N A N P A news

Provided by the North American Numbering Plan Administration

NANPA newsletter goes online

Beginning with this issue, the NANPA Newsletter (formerly NANPA Numbering News) will be available only in electronic format, and will be sent to subscribers through e-mail.

To subscribe, direct your internet browser to the following URL: http://lists.neustar.com/mailman/listinfo.cgi/nanpa-newsletter. You can also subscribe from the NANPA website, www.nanpa.com. Look under "frequently visited pages" and click on "electronic mailing list signup".

Carriers submit NRUF data

Per the FCC's Number Resource Optimization (NRO) Order, service providers are required to submit data concerning the utilization and forecast of assigned numbers to NANPA no later than February 1 and August 1 of each year. NANPA uses this information, along with other data, in developing the projected exhaust date of each geographic NPA in the U.S. Combining this information with data gathered for the area codes in Canada and the Caribbean, NANPA provides an estimate of the exhaust time frame for the North American Numbering Plan (NANP).

As of February 26, 2002, NANPA has processed over 4,800 submissions. When NANPA receives a Form 502 from a carrier, it performs a number of checks to identify any errors and notifies the service provider when a correction is necessary. NANPA performs this analysis on every submission, regardless of whether it is a new, updated, or revised submission. NANPA has also provided the appropriate NRUF data to the pooling administrator and received their central office code forecast.

Per the NRO Order, NANPA is to provide a copy of the carrier-specific data to state commissions with appropriate confidentiality protections in place. NANPA will make this information available to the states on or about March 11, 2002. ∎

Disconnected codes with ported TNs remain a problem

One of NANPA's most difficult challenges today is the disposition of central office codes assigned to service providers that no longer provide service or plan to discontinue service. In order to shut down service, a service provider must file a Part 1 disconnect request with NANPA at least 66 days prior to the date on which they intend to dismantle their networks. During the 66-day period, NANPA processes the application, the disconnect notice is published in the LERG, and service providers schedule the required changes to their switches.

Local number portability has made the process more complex. Codes assigned to service providers that are no longer providing service, may contain numbers that have been ported to other service providers. If this has occurred, the code cannot simply be disconnected because the disconnect would remove the default routing path, causing some calls to the ported numbers to fail. To avoid this possibility, the procedure for processing disconnect Part 1s has been modified. In the modified procedure, NANPA first requests a report from the Number Portability Administration Center (NPAC) to determine whether any numbers have been ported from the codes to be disconnected. If porting has occurred, NANPA attempts to find a new "LERG assignee" for the codes by contacting each of the service providers to which numbers have been ported. The new LERG assignee agrees to provide the default routing path.

In reality, things are seldom as simple as described above. The following are some of the complicating factors:

- Some carriers have torn down their networks without returning their assigned codes.

- Once the decision is made to discontinue service, service providers are reluctant to maintain their switches for the required 66-day period. In fact, some service providers have simply stopped providing service without returning codes assigned to them.

- Some service providers have allowed numbers to be ported from their codes after the Part 1 disconnect is filed with NANPA. If there are no ports at the time, NANPA requests the report from NPAC, the code will be disconnected normally, and default routing for later ports will be lost.

- The process of finding a new LERG assignee has proved to be complex, primarily because many of the service providers contacted are reluctant to take on the responsibility, and NANPA has been unsuccessful in finding a new LERG assignee in more than half of the cases processed to date.

- The new LERG assignee must submit a Part 1 to establish a new default routing path, which in turn takes 66 days to be effective. If the disconnect occurs before the new LERG assignee effective date, default routing will be lost for the period of time between the disconnect date and the new LERG assignee effective date.

Clearly this problem will continue to be a major issue in 2002. NANPA will continue to work with the service providers and regulators to find effective ways of dealing with these problems. ▪

NANPA annual report

The NANPA Annual Report for 2001 will be published at the end of March. The annual report provides an overview of NANPA activities during 2001, combined with "state of the resource" reports for NANPA numbering resources. The 2001 report also contains expanded contact information for the 19 countries that share the numbering plan.

