

## **Telecommunications Numbering Advisory Committee**

### **The Use of Paging Numbers by Mobile Operators in Secretarial or Short Messages Services (II)**

#### **Introduction**

In NAC Paper No. 21/1997, the Telecommunications Authority (TA) sought views and comments from members of Telecommunications Numbering Advisory Committee (TNAC) and mobile operators on the use of paging numbers by mobile operators in their Secretarial or Short Messages Services (thereafter simply called SMS). As a result of the consultation, the Office of the Telecommunications Authority (OFTA) received 4 submissions from TNAC members and mobile operators. Having considered the received comments and views, the TA would like to give his considerations in this paper for further consultation with members of TNAC and mobile operators.

#### **Summary of Comments and Views**

2. The received comments and views with respect to TA's initial views in NAC Paper No. 21/1997 are summarised below :

##### **Hong Kong Telecom CSL Ltd. (HKTCSL) :**

- In order to provide better service to the public such as call screening, privacy control, cost saving and communication enhancement, a separate number for SMS should be available.
- The nature of the service may be a better rule for definition of service type in the Numbering Plan and a mechanism should be equipped to allow flexibility and to cater for the growth of various services in order to cope with the exhaust of numbering resources of individual type of services.

##### **Hutchison Telecommunications (Hong Kong) Ltd. (HTL):**

- The current practice of assigning paging numbers to SMS users should be maintained.
- The use of customers' assigned mobile

numbers for routing cannot satisfy the genuine demand from customers for two different mobile and/or paging numbers.

- Due to the declining trend of the paging industry, there should be sufficient paging numbers for the limited number of new SMS subscribers.

**New World Telephone Ltd.  
(New World) :**

- Separate number for mobile's secretarial or SMS is beneficial to customers for call screening.
- New numbering blocks start with "7" should be allocated to mobile operators for SMS because general public views SMS is a kind of paging service and may prefer "7" numbering block to have clear distinction from a mobile number.
- For existing paging customers, they should be allowed to retain the paging numbers if they choose to receive messages through SMS within the same operator and cease the subscription of pager.

**Paging Operators Group  
(excluding Hong Kong Telecom  
CSL Ltd. and non-members of  
the Hong Kong Radio Paging  
Association) :**

- Paging Operators Group does not agree to mobile operators using paging numbering blocks for their SMS because :
  - \* SMS is a mobile network's operation which should use its own numbering blocks;
  - \* paging number blocks will soon run out if using paging numbers for SMS is to be adopted;
  - \* it is unfair to paging operators as the use of paging numbers for SMS will assist mobile operators to capture the paging subscribers; and
- \* the use of mobile numbers for call routing

makes more efficient use of the existing Numbering Plan and allows more convenient administration.

- Paging Operators Group supports the TA's views that existing customers who had already been assigned paging numbers for SMS may be tolerated, while new customers should use the mobile numbers for such purpose. This will be in line with the assignment principles of the Code of Practice.

### **TA's Further Considerations**

3. Having considered the comments and views from members and mobile operators, the TA has the following considerations -

- The TA maintains his views that for *new* mobile customers joining SMS, they should not be assigned paging numbers. However, for the sake of minimising customer inconvenience, *existing* customers who have already been assigned paging numbers may be tolerated to use the paging numbers for SMS even if they have discontinued the subscription to the paging services.
- Since there is a genuine need for customers to have a separate mobile number for the SMS in call screening, privacy control, etc., the TA considers that mobile operator can assign each customer an additional mobile number in accessing the SMS if necessary.
- In order that the TA can keep track of how many existing paging numbers have been used for SMS, mobile operators should keep a record of it and provide the figures to the TA if required.

### **Advice Sought**

4. Members of the TNAC and mobile operators are invited to give their further comments and views on the above TA's further considerations on the issue.

Office of the Telecommunications Authority  
15 January 1998