
Office of Utilities Regulation

Uniform Domestic Dialling Plan

Determination Notice



OFFICE OF UTILITIES REGULATION

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PURPOSE OF DOCUMENT

This document sets out the Office of Utilities Regulation's deliberation and decisions regarding the establishment of a Uniform Domestic Dialling Plan

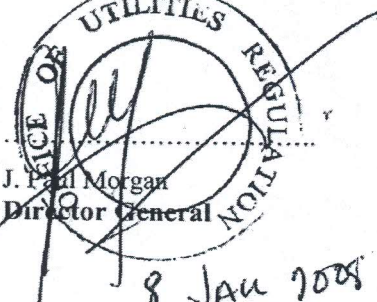
RECORD OF REVISIONS

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APPROVAL

This document is approved by the Office of Utilities Regulation and the decisions therein become effective on January 11, 2008

On behalf of the Office:


J. Paul Morgan
Director General

Date

8 Jan 2008

ABSTRACT

This Determination Notice sets out the Office's decisions for the establishment of a Uniform Domestic Dialling Plan (UDDP), in response to concerns expressed in the local telecoms industry that the manner of the incumbent telecom operator's continued use of the "1+" prefix as a toll indicator on domestic calls had potential negative competitive implications for competing carriers and service providers, and also in partial fulfilment of the Office's intention to review the National Dialling Plan.

This document summarises the comments of respondents to the Office's NPRM on the Uniform Domestic Dialling Plan and the Office's responses to those comments, and outlines the basis for the Office's decision.

Six policy outcomes that should provide the basis for the implementation, by carriers and service providers, of the UDDP which is intended to provide a single dialling standard for domestic calls within Jamaica are outlined. These are:

1. Establishment of a single national standard for domestic Station-to-Station Sent-Paid calls which requires the dialling of the last seven digits of a subscriber's 10-digit telephone number. This facility will provide dialling parity for all subscribers for such calls
2. Discontinued use of the 1+ prefix, as a toll indicator for Domestic calls
3. Use of the 1+ prefix only to differentiate between 7-digit and 10-digit dialling
4. The provision of a post-dialling "toll warning indicator" for consumer protection, while reducing the number of dialled digit for domestic calls
5. Mandatory uniform domestic dialling across all fixed and mobile networks in Jamaica

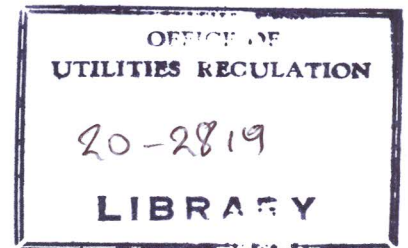
The Office concluded that a post-dial toll warning indicator in the form of an audible tone signal of appropriate frequency, level and cadence, may be provided by carriers to alert callers that the call to the telephone number dialled may be charged at a rate higher than that standard for a local call.

The Office recommended that an industry standard for a toll warning signal be developed in accordance with: ITU-T Recommendation E.180/Q.35 - **Technical Characteristics of Tones for the Telephone Service** and ITU-T Recommendation E.182 - **Application of Tones and Recorded Announcements in Telephone Services**.

The toll warning signal is to be implemented on a permissive basis, subject to a future review of this facility by the Office. The implementation of the Uniform Domestic Dialling Plan will not be delayed for the establishment of the technical standard for the toll warning signal.

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.0** Effective management and administration of the numbering resources established by the National Numbering Plan and their uses in relation to the National Dialling Plan is essential to the realization of the benefits of the public switched telephone network.
- 1.1** The Numbering Plan specifies the format and structure of numbers including any segments used for identification, routing, and charging purposes (e.g., country codes, area codes and central office codes used for geographic routing and distance sensitive charges). The Dialling Plan is the combination of digits and additional information that defines the method by which the Numbering Plan is used and may include prefixes, suffixes and additional information supplemental to the Numbering Plan required to complete the call.
- 1.2** The Jamaican National Numbering Plan is a subset of the North American Number Plan (NANP), which is the basic numbering scheme serving the United States and its territories, Canada, Bermuda and sixteen Caribbean countries. The NANP shares Country Code 1 under the International Telecommunication Union ITU-T Recommendation E.164, "The International Public Telecommunication Numbering Plan".
- 1.3** In Country Code 1 the NANP numbering resources at the NPA level are administered by the NANP Administration (NANPA), which is contracted by the U.S. federal government to a neutral third party. In Jamaica, the Office of Utilities Regulation (The Office) has plenary jurisdiction over numbering resources used in the functioning of telecommunications networks, including the portion (NPA, or area code, 876) of the North American Numbering Plan resources that relates to Jamaican telecommunications networks, and the development of numbering strategies as provided under section 8 of the Telecommunications Act 2000.
- 1.4** An adequate supply of telephone numbers, available through a uniform numbering plan, is essential to providing present and future consumers with efficient access to existing and new telecommunications services and technologies and to support continued growth of an economy that is increasingly dependent upon those services and technologies. A uniform dialling plan is similarly important. The benefits of a uniform dialling plan include reduced customer confusion, particularly in today's mobile society, and support for a consistent, fair and equitable competitive environment.

