

Publication of submissions to ACMA

In general, ACMA publishes all submissions it receives. ACMA prefers to receive submissions that are not claimed to be confidential. However, ACMA accepts that a submitter may sometimes wish to provide information in confidence. In these circumstances, submitters are asked to identify the material over

which confidentiality is claimed and provide a written explanation for confidentiality claims. ACMA will consider each claim for confidentiality on a case-by-case basis. If ACMA accepts a confidentiality claim, it will not publish the confidential information unless required to do so by law.

When can ACMA be required by law to release information?

Any submissions provided to ACMA may be released under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*. ACMA may also be required to release submissions for other reasons, including for parliamentary processes or where otherwise

required by law (for example a court subpoena). While ACMA seeks to consult submitters of confidential information before that information is provided to another body or agency, ACMA cannot guarantee that confidential information will not be released through these or other legal means.

New telephone number ranges introduced

ACMA has introduced new telephone number ranges for parts of Melbourne and Sydney and certain regional areas in Queensland, Tasmania and Victoria to supplement the existing ranges, which are running out. It is estimated these new number ranges will provide at least a ten-year supply of numbers for the affected areas.

It may be some time before numbers in the new number ranges are provided to carriers for allocation. The changes will have no impact on the cost of calls or existing numbers, but business equipment such as PABX systems may require reprogramming.

The changes were developed by ACMA in consultation with its Numbering Advisory Committee, which includes representatives from the telecommunications industry, business and consumer groups, customer equipment suppliers and government agencies.

ACMA identified five areas likely to run out of numbers in the short term—the Camperdown area; the Deloraine area; the Bundaberg area; the West Sector of Sydney and the Liverpool standard zone unit (SZU);

and the West Sector of the Melbourne SZU, including the Craigieburn, Point Cook and Sydenham SZUs. An SZU is the area to which geographic numbers are allocated.

ACMA manages the *Telecommunications Numbering Plan 1997*, which provides the framework and policies for telephone number allocation and use. The plan ensures that telephone service providers adopt the same approach to the use of telephone numbers, which means that a certain telephone number is associated with a specific type of service and call cost. The Numbering Plan can be varied to make additional numbers available or introduce new services. ACMA must conduct a public consultation for 30 days if the variation will affect a number issued

to a customer and is not declared by ACMA to be a minor variation, or it is in the public interest.

While ACMA received two submissions during this consultation, one was not directly relevant to the proposed changes. It suggested that ACMA should audit large customers such as government, with a view to compulsorily acquiring unused numbers to extend the time before additional numbers are required. However, the practice would most likely only recover a small number of numbers and the benefit would be outweighed by the costs to carriage service providers, their customers and ACMA. It would also require changes to the Numbering Plan. The proposal was not supported.

The other submission supported the proposed changes with two exceptions—that the new prefix for the Deloraine area should be (03) 67 rather than (03) 65 and that a new prefix, (02) 7x, should be used to supplement the West Sector of Sydney, rather than changing the specification of 900,000 unused (02) 81 numbers.

The first exception was supported because, while having no practical impact on customers in the Deloraine area, it will allow the Burnie area to be supplemented with the number range (03) 65 in the future. This range is adjacent to the existing number range for Burnie of (03) 64 and will be beneficial for customers. There is no adjacent number range available for specification in the Deloraine area.

The second exception was not supported. The West Sector of Sydney is a growth corridor and the current two prefixes (02) 87 and (02) 97 specified for use in the sector have not been adequate to meet demand when compared with other sectors in Sydney. Associating a third (little used) prefix (02) 81 with the West Sector now enables the specification of two prefixes (02) 78 and (02) 71 in the future to accommodate additional demand. If (02) 78 were to be specified now, the opportunity to introduce the third prefix and logically extend it with (02) 7x numbers may be lost.

The new number ranges are specified in *Telecommunications Numbering Plan Variation 2007 (No 2)*, which is on the ACMA website at www.acma.gov.au (go to For licensees & industry: Licensing & regulation > Telecommunications: Telecommunications regulation > Numbering > Numbering Plan).

NEW NUMBER RANGES

Area	New number range	Existing number range
Bundaberg, Queensland	(07) 43	(07) 41
Camperdown, Victoria	(03) 45	(03) 55
Deloraine, Tasmania	(03) 67	(03) 63
West Melbourne	(03) 73	(03) 83 and 93
West Sydney	(02) 81	(02) 87 and 97