

Agenda Date: March 13, 2002
Item Number: 2B

Docket: UT-000202 – Petition
Company Name: Telecommunications General

Staff: Rebecca Beaton, Regulatory Analyst
David Griffith, Policy Analyst
Glenn Blackmon, Assistant Director

Recommendation

Dismiss the 509 NPA Relief Plan Petition in Docket UT-000202.

Background

On June 7, 2000, NeuStar, Inc., the North American Numbering Plan Administrator (NANPA), on behalf of the Washington state telecommunications industry, filed a Petition requesting the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (WUTC) approve a relief plan for the 509 Number Plan Area (NPA). The proposed relief plan was submitted with projection data that assumed the 509 NPA would exhaust in the Third Quarter of 2001. The Petition recommended the WUTC approve a second area code as an overlay of the entire 509 NPA and a ten-digit dialing plan.

On December 1, 2000, the WUTC ordered a local number portability thousand-number block pooling trial in the 509 NPA in Docket UT-991627. On December 28, 2001, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), in CC Docket 99-200, issued a national schedule for number pooling. Based on this schedule, number pooling was implemented in the 509 NPA on January 8, 2002.

In April 2001, NANPA updated its projection for the 509 NPA to exhaust during first quarter of 2004. The next NANPA number exhaust forecast is due to be released spring 2002 but will not include details of the 509 NPA pooling as the NPA was not in pooling prior to December 31, 2001. Rate center consolidation, the return of unused prefix codes, reduced demand for new prefixes, and a new forecasting method (Numbering Resource Utilization and Forecast “NRUF” FCC Docket CC 99-200, June 2001), have all contributed to a slowing of code demand and changes in the exhaust date for the 509 NPA.

In 2000, 88 codes were assigned in the 509 NPA with seven codes returned by the industry. In 2001, 61 codes were assigned with 87 returned by the industry, a net gain of 26 codes. There are currently 216 codes available for assignment, with 42 unavailable (these codes include test and special use codes) in the 509 NPA. At the current rate of code requests of three per month, the 509 NPA will not exhaust for over five years. In 2002 there may be a further reduction in monthly code demand due to pooling that began in January. The 2001 NANPA exhaust projection for the 509 NPA of first quarter 2004 may move out further once industry information is incorporated into new projections.

Area code 509 does not appear to need an additional area code at this time. The Petition was a recommendation by the industry using options, projections, and authority from the FCC based on 1999 information. Since that time, the FCC has granted states expanded authority including pooling and Service Specific Overlay, "SSO" or Technology Specific Overlay, "TSO", in considering relief plans for an NPA exhaust. These were not under deliberation when the initial relief plan Petition was filed for the 509 NPA.

The information on which the Petition was based is now obsolete and implementation of the relief plan as proposed would be in conflict with number resource utilization programs currently in effect at the state and national levels. If a new area code is eventually required in eastern Washington, a new relief plan based on then-current information and customer preferences would be appropriate.

Conclusion

Staff recommends the Commission dismiss the 509 NPA Relief Plan Petition.