

## NUMBERING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

### Final minutes of Meeting 3 of 2004

Wednesday 25 August 2004

Held at the offices of ACA, Level 42, 360 Elizabeth Street, Melbourne

#### Attendees

Grant Symons	ACA	Chairman
Robert Johnston	ACA	
Susan Horne	ACA	Secretariat
Phil Sandercock	ACA	
Martin Vella	Primus	
Alexander Osborne	Hutchison	
Grant Young	ACCC	
Paul Johnston	Vodafone	
Guy Di Paola	Telstra	
Uyen Nguyen	Telstra	
Joe Gorup	Mobile Innovations	
Michael Elsegood	Optus	

#### Videoconference (ACA, Sydney)

Sam Mangar	Optus
Megan McEwen	INMS
Paul Teng	PowerTel

#### Teleconference

Bronwyn Asquith	DCITA
Phillip Mason	DCITA
Chris Drew	DCITA
Emily Cripps	DCITA
Mary-Jane Salier	WorldCom
Ian Proellocks	Telstra

#### Apologies

John Pack	ATUG
-----------	------

### 1. WELCOME

Grant Symons, as the new Executive Manager of Telecommunications Licensing Group, chaired his first meeting of the NAC. The Chair welcomed members and tabled the apologies for the meeting.

Optus asked that agenda items 5.1, 5.4, 5.5 and 5.7 be considered consecutively due to linkages between the issues to be discussed.

### 2. BUSINESS ARISING

#### 2.1 Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the NAC Meeting 2 of 2004 were accepted, without modification.

## **2.2 Status of Actions outstanding since NAC Meeting 2 of 2004**

At the meeting, ACA staff tabled an updated copy of the paper that outlined the status of the actions arising from NAC Meeting 2 of 2004. The updated copy of the paper reflected minor changes:

- noting the agenda item that various actions would be further discussed; and
- referring to legal advice received by the ACA confirming that mobile and geographic numbers can be used as ENUMs.

Hutchison raised an issue associated with Action 1/2/04, which refers to an amendment to the minutes of Meeting 1 of 2004 associated with equivalent service for ported numbers. Hutchison asked that the word 'minor' be removed from those minutes, as CSPs should be considered to have met their equivalent service obligations where a customer is aware of any difference between the services, whether major or minor. The ACCC agreed that the word 'minor' could be removed from the minutes.

Once this change has been made, NAC members accepted the minutes of NAC Meetings 1 and 2 of 2004.

**Action 1/3/04 ACA staff to update the text for Agenda item 4.2 in NAC Minutes 1 of 2004 to remove the reference to 'minor' differences.**

## **3. NUMBERING PLAN**

### **3.1 Report on status of variations to the Numbering Plan**

ACA staff tabled the paper that outlined the status of three variations currently under consideration by the Numbering Team. ACA staff reported that a copy of the draft variations associated with creating new standard zone units and the more efficient use of geographic numbers had been received the previous day, and would be circulated to members as soon as possible. ACA staff also reported that the variation related to short digit premium rate numbers was minor, and as a result of a request by the Senate Standing Committee on Regulations and Ordinances for additional clarity for part of the variation associated with premium rate numbers submitted to it for consideration.

## **4. NUMBER PORTABILITY**

Nil papers considered.

## **5. OTHER ISSUES**

### **5.1 Options for providing additional geographic numbers for various areas**

ACA staff tabled the paper identifying a number of areas running short of geographic numbers for allocation to CSPs. ACA staff outlined each of the areas and discussed the advantages and disadvantages of various approaches to supplementing numbers.

Optus identified the obvious linkages with the ACA's discussion paper addressing numbering options for VOIP services. ACA staff reported that the discussion paper would address the long term arrangements for VOIP services, but that various areas running short of numbers needed to be addressed in advance of this paper as existing demand for numbers may not be able to be met.

NAC members discussed the option of re-specifying existing BGS numbers for use as LGS numbers. Hutchison raised the issue of existing difficulties experienced by CSPs trying to correctly deliver ported BGS numbers to geographic numbers used to terminate an inbound service, and indicated that the same issues also arise with BGS numbers respecified as LGS numbers. ACA staff indicated that an available option that could address this issue would be to respecify a prefix currently identified as BGS for use in a particular SZU. However, additional work was required to identify whether this could be achieved.

Comment was sought from NAC members at the meeting, with written comment requested by 15 September 2004.

**Action 2/3/04**      **NAC members to provide comment on the options identified to address various areas running short of geographic numbers for allocation to CSPs. Written comment is sought by 15 September 2004.**

## **5.2 Process for notifications of variations to allocations**

ACA staff tabled the paper seeking comment on the process that should be used to notify CSPs of variations to existing allocations of geographic numbers.

