

NUMBERING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes of Meeting 1 of 2006

Wednesday, 5 April 2006
ACMA, 201 Essex Street, Sydney

Attendees: Sydney

1.	Giles Tanner	ACMA
2.	Mark Loney	ACMA
3.	Suzanne Cumming	ACMA
4.	Mary Stavropoulos	ACMA
5.	Helen Papazoglou	ACMA
6.	John Pack	ATUG
7.	Geoff Brann	Powertel
8.	Mary-Jane Salier	Verizon
9.	Joe Gorup	Engin
10.	Van Le	Vodafone
11.	Sam Mangar	Optus
12.	Alexander Osborne	Hutchison
13.	Grant Young	ACCC
14.	Megan McEwin	INMS
15.	Teresa Corbin	CTN

Attendees: Melbourne

1.	Robert Johnston	INMS
2.	Martin Vella	Primus
3.	Guy Di Paola	Telstra
4.	Michael Elsegood	Optus

Specific agenda items only

1.	Chris Wong	ACMA	Agenda Item 5.3
2.	Harin Perera	ACMA	Agenda Item 5.4
3.	Andy Byrne	ACMA	Agenda Item 5.5 & 6.1

Teleconference

1.	Kate Jackson	DCITA
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Apologies

1.	David Havyatt	AAPT
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1. WELCOME & APOLOGIES

The Chair welcomed members and tabled the apologies for the meeting.

1.1 ACMA organisational restructure information

Giles Tanner, General Manager, Inputs to Industry Division, provided an overview of ACMA's recent organisational restructure. He highlighted that the new structure was not defined by "silos" (telecommunications, radiocommunications and broadcasting) but rather by commonalities between these in terms of inputs and outputs to industry. Each branch integrates these three areas across each office. The Numbering Advisory Committee falls within the Inputs to Industry Division, specifically in the Pricing and Policy Branch, which is headed by Mark Loney.

NAC members requested a copy of the new ACMA organisational chart.

Action 1/1/06	ACMA will circulate the new organisational chart to NAC members.
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Mark Loney, Executive Manager of ACMA's Pricing and Policy Branch informed NAC members that the Branch consisted of four teams: Resource and Industry; Regulatory Development; Projects and Coordination; and Industry Partnerships.

Robert Johnston advised that his team's work consists of Licensing applications, Numbering applications, smartnumbers® auctions and the Annual Numbering Charge.

Helen Papazoglou advised that her work on pre-selection, number portability and rights of use (Chapters 10 & 11 of the Numbering Plan) is now located within the Industry Outputs Division.

NAC members asked about the future of advisory committees under ACMA's new structure. Mr Tanner stated that the review of advisory committees was ongoing. The approach taken by ACMA is that committees that prove fruitful should continue and that any changes to current committees will occur following satisfactory consultation.

2. BUSINESS ARISING

2.1 Minutes of previous meeting

ACMA staff tabled the minutes of the previous meeting of NAC 3 of 2005. The minutes were accepted without discussion.

2.2 Status of actions outstanding since NAC Meeting 3 of 2005

ACMA staff tabled the paper that outlined the status of the actions and recommendations arising from NAC meeting 3 of 2005. All outstanding actions were noted as complete.

3. NUMBER PORTABILITY

3.1 Local Number Portability Exemption

No papers were scheduled for this item. ACMA staff advised that consultation for the exemption ends on 12 April 2006 and that the application will be referred to the Authority in late April or early May 2006.

3.2 Premium Rate Number Portability

ACMA staff advised that a draft variation to the Numbering Plan that would trigger an implementation date for premium rate number portability was close to being finalised. ACMA staff advised that following Authority consideration, the draft would be released for public comment.

INMS advised that a process to facilitate the movement of short digit premium rate numbers between CSPs registered with INMS had been implemented.

4. NUMBERING PLAN

4.1 Report on status of variations to the Numbering Plan

ACMA staff tabled the paper reporting on the status of variations to the *Telecommunications Numbering Plan 1997* (the Plan).

NAC members were informed that:

- the variation creating additional numbers for 3 areas will be submitted for Authority approval in May 2006;
- ACMA staff are considering public submissions on the variation addressing Numbering Arrangements for VoIP services and will prepare revised drafting instructions for Legal Branch. This variation will be discussed in more detail at Item 5.1; and
- ACMA staff are preparing drafting instructions to, or waiting for draft instruments from, OLD for the remaining variations 2, 4, 5 and 6. Copies of these instruments will be provided to NAC members once they are available.

