

## TELECOMMUNICATIONS NUMBERING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

### **Review of Number Utilisation Rate for Fixed Network Services**

#### **Purpose**

This paper sets out the Telecommunications Authority (TA)'s considerations and proposals to review the existing utilisation rate of 50% as the underlying criterion for new numbers applications for fixed network services.

#### **Existing Number Utilisation Rate for Fixed Network Services**

2. At present, the "Code of Practice Relating to the Use of Numbers and Codes in the Hong Kong Numbering Plan (Cap. 269)" (the CoP) prescribes that additional numbers application for the following fixed network services:

- the existing basic telephone service <sup>(Note)</sup>,
- personal numbering service,
- infoline service, and
- public non-exclusive telecommunications services (PNETS),

the applicant should have achieved a minimum utilisation rate of 50% with the number blocks already allocated to it. Regarding additional numbers application for freephone services, the applicant should have achieved a minimum utilisation rate of 70% with the number blocks already allocated to it.

3. The utilisation rate of "18" short codes had been reviewed in NAC paper No. 6/1997 and 10/1997. As a result of the review, the utilisation rate of "18" codes was set at 80%. The TA has no intention to review the 80% utilisation rate in this exercise.

4. Base on the record of Office of the Telecommunications Authority, by the end of 1999, the utilisation of numbers for those fixed network services described in paragraph 2 are –

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<sup>(Note)</sup> Basic telephone services refer to direct exchange line, facsimile line, Centrex line and direct-dialling-in line, etc.

Type of Fixed Network Services	Total Amount of Numbers Allocated to FTNS Operators by the TA	Total Amount of Numbers Assigned to Subscribers by FTNS Operators	Overall Number Utilisation Rate as a Whole
Basic telephone service	9,650,000	5,840,000	60.5%
Personal numbering service	1,200,000	422,000	35.2%
Infoline service	24,000,000	3,600,000	15%
PNETS	130,000	44,000	33.8%
Freephone services	24,000	14,000	58.3%

### **TA's Considerations & Proposals**

5. Following the review of the utilisation rate for mobile numbers application as discussed in NAC Paper No. 11/1999, 13/1999 and 3/2000, the TA considers that there is a need to conduct a review of the number utilisation rates for fixed network services since their inceptions in 1994.

6. Considering that telecommunications numbers are a scarce and precious community resource which should be used efficiently, the TA proposes that the numbers utilisation rate of the existing basic telephone service, personal numbering service infoline service, PNETS and freephone services should be increased from 50% to **75%**.

7. The TA considers that after the adoption of the proposed utilisation rate, the operators would still have adequate buffer to cater for the take-up of new subscribers. However, if individual FTNS operators could not meet the proposed criterion but still have strong justifications for additional number blocks, they may still submit their applications to the TA for consideration in accordance with the provision of the CoP.

8. The TA will amend the CoP to incorporate the above proposals if they are adopted.

### **Advice Sought**

9. Members and FTNS operators are invited to give their views and comments on the TA's proposals given in para. 5-7 above.