The NANPA Annual Report for 2001 will be available on the NANPA web site under "Reports." To request a paper copy, send your name and address to ron.conners@neustar.biz. ▪

Remaining NANC Meetings in 2002

The North American Numbering Council (NANC) meets every other month at the FCC, located at 445 12th Street SW, Washington, DC 20554. Interested parties may attend the meetings. Meeting dates for the remainder of 2002 are:

March	12–13
May	21–22
July	17–18
September	24–25
November	19–20

Agendas for each meeting are posted in advance on the FCC web site, www.fcc.gov. Note that the meeting will conclude when the agenda has been covered. The second day of each meeting may not be needed. ▪

FCC releases third order on number optimization

On December 28, 2001, the FCC released its Third Report and Order on Number Resource Optimization (NRO). The Order addressed a number of areas that were raised in the First and Second NRO Orders.

In the Third Report and Order, the FCC reaffirmed that the Month-to-Exhaust (MTE) requirement for carriers is an important element in ensuring the numbering resources are used efficiently. Further, they concluded that the utilization thresholds established in the Second Report and Order were reasonable. The Second Report and Order established a utilization threshold of 60% that carriers must meet before receiving additional numbering resources in a given rate center. This threshold will increase by 5% on June 30, 2002 and annually thereafter until the utilization threshold reaches 75%. Carriers seeking growth numbering resources will be required to meet both the current MTE criteria and the utilization threshold.

Further, the FCC established a "safety valve" mechanism to allow carriers that do not meet the utilization threshold in a rate center to obtain additional numbering resources. State commissions were given the authority to hear claims that a safety valve should be applied when NANPA or the Pooling Administrator denies a specific request for numbering resources.

With regard to NPA relief planning, the FCC lifted the ban on service-specific and technology-specific overlays (referred to as specialized overlays). The FCC outlined a list of issues to be addressed before delegated authority to implement a specialized overlay will be granted. Authority to implement a specialized overlay will be granted on a case-by-case basis.

The FCC concluded that carriers that are audited and found to have violated FCC numbering requirements, or failed to cooperate with the auditor, may be denied numbering resources in appropriate cases. Additional penalties may include reclamation of numbering resources. Only the FCC Common Carrier Bureau or the Enforcement Bureau can direct NANPA or the Pooling Administrator to withhold numbering resources in such cases.

Finally, the FCC clarified that numbers used for intermittent or cyclical purposes should not be categorized as reserved numbers for NRUF reporting. To the extent that these numbers are working, they should be categorized as assigned numbers. The FCC also directed that state commissions should have password-protected access to NRUF data collected by NANPA. ▪

Unassignable Code Study Nears Completion

When NANPA took over central office code administration several years ago, a significant number of codes were designated as "unassignable." There are many reasons why a code might be so marked. For example, the category includes codes used for special tariffed services or reserved to avoid dialing confusion. For many of the codes, however, the purpose for which they were originally assigned was not clear from the records. In March, 2001, NANPA, in cooperation with the incumbent administrators, undertook an investigation to examine these codes to determine what they were used for and whether any of them might be returned to the inventory of available codes.

Working with the incumbent administrators, NANPA developed and published for industry review three lists containing 1,800 "potentially assignable" central office codes from 212 NPAs. In their responses, service providers and regulators identified certain central office codes that should be considered assignable, but should be assigned last. Typically, this new category includes the home and adjacent NPA codes and other NPA codes reserved for relief of the home NPA.

During this project, two state regulators requested that NANPA convene industry conference calls to discuss unassignable codes in certain NPAs within their jurisdiction and to reach consensus on which codes could be released. These calls led to the early identification and release of seventy codes.

From the 1,800 potentially releasable codes on NANPA's original list, to date, approximately 1,370 have been designated for release. NANPA will make these codes available in March and early April, with the exception of the codes that will be used "last." Some service providers will need to make changes in the LERG before some of the codes can be released. The next step will be to publish on the NANPA website augmented descriptions for each of the codes that remain unassignable. ▮