

**Before the
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20554**

In the Matter of)	
)	
Administration of the North American Numbering Plan)	CC Docket No. 92-237
)	
Number Resource Optimization)	CC Docket No. 99-200
)	
The Wireline Competition Bureau Seeks Public Comment On The North American Numbering Plan Administrator Technical Requirements)	DA 02-1412
)	

To: The Wireline Competition Bureau

**COMMENTS OF
THE RURAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS GROUP**

The Rural Telecommunications Group (“RTG”), by its attorneys, hereby respectfully submits these comments in response to the Federal Communications Commission’s (“FCC” or “Commission”) June 13, 2002 *Public Notice* in the above-captioned proceedings.¹ The *Public Notice* seeks comments on the technical requirements that will be used in preparing the solicitation for the North American Numbering Plan Administrator’s (“NANPA”) next term of administration. RTG, in this proceeding, will be focusing on the North American Numbering Council’s (“NANC”) proposed technical requirements that relate to the Mobile Identification Number (“MIN”) Block Identifier (“MBI”) Administrator. Specifically, RTG’s comments focus on Section 2.18 of the aforementioned document, otherwise known as the NANPA Technical

¹ *In re Spectrum Policy Task Force Seeks Public Comment on Issues Related to Commission’s Spectrum Policies*, ET Docket No. 02-135, Public Notice, DA 02-1311, (June 6, 2002) (“*Public Notice*”).

Requirements Document (“NANPA Technical Document”).² RTG respectfully submits these comments because Section 2.18, as currently drafted, is based upon a false premise that NCS Pearson has been sanctioned by the FCC as the exclusive body for MBI Administration and that all MIN-based wireless carriers are obligated to exclusively contract with NCS Pearson.

While the FCC recognizes NCS Pearson’s role as an MBI Administrator, the FCC has never mandated that NCS Pearson be afforded the role as exclusive MBI Administrator for the wireless industry. The MBI Administration concept is strictly an industry-solution created by the larger carriers and directed by the MBI Oversight LLC, which is comprised of Verizon Wireless, Cingular Wireless, AT&T and Sprint PCS.³

Section 2.18 states that:

NANPA shall be required in the U.S. to work with the neutral third party Mobile Block Identifier (MBI) Administrator, currently NCS Pearson, for the Mobile Identification Number (MIN) administration for wireless LNP. All MIN-based wireless providers shall have to register existing MBIs and obtain new ones through the MBI Administration Group at NCS Pearson.

RTG respectfully submits that Section 2.18 of the NANPA Technical Document should be modified to read:

NANPA shall be required in the U.S. to work with the neutral third party Mobile Block Identifier (MBI) Administrator(s) for the Mobile Identification Number (MIN) administration for wireless LNP **and/or local number pooling**. All MIN-based

² NANPA Technical Requirements Document (Description/Specifications/Statement of Work), (June 13, 2002) (“NANPA Technical Document”); Section 2, General Requirements, Section 2.18 Mobile Identification Number Block Identifier Administrator.

³ See, e.g. Notice of Ex Parte Presentations: Wireless LNP Forbearance – WT Docket No. 01-184. Kurtis & Associates, P.C., Counsel for Missouri RSA No. 7 Limited Partnership dba Mid-Missouri Cellular, Illinois Valley Cellular RSA 2-I Partnership, Illinois Valley Cellular RSA 2-II Partnership, Illinois Valley Cellular RSA 2-III Partnership, Public Service Cellular, Inc., Farmers Cellular Telephone, Inc., Golden State Cellular, Northwest Missouri Cellular Limited Partnership, Iowa RSA 2 Limited Partnership and RSA 1 Limited Partnership dba Cellular 29 Plus. Ms. Caressa D. Bennet on behalf of the Rural Telecommunications Group (“RTG”) and Mr. John Kuykendall on behalf of the Rural Cellular Association (“RCA”). (June 19, 2002).

wireless providers shall have to register existing MBIs and obtain new ones through the an MBI Administrator rtion Group at NCS Pearson.