5. OTHER ISSUES

5.1 Numbering arrangements for VoIP services

ACMA staff tabled a report on the status of the proposed amendment to accommodate numbering arrangements for VoIP services in the Numbering Plan. ACMA staff noted that 10 submissions were received and there was general support for the proposed amendments. Some of the issues raised in the submissions include the following:

- Emergency service organisations expressed concern about the adequacy of location data associated with VoIP services on geographic numbers; and
- CSPs indicated that service descriptions contained within the Table of the proposed guidelines would require some clarification.

NAC members noted the benefit in specifying a distinctive number range for VoIP services, given the inevitability of geographic number exhaustion. However, NAC members expressed concerns about the level of demand for the new number range and its potential rate of take-up. NAC members identified the need for the new range to be cost effective and simple for industry to implement as crucial to its successful take-up by consumers.

Other concerns raised during the discussion included the status of portability arrangements, including the cost associated with the porting of the new numbers, and routing mechanisms for new number range. It was agreed that ACMA would write to the Network Reference Panel of ACIF requesting that it consider the issue of call network routing for VoIP services in order to initiate the process.

The ACCC advised that the Commission could not declare the VoIP number range as portable given that the number range has not as yet been introduced and accordingly, it could not make an assessment against the LTIE test.

NAC members noted that the introduction of a new number range was a small part of the process, and identified that various other arrangements would determine the success of the new service. These include:

- the development and introduction of interconnect arrangements;
- portability arrangements;
- routing mechanisms for the new number range; and
- pre-selection.

ACMA staff advised NAC members that ACMA has a dedicated VoIP task Coordinator, Duncan MacAuslan, who is responsible for the coordination of VoIP issues across the organisation. NAC members requested that ACMA staff circulate the VoIP Coordinator's contact details.

Optus asked about the related issue of what happens to numbers that are held by carriage service providers that subsequently go out of business. Optus advised that with the increasing number of VoIP operators in the market, the possibility of business failure resulting in the disruption of service to customers was an area of work that the NAC should consider. ACMA staff agreed that further consideration may be required.

Action 2/1/06 ACMA to develop a paper to consider what options are available to minimise the service disruption to customers in the event of a CSP going out of business.

Action 3/1/06 ACMA to write to ACIF Network Reference Panel requesting that it give consideration to developing a network routing plan for the proposed new VoIP number range.

Action 4/1/06 ACMA to circulate contact details for ACMA's VoIP co-ordinator to NAC members

5.2 Proposal to specify through-connect services on 1223

ACMA staff provided a briefing on the status of the proposed re-specification of 1223 to allow through-connect services. NAC members were advised that ACMA staff were considering a staged implementation of through-connect services supplied on 1223. This was in response to a Telstra/Sensis proposal that through-connect services be supplied to calls originating on mobile networks initially with the possible extension of the services to calls originating on fixed networks at a later stage.

ACMA had identified the following benefits to this proposal:

- charging for a through-connect service on 1223 for calls originating on mobiles would not be as contentious for consumers; and
- pre-selection is not an issue on mobile networks.

NAC members sought more detail about the proposal to allow them to give proper consideration to it before providing comment.

Telstra also indicated that it had reconsidered its proposal for mobile through connect services and now believed that through connect services should be available to all callers to 1223. Adoption of the proposal to re-specify 1223 for calls originating on mobile networks would only delay implementation of the most appropriate solution.

Action 5/1/06 ACMA will circulate a detailed proposal to specify through-connect services on 1223 in an out of session paper to NAC members.

5.3 Update on the progress of Australian ENUM trial

ACMA staff provided a briefing on the progress of the ENUM trial. ACMA staff advised that a proposal to extend the trial had been agreed to by the Authority. AusRegistry and both registrars involved in the trial had sought an extension of the trial period by a further 12 months in accordance with the contract between ACMA and AusRegistry.

The Australian ENUM Discussion Group (AEDG) has met twice since the last NAC meeting. Discussion at those meetings had focused on the processes that will enable the inclusion of geographic and mobile numbers in the trial. The two registrars participating in the trial are developing authentication and validation procedures that would be used to authenticate the identity of a person wishing to make a registration and to validate that this registrant is the legitimate rights of use holder for that E.164 number.

The AEDG has also further discussed the proposal to undertake an independent privacy impact assessment of the implementation of ENUM in the trial as well as its future potential uses. ACMA has indicated to AEDG that it intends to undertake this assessment based on a template prepared by the Office of the Privacy Commissioner with the guidance of a Privacy Impact Assessment (PIA) consultant.