NAC members discussed the three options outlined in the paper and indicated a broad preference for Option 3: notifying CSPs by email of variations that had occurred, and maintaining this information in a register on the ACA's database. ACA staff indicated that the usefulness of the process would be reviewed after 12 months.

NAC members also indicated that the information that needs to be provided is the number range, the name of the CSP, and the SZUs to which the range had initially been allocated and then varied.

**Action 3/3/04**      **NAC members to provide comment on the preferred process for notifying variations to allocations by 15 September 2004.**

## **5.3 Specification of shorter numbers for crisis intervention counselling services**

ACA staff tabled a paper seeking comment on whether NAC members supported the specification of a short digit number range for crisis counselling services.

Telstra staff noted that shorter numbers would be easier for people to remember, especially as crisis counselling is likely to be sought at times of high stress. However, a number of other issues were also discussed by NAC members that require further exploration including:

- number management issues such as how the numbers would be allocated and billed and probable need for network management through the INMS;
- the level of advertising that may be required to raise the profile of any new numbers when existing crisis counselling services are likely to continue to use existing numbers;
- administration issues such as the application of annual numbering charge, and
- the number length and quantity of numbers as these would be dependent on possible demand for new numbers. Issues to address when considering likely demand included:
  - services are already supplied on a range of existing number types;
  - providers of crisis counselling services which may have obtained a number through the smartnumbers™ process; and
  - the cost of moving to a shorter number may be more than remaining with existing arrangements eg telephone users are familiar with existing numbers, advertising, and changes to stationery, signage, etc.

The paper also addressed a comment regarding lack of access to Kids Help Line, a crisis counselling service, by some privately operated payphones. This lack of access is likely to be caused by private payphone operators blocking access to freecall numbers, from which no revenue is derived. NAC members noted whether making available shorter numbers for crisis counselling services may add to this problem, as any new numbers are likely to be freephone or local rate. ACA staff noted that this issue was addressed in its public review of payphone policy conducted during 2003, and the Minister is likely to consider the recommendations in this report during August/September 2004.

**Action 4/3/04          NAC members to provide comment 15 September 2004 to ACA staff on the issues raised in the paper.**

#### **5.4      Numbers for network specific services and trialling new services**

ACA staff tabled the paper seeking comment on whether the Plan should be varied to specify numbers for network specific services and trialling new services.

ACA staff outlined that this issue was being raised in the context of trials of new services and network specific services that could be considered as carriage services supplied to the public. Carriage services supplied to the public must use numbers specified in the Plan, and ACA staff are aware of instances where numbers not specified in the Plan have been used. The paper outlined the option of specifying numbers in the Plan which could be used for these types of uses.

NAC members noted that industry strongly preferred to trial services on numbers that would be available for the same service once a trial had ceased, and explored whether it would be possible to trial a service and have the Plan amended to allocate those numbers at a later stage. It was noted, however, that if this option was adopted numbers may not be able to be allocated for long term use.

Optus noted that industry understood the risks associated with providing carriage services other than to the public on numbers that may be required later for a carriage service to the

public, that is, the numbers or range would need to be cleared for any later carriage service to the public.

Optus also noted that it believed that the Numbering Plan currently provided little guidance with respect to how shared numbers can be used, and it believed this issue should be addressed. ACA staff indicated that there was scope for some issues associated with shared numbers to be addressed through ACIF, for example, advertising. Optus indicated that it may write to the ACA to progress this issue.

**Action 5/3/04      NAC members to provide comment by 15 September 2004 to ACA staff on the issues raised in the paper.**

### **5.5      Update on progress of Australian ENUM trial**

ACA staff tabled the paper updating NAC members on progress towards a trial of ENUM in Australia. The major issues addressed by the ACA were the call for expressions of interest for the Trial 1 Registry Operator and its selection, and rights of use associated with E.164 numbers and domain names. Optus noted that consistent rules relating to rights of use across all services were preferred.

NAC members also discussed reporting arrangements for the Australia ENUM Discussion Group, and its relationship with the ACA and NAC.

### **5.6      Update on the introduction of premium rate and proprietary network services**

ACA staff tabled the paper providing NAC members with an update on issues associated with short code premium rate and proprietary network services. ACA staff also provided a verbal update at the meeting on:

- the allocation of 2,000 numbers commencing with 19 when they were released on 31 May 2004; and
- ACA staff were still considering the form the instrument would take to address access control and consumer protection arrangements.

### **5.7      Numbering arrangements for VOIP services**

ACA staff provided a verbal update at the meeting on progress towards the discussion paper for VOIP services.

ACA staff indicated that the discussion is currently being finalised and is due to be released shortly. ACA staff also reported that issues associated with porting, preselection and competition will be addressed in a separate paper focussing on these and other non-numbering related issues. NAC members were asked to comment on the numbering paper separately, or to wait until the other paper was released and provide comment to the ACA at that time.

