown and surrounding area¹. Numbers commencing with (03) 55 are currently used in this area;
- Deloraine and surrounding area. Numbers commencing with (03) 63 are currently used in this area;
- Bundaberg and surrounding area. Numbers commencing with (07) 41 are currently used in this area;
- West Sector of the Melbourne standard zone unit (SZU), Craigieburn, Point Cook and Sydenham SZUs. Numbers commencing with (03) 83 and 93 are currently used in this area; and
- West Sector of the Sydney SZU, Liverpool and Bankstown SZUs. Numbers commencing with (02) 87 and 97 are currently used in this area.

The available numbers in these areas have been identified by ACMA as nearing exhaustion.

The variation also changes all references to the former Australian Communication Authority (ACA) to ACMA.

Background

Access to numbers is a prerequisite for access to telecommunications networks and services. There must therefore be an adequate supply of numbers available for allocation in a way that enables telecommunications companies to compete on equal terms and to ensure telephone users have access to the services they require.

Local services are an area in which competition and provision of new service types has generated substantial demand for numbers. Local services are delivered on geographic

¹ In this paper an 'area' is the standard zone units, sector or charging districts which share a common number prefix. For example, the Deloraine, Flinders Island, Launceston, Scottsdale and St Mary's charging districts share the existing prefix (03) 63.

numbers, identified by a two-digit area code followed by an eight-digit telephone number (for example, (03) 9963 6800). These numbers are used to provide telephone users with an individually identifiable local telephone service. Geographic numbers are the most commonly allocated numbers, with examples of services provided on these numbers including fixed-line telecommunications, access to the internet and voicemail.

One of the most important features of a geographic number is the relationship between the number and the area in which it can be used. This information has been a feature of geographic numbers since around 1960, and is understood and used by telephone users to infer the general location of the called party and information about the charges associated with the call.

In determining which number range to specify to supplement the existing prefixes, ACMA considered how to make available additional numbers in a way that would maintain the numbering pattern currently available in the areas in question. To achieve this aim and provide consistency with other areas across regional and metropolitan areas which have already been supplemented, the preferred approach for supplementing the affected areas is as follows:

- the new B-digit (03) 45² specified for use in the Camperdown and surrounding area;
- the new C-digit (03) 67 specified for use in the Deloraine and surrounding area;
- the new C-digit (07) 43 specified for use in the Bundaberg surrounding area;
- the new B-digit (03) 73 specified for use in the West Sector of Melbourne, Craigieburn, Point Cook and Sydenham SZUs; and
- changing the specification of the existing prefix (02) 81 for use in the West Sector of Sydney, Liverpool and Bankstown SZUs.

The specification of these additional numbers will provide sufficient numbers to meet forecast demand in the identified areas for the medium to long term.

Public consultation

Section 460 of the Act specifies that public consultation must be undertaken where a variation to the Plan will affect a number issued to a customer or if it is otherwise considered in the public interest to consult. Consequently, ACMA sought the views of the Numbering Advisory Committee³ (NAC) and also advertised and released a draft amendment for public comment.

ACMA received one comment from a CSP, a member of the NAC, and two comments from members of the public. These comments were considered by ACMA when it finalised the variation.

Section 17 of the *Legislative Instruments Act 2003* states that a rule-maker must ensure that any person likely to be affected by the variation – where that variation is likely to have a direct, or substantially indirect, effect on business, or restrict competition – must be provided with adequate opportunity to comment. ACMA staff believe that the broader

² Using the number (0x) 1234 5678, x can be referred to as the A-digit, 1 as the B-digit, 2 as the C-digit and so on.

³ NAC membership is drawn from the telecommunications industry, business and consumer groups, customer equipment suppliers and government agencies.

public consultation conducted under section 460 of the Act and the targeted consultation with NAC members meets this requirement

Section 461 of the Act separately requires ACMA to formally consult the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) before varying the Plan. The ACCC indicated that it has no comments on the proposed variation.

The Office of Best Practice Regulation Review (OBPR) has endorsed a Regulation Impact Statement (RIS) for this variation and advised that the best practice requirements for a RIS were met.

Details of Variation

Section 1 provides that the variation may be cited as the *Telecommunications Numbering Plan Variation 2007 (No. 2)*.

Section 2 provides that the Variation takes effect on the date after it is registered.

Section 3 specifies that the *Telecommunications Numbering Plan 1997* is amended as set out in the first schedule.

Schedule 1 Variations

Item 1-19 sets out changes to references in the Plan to the ACA to ACMA to reflect the name change of the former Australian Communications Authority to the Australian Communications and Media Authority.

Item 20 sets out a change to Schedule 2 of the Plan. The change inserts the new prefix (03) 45 after the existing prefix (03) 44. Blocks of numbers commencing with (03) 45 will be available for allocation to carriage service providers for the continued growth of telephone services in areas currently using the prefix (03) 55.

Item 21 sets out a change to Schedule 2 of the Plan. The change inserts the new prefix (03) 67 after the existing prefix (03) 64. Blocks of numbers commencing with (03) 67 will be available for allocation to carriage service providers for the continued growth of telephone services in areas currently using the prefix (03) 63.

The change also inserts the new prefix (03) 7 after the new prefix (03) 67. Blocks of numbers commencing with (03) 7 will be available for allocation to carriage service providers for the continued growth of telephone services in areas currently using the prefix (03) 8 and (03) 9.

Item 22 sets out a change to Schedule 2 of the Plan. The change inserts the new prefix (07) 43 after the existing prefix (07) 42. Blocks of numbers commencing with (07) 43 will be available for allocation to carriage service providers for the continued growth of telephone services in areas currently using the prefix (07) 41.

Item 23 sets out a change to Schedule 3, Part 1, of the Plan. The change adds the prefix (02) 81 to the numbers in the West sector of Sydney. Blocks of numbers in this range will be available for allocation to carriage service providers as numbers of local geographic

significance for the continued growth of telephone services in areas currently using the prefixes (02) 97 and (02) 87.

Item 24 sets out a change to Schedule 3, Part 1, of the Plan. The change removes the prefix (02) 81 from the numbers that can be allocated in the City Centre sector of Sydney. Blocks of numbers commencing with (02) 81 will no longer be available as numbers of local geographic significance.

Item 25 sets out a change to Schedule 3, Part 1, of the Plan. The change adds the prefix (02) 81 to the numbers in the Liverpool charging zone. Blocks of numbers in this range will be available for allocation to carriage service providers as numbers of local geographic significance for the continued growth of telephone services in areas currently using the prefixes (02) 97 and (02) 87.

Item 26 sets out a change to Schedule 3, Part 1, of the Plan. The change adds the prefix (03) 73 to the numbers in the West sector of Melbourne. Blocks of numbers in this range will be available for allocation to carriage service providers as numbers of local geographical significances in areas currently using the prefixes (03) 93 and (03) 83.

Item 27 sets out a change to Schedule 3, Part 2, of the Plan. The change removes the prefix (02) 81 from the numbers that can be allocated in Sydney. Blocks of numbers commencing with (02) 81 will no longer be available for allocation as broad geographic significance.

Item 28-29 sets out changes to references in the Plan to the ACA to ACMA to reflect the name change of the former Australian Communications Authority to the Australian Communications and Media Authority.