I. Statement of Interest

RTG is an organized group of rural telecommunications providers who have joined together to speed the delivery of new, efficient, and innovative telecommunications technologies to the populations of remote and underserved sections of the country. RTG's members provide wireless telecommunications services, such as cellular telephone service, Personal Communications Services ("PCS"), Multichannel Multipoint Distribution Service ("MMDS"), and Local Multipoint Distribution Service ("LMDS") to their subscribers. RTG's interest in Section 2.18 of the NANPA Technical Document is in regard to the grandfathering and administration of its members' MBIs. RTG's members currently hold NPA-NXXs codes and corresponding MBIs and have stated that they plan to request assignment of additional NPA-NXXs from NANPA at various points during the next five years,⁴ the term of the NANPA Technical Document. Accordingly, the terms of the new NANPA Technical Document will directly affect RTG's members.

II. Discussion

The draft NANPA Technical Document, as presently written, could give the false impression that carriers are required to use NCS Pearson, so long as it has been designated as an MBI Administrator. Although RTG understands that the terms of this NANPA Technical Document cannot actually impose additional obligations on carriers with respect to MBI administration, RTG feels that, given the present issues outstanding between RTG members and

⁴ See forecast information filed via the FCC Form 502 by many of RTG's members. (Carriers most recently filed this confidential forecast information with NANPA by February 1, 2002.) See also NANPA Technical Document, Section 1 (The contractor shall, at the FCC's discretion, perform the duties of NANPA from February 2003 through January 2008.)

NCS Pearson, it is important that the NANPA Technical Document not contain language that could be open to misinterpretation.

Notwithstanding the contractual relationship that the MBI Oversight Council, LLC has with NCS Pearson, because the FCC has never designated NCS Pearson as an MBI Administrator, let alone the only MBI Administrator, nor in any way required that the “industry” only recognize and work with one MBI Administrator to the exclusion of all others, MIN-based wireless carriers are not under any obligation to contract with NCS Pearson for MBI Administration, in whole or in part. Indeed, there are presently substantial issues between NCS Pearson and RTG members that, to date, have resulted in the refusal of those carriers to execute the NCS Pearson MBI User Agreement. Unless and until that agreement can be made acceptable to small carriers such as RTG’s members, NCS Pearson will not be designated as their MBI Administrator⁵. Further, RTG understands that the MBI Oversight LLC retains the discretion to replace NCS Pearson as the MBI Administrator. Accordingly, there is no reason to include the reference to NCS Pearson, as an entity in the NANPA Technical Document or to, in any way imply in the NANPA Technical Document that NCS Pearson is or ever will be the sole MBI Administrator. The language proposed by RTG above, would accomplish the same goals without creating any incorrect implications.

RTG’s members are operating under the reality that the larger carriers in the industry have determined that MBIs held by MIN-based wireless providers need administration to ensure that they are not assigned to other carriers when wireless local number portability (“WLNP”)

⁵ While RTG members have been able to agree with NCS Pearson on a “grandfathering-only” agreement which allowed those small carriers to utilize NCS Pearson for the limited purpose of grandfathering their existing NPA-NXX codes into MBIs, the RTG members have so far been unable to resolve their underlying issues with respect to the MBI User Agreement and therefore have *not* designated NCS Pearson as their MBI Administrator.

becomes an issue. Moreover, because the large carriers have elected to utilize the MIN/MDN separation as the means for implementing local number pooling with or without WLNP, the issue of MBI administration comes into full play now, whether or not there is a delay in the implementation of WLNP. As originally proposed, the draft NANPA Technical Document incorrectly indicates that the MBI issue relates solely to WLNP. While pooling-only could have been implemented without MIN/MDN separation, because the large carriers have elected not to do so, the issue of MBI administration is applicable in a pooling-only environment as well. The RTG proposed language also corrects this oversight.

III. Conclusion

For the reasons stated above, the NPA Technical Document must be drafted in such a way that makes it clear that the obligation exists on NANPA's part to recognize and work with any and all of the class of entities that may serve as MBI Administrators for all wireless carriers, not merely the one entity designated by the large carriers.

Respectfully submitted,

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