AEDG has also discussed holding a VoIP peering, ENUM and SIP workshop as a means through which to raise awareness of the possibilities for peering using ENUM.

5.4 Update on smartnumbers® auctions

ACMA tabled a letter responding to a request by INMS for guidance about the potential short-term activation of services on smartnumbers® to circumvent the 3 year activation rule. ACMA staff advised that the intention of circulating this letter to NAC members is to provide clarification of the 3 year activation rule, seek industry feedback on whether it may become a problem and, if so, discuss options for the way forward.

ACMA staff emphasised that although the Numbering Plan does not specify the purpose for which smartnumbers® may be activated, the underlying policy objective is that they be activated for genuine purposes. If it became apparent that stakeholders are attempting to circumvent these policy objectives by enabling temporary or short-term service activation, ACMA will take the necessary steps to address the matter. This may include amending the Numbering Plan to enable cancellation of the rights of use of smartnumbers®.

NAC members noted that it would be desirable to tighten the provisions now as it would be more difficult to take regulatory action after the first 3 year period has expired. Optus noted that it never considered the “anti-hoarding” provisions in the Numbering Plan as sufficient.

ACMA advised that there is time to make regulatory changes if necessary. The smartnumbers® auction process is approaching its third year. Those who purchased smartnumbers® early and have not yet activated them, would now have little over 12 months to activate a service on those numbers.

ACMA will consider the need for additional regulation after considering the responses to this open letter. Staff invited NAC members to comment.

NAC members were informed that INMS will be providing ACMA with a new report for monitoring services which remain un-activated. ACMA and INMS will discuss the matter with the NAC once the report details are worked out.

Action 6/1/06 NAC members to provide comment on ACMA’s letter to INMS.

Action 7/1/06 ACMA will report to NAC once the new report details for monitoring services which remain un-activated have been finalised with INMS.

5.5 Specification of numbers for Adelaide, Darwin and Perth

ACMA staff sought comments on a paper that had been circulated out of session about the specification of numbers for Adelaide, Darwin and Perth. The paper sought comment on the available options and recommended approach for supplementing three areas in Adelaide, Perth and the Northern Territory. NAC members supported the approach on all three areas. ACMA staff advised that the next step would be to seek Authority approval to draft a variation to the Numbering Plan and release it for consultation.

5.6 Numbering for SMS services

ACMA staff advised that it has been approached by a company which is proposing to provide an advertisement response service via SMS on the 13/1300 local rate number ranges. The company develops the software which enables this virtual dialogue with consumers via SMS. It works directly with advertisers across Europe and has recently launched a service in Australia on the 19 premium rate number range. They have advised that all tariffs are set a low standard rate of 25 cents per SMS.

ACMA is currently considering whether the proposal is consistent with the Numbering Plan. This company has cited the following reasons for their preference to use the 13 range:

- The negative perception of 19 numbers, presumably because consumers associate these numbers with adult content and that the cost of using services on these numbers is expensive;
- Operators block access to 19 numbers on pre-paid capped plans, which will restrict advertisers using the proposed services; and
- The cost of an SMS to a 13 number being far cheaper (25 cents per SMS) than making a voice call from a mobile to a 13 number, which will be timed and charged at mobile rates.

The company has advised that they have been in discussions with telecommunications operators and have received assurances that the technical requirements to enable data such as SMS on 13 local rate numbers do not pose any significant issues.

NAC members acknowledged that the SMS market is rapidly expanding. It was also noted that Telstra is currently providing customers with the ability to send an SMS from an SMS compatible fixed handset supplied by Telstra. CTN advised that this service would be beneficial for certain consumers such as the hearing impaired.

ACMA staff advised that it is currently considering whether the proposal is consistent with the Numbering Plan.

NAC members requested that ACMA provide written advice on its view in relation to this matter. NAC members also requested Telstra to provide information about its product which enables SMS from a fixed handset.

Action 8/1/06 **ACMA to circulate view on whether SMS services can be supplied on local rate numbers.**

Action 9/1/06 **Telstra to provide information about the Telstra product that converts text to voice**

6. ALLOCATIONS AND SURRENDERS

6.1 Report on number transactions

ACMA staff tabled the report on number transactions for the period 10 November 2005 to 31 March 2006. The report was accepted without discussion.

7. NEW ISSUES FOR NEXT MEETING

Optus suggested that the next meeting's agenda include an item on the options available to minimise service disruption for customers when CSPs go out of business.

8. OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was raised.

9. NEXT MEETING

The next NAC meeting is scheduled for Melbourne on Wednesday 26 July 2006.