- 1.5** The latter principle was endorsed by the Industry Numbering Committee¹ (INC) and the Canadian Steering Committee on Numbering in the late 1990's when both organizations examined the need for a Uniform Dialling Plan and recommended to regulators of NANP-member countries that a Uniform Dialling Plan (UDP) be adopted. In conjunction with the migration to the UDP, the INC recommended that the industry address the need for the continued use of a toll indicator. The fundamental objective was the implementation of a 10-digit dialling UDP throughout the NANP area with the elimination of the 1+ prefix. The prefix is used traditionally as a toll indicator and to differentiate between 7-digit and 10-digit dialling where there are interchangeable (NPA and central office) codes.
- 1.6** In North America, there has been a steady move towards the realization of a 10-digit dialling UDP albeit spurred largely by area code overlays, that is, the use of multiple area codes for the same geographic area; the concomitant elimination of the 1+ prefix generally reflects state regulatory preference. In any event, the implementation of a 10-digit dialling UDP is a prerequisite for the expansion of the North American Numbering Plan as currently proposed.
- 1.7** The 1+ prefix is not used on domestic calls in Trinidad and Tobago and Barbados. The Eastern Caribbean Telecommunications Authority (ECTEL) representing the five Eastern Caribbean States (Grenada, Commonwealth of Dominica, St Kitts/Nevis, St Lucia, St Vincent & the Grenadines) which constitute the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States has proposed, in its current draft Telecommunications (Numbering) Regulations, the adoption of a uniform domestic dialling plan which eliminates the use of the 1+ prefix for all domestic calls; the 1+ prefix is solely to indicate 10-digit dialling to other NANP destinations.
- 1.8** In Jamaica, the non-incumbent carriers have eliminated the "1+" toll prefix for all domestic calls or are applying it permissively to facilitate customers who might use it out of force of habit. No alternative toll indication is provided on either fixed to fixed or fixed to mobile calls. C&WJ has done likewise except for fixed to mobile and fixed to 3rd party fixed calls. The 1+ prefix is also used to indicate 10-digit dialling to other NANP destinations and for domestic "888" Toll Free calls.

¹ **Industry Numbering Committee** - INC, a standing committee of the industry Carriers Compatibility Forum (ICCF), provides an open forum to address and resolve industry-wide issues associated with the planning, administration, allocation, assignment and use of the numbering resources and related dialling considerations for public telecommunications networks within NANP. The INC develops NANP Number Assignment Guidelines.

CHAPTER 2 THE OFFICE'S NOTICE OF PROPOSED RULEMAKING (NPRM) ON A UNIFORM DOMESTIC DIALLING PLAN (UDDP)

- 2.0** Indeed, the Office had signalled its intention, in section 8.2 of its "Determination Notice on the Jamaican National Numbering Plan", to consult on a National Dialling Plan. The Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) on a Uniform Domestic Dialling Plan (UDDP) for Jamaica, which was published in March 2007, partially fulfilled that purpose.
- 2.1** In the NPRM, the Office set out the basis for its proposal to institute the UDDP with the objective of providing dialling parity for all customers for all domestic calls requiring the dialling of a regular 7-digit telephone number and thereby satisfy the requirement for competitive fairness and equity for competing carriers and service providers in this market. Dialling parity in this context is to be understood to mean: equal dialling access provided to customers on all networks to reach customers on theirs and other networks. That is, no additional codes or numbers beyond the basic 7-digit telephone number are required to reach a telephone destination in the public national network.
- 2.2** The NPRM proposed six policy outcomes that should provide the basis for the implementation, by carriers and service providers, of the UDDP that would provide a single dialling standard for domestic calls within Jamaica. These policy outcomes are summarised as follows:
1. Elimination of variations in dialling patterns for domestic Station-to-Station Sent-Paid² calls in favour of a single national standard which requires the dialling of the last seven digits of a subscriber's 10-digit telephone number, and which comprises the 3-digit central office code followed by 4-digit line (or station) number.
 2. Elimination of the 1+ prefix, as a toll indicator for Domestic calls
 3. Use of the 1+ prefix to differentiate between 7-digit and 10-digit dialling
 4. The provision of a "toll indicator" for consumer protection, while reducing the number of dialled digits for domestic calls
 5. Mandatory uniform domestic dialling across all fixed and mobile networks in Jamaica