### **5.8      Report on the NAC terms of reference**

ACA staff tabled the paper considering whether the NAC terms of reference continue to be relevant, or whether they need to be amended to accommodate changes in the industry and regulatory environment.

Optus noted that it believed the discussion at the last NAC meeting could have been more focussed on the ongoing need for the NAC given that so many recent issues had been discussed in fora outside that committee. Optus asked that discussion under this agenda item also address this issue.

NAC members explored recent methods of discussing numbering related issues including whether future issues should be:

- discussed at NAC as the first point for all numbering related issues, with subcommittees developed under the committee to manage issues that require other input or tighter timelines that is possible through NAC; or
- managed by a committee that best meets the needs of the subject.

NAC members noted that the existing terms of reference for the NAC appeared broad enough to encompass any numbering related topic. However, it was noted that the prevailing approach to discussing numbering related issues outside the NAC could impact on the usefulness of any advice provided by NAC members. As a result, NAC members asked that they be briefed on those issues that might impact on NAC members.

**Action 6/3/04      ACA staff to ensure that NAC members are aware of any numbering related developments discussed in fora outside NAC that may impact on issues discussed by the NAC.**

## **5.9      Update on the ACA's new Numbering database**

ACA staff tabled the paper that provided NAC members with additional information about the timing for completion of the new numbering database.

ACA staff indicated that the 2005 ANC process had identified a number of issues which were preventing the new NUMB system going into production. The ACA has escalated these issues with QCOM senior management to expedite their resolution.

Once the system has entered into production, the ACA will run a training session in Sydney for interested CSPs. Alternative individual arrangements will be made for CSPs preferring training to be held in Melbourne.

## **5.10      Update on the smartnumbers<sup>TM</sup> auction**

ACA staff provided a verbal update on the progress of the smartnumbers<sup>TM</sup> auction, and noted that the auction of numbers for charities was continuing and the public process had commenced. ACA staff also outlined the reasons behind, and process to address the system crashes that occurred last week. In particular, manual processes had been put in place in the interim to ensure the system was functioning correctly, and the system should be fully automated, as intended by the middle of the following week. ACA staff publicly recognised the assistance and support of Megan McEwen of the INMS, CSPs and others during the time the system was offline.

NAC members also discussed the potential for warehousing or hoarding of freephone and local rate numbers and concerns about the volume of participation notices submitted by 1300 Australia. ACA staff confirmed its position that the auction is seen as the fairest and most transparent approach to allocating these numbers, and that the three year 'use it or lose it' provision was included to specifically address this issue.

## **6. ALLOCATIONS AND SURRENDERS**

### **6.1 Quarterly report of allocations, surrenders and permanent transfers of numbers**

ACA staff tabled the quarterly report of allocations, surrenders and permanent transfers of numbers between 24 April and 10 August 2004. ACA staff asked that NAC members consider whether this information should continue to be provided as an itemised list of all transactions, or whether an abbreviated format would be more appropriate.

Several NAC members indicated that both forms of reporting are useful, depending on the audience within their organisations. For example, some NAC members regularly provided the detailed list of all transactions to line staff with a view to updating/checking status of numbers held by that CSP. NAC members agreed that the existing format for the quarterly report was the more useful.

**Action 7/3/04** ACA staff to continue to provide quarterly report of allocations, surrenders and permanent transfers in existing format.

## **7. NEW ISSUES FOR NEXT MEETING**

### **7.1 Update on progress towards premium rate portability**

NAC members requested the ACA to provide an update regarding the progress towards premium rate portability.

**Action 8/3/04** ACA staff to provide NAC members with an update regarding the progress towards premium rate portability.

## **8. OTHER BUSINESS**

### **8.1 NAC meeting dates for 2004 and 2005**

NAC members discussed the proposed meeting dates for the last NAC meeting for 2004, and for the meetings to be held during 2005. NAC members agreed that the proposed meeting dates were appropriate.

### **8.2 Primo Lingo Service**

Primus outlined how the Primus Lingo service was delivered including:

- only US Primus customers can sign up to the service;

- only Australians in the five mainland capital cities can make calls to the US for the price of a local call;
- up to 100 numbers in each of the five mainland capital cities are on permanent diversion to provide the service; and
- return calls cannot be made from the US using the numbers on diversion.

NAC members discussed various issues relevant to the Australian regulatory arrangements including information provided to the IPND and law enforcement.

## **9. NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be held in Sydney on 2 December 2004. ACA staff asked for volunteers for a venue. Optus indicated that it would let the ACA know whether the next meeting could be held at Optus' Sydney offices.

**Action 9/3/04      Optus to advise the ACA whether it can host NAC 4 of 2004 in Sydney.**