



**Telecommunications Regulatory Authority  
Sultanate of Oman**

# **National Numbering Plan**

**National Numbering Plan**

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## Telecommunications Regulatory Authority Sultanate of Oman

### NOTICE

The National Numbering Plan displayed in this document is in *draft form*. Although the Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (TRA) does not anticipate any major changes or alterations in the said Draft, however, its finality must not be assumed until approved and notified by the competent Authority.

TRA does not take any responsibility nor accept any liability regarding the accuracy of this document or its implications in any form or manner whatsoever.

Furthermore, the said Numbering Plan is subject to change from time to time after following the legal formalities and procedures for such change.

### Revisions

To reflect the prevailing planning or usage of the numbering resource, the information contained in the document may be subject to periodic revisions without prior notification

### Disclaimer

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## **Telecommunications Regulatory Authority Sultanate of Oman**

# **1 Introduction**

The National Numbering Plan sets out the rules and guidelines for the numbering of all types of telecommunications services in the Sultanate. The rules contained in the National Numbering Plan apply to all operators and all users of the National Numbering Scheme.

The plan also describes the current assignment of numbers within the Sultanate.

All operators are required to implement a numbering plan that complies with this National Numbering Plan.



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# 2 Defining the roles of the Authority and the operators

### 2.1 Guiding principles

The Oman Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (TRA) is responsible for managing the public numbering scheme and for issuing the National Numbering Plan. In addition, the Authority is responsible for developing overall national numbering strategy in the national interest of the Sultanate.

### 2.2 The Authority control of the National Numbering Plan

As the regulator of telecommunication industry, the Authority controls and manages the National Numbering Plan.

The Authority will ensure that the number allocation process is fair and transparent so as to provide a level playing field regarding the availability of numbers for all operators.

The Authority will review the National Numbering Plan from time to time and will update it as necessary to ensure its continued relevance.

Since numbers and codes are a national resource, the Authority will manage the National Numbering Plan in the interest of the whole Sultanate.

### 2.3 Responsibilities of the Authority

The Authority will take into account of the following guiding principles when managing, allocating, and reserving numbers:

- the Authority will manage the National Numbering Plan to ensure that, as far as possible, there are sufficient numbers available to meet all reasonable demands that end users and operators might have.
- As far as possible, the Authority will be fair, equitable and transparent in the processes adopted for numbering allocation.
- The National Numbering Plan will, where applicable, be fully compatible with all relevant international agreements, standards and recommendations.



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- The National Numbering Plan will, wherever possible, be formatted to ensure that numbers of different types give a broad indication of the service and the tariff.
- the Authority will ensure that, where changes are made to the designated numbering plan, costs or inconvenience to consumers and operators are objectively justified, and are kept to the minimum consistent with meeting the demands for numbers and for sound management of the National Numbering Plan.
- the Authority will allocate or reserve numbers in a fair and equitable manner. The allocation or reservation will normally be done on a 'first come first served' basis, with allocations made to the first operator who requests the block or code.
- Numbering capacity will only be allocated to or reserve for operators who meet the eligibility criteria set out in the following standards.
- the Authority will take into account the need to anticipate growth and to innovative in the demand for telecommunications services and, when allocating numbers, will consider the need to conserve numbering capacity in all ranges. In particular, the utilisation of previous numbering allocations, including any numbers made available for porting, will be taken into account when considering new requests for number allocations.

### 2.4 The Authorities' Guidelines

Those operators who have received allocations of numbers or codes shall act in accordance with the following principles:

- operators must adopt and publish a numbering plan for such numbers or codes as are allocated to them. This must be in accordance with the National Numbering Plan
- operators must use the numbers for the purpose stipulated at the time of the allocation and must comply with the relevant terms and conditions of the allocation. Non-compliance by an operator will be considered as a violation of the licence conditions.
- Operators must provide any information to the Authority upon request regarding their use of numbers from the allocations received, and must submit an annual information return as specified in the National Numbering Plan

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- Operators shall be efficient in their use of numbers
- In advertising and other publicity material, operators shall not brand numbers, nor associate a