² A call in which the calling party dials the desired telephone number, the call is completed without the assistance of an operator (except under certain circumstances.), and the call is billed automatically to the telephone number from which the call is placed.

6. Dialling parity for all subscribers for Domestic Station-to-Station Sent-Paid calls within Jamaica

2.3 The NPRM asked for comments on the Office's proposals for the adoption of a UDDP. The Office also solicited comments on the following broad issues:

(1) whether all carriers/service providers throughout Jamaica should be required to permit customers to dial the same number of digits to make a domestic call regardless of the identity of the customer's or the called party's carrier/service provider.

(2) Whether carriers should provide an alternative toll indicator, such as an audible tone signal or a recorded announcement, in lieu of the 1+ prefix.

(3) What standards should be applied to any call connection delays, inclusive of that from any message or non-message alerts that carriers may introduce in their networks after the customer has entered the required digits for completion of the call.

2.4 Respondents were also encouraged to propose and explain the benefits of other options or alternatives in the context of the goal outlined by the Office.

2.5 The Office received comments from Cable & Wireless Jamaica Limited (C&WJ), Mossel Jamaica Limited (Digicel), Columbus Communications Limited (Flow) and Reliant Enterprise Jamaica Limited (Reliant). Replies to comments were received from Cable & Wireless Jamaica and Columbus Communications Limited.

2.6 The Consumer Affairs Commission (CAC), because of an understandable inadvertence, did not respond to the consultation. However, the Office considered the view from a consumer perspective, on the proposal to institute the UDDP, to be of vital importance in arriving at a decision. The Office therefore sought and obtained the views of the CAC in a separate consultative exercise.

CHAPTER 3 SUMMARY OF COMMENTS ON THE NPRM AND THE OFFICE'S RESPONSES

Cable & Wireless Jamaica Limited

- 3.0** On October 25, 2005 and January 13, 2006 the Office notified C&WJ of its desire to discontinue the use of the 1+ prefix as a toll indicator on domestic calls. In its response C&WJ stated: "... while not certain, it did not appear that there was a technical difficulty in removing the '1' toll indicator.
- 3.1** In March 2006, C&WJ stated formally regarding the Office's proposal on 1+ dialling: "...C&WJ is not opposed to the OUR's proposal, once it is technically and practically feasible...
- 3.2** However, C&WJ, in its response to the NPRM, said it considered " it prudent and in the interest of [its] customers to continue the use of the '1' plus toll indicator which tells [its] customers that the number that they are calling will cost more than a call on the C&WJ fixed network. Calls to other fixed networks are at least 300% more expensive than on- network C&WJ calls".
- 3.3** Earlier in the same response C&WJ asserted: "We remind the OUR that by way of letter dated February 17, 2006 and titled, 'Increased Rates From C&WJ Fixed to Third Party Fixed Networks', C&WJ had advised that rates from C&WJ fixed to call Gotel, Columbus Communications (Merit Communications) and ODJ are:..." The new retail rates were given.

The company stated further in its response:

(1) "Having been penalized by the anomalous fixed to mobile regime established by the OUR, where the mobile operators are allowed to set the retail rates, C&WJ is adamant that it needs to maintain systems that allow its customers to manage their spend and prevent ruin to its business. To do otherwise is irresponsible. Therefore C&WJ maintains that 1+ dialling is necessary to protect its customers..."

(2) "C&WJ's customers therefore had to dial the '1' prefix so as to alert them to the higher charge. C&WJ's policy in this regard has consistently been that where the customer will be charged at a higher rate the customer is notified of the higher charge by virtue of the use of the '1+' dialling format. This is a consumer protection device which C&WJ does not think it prudent to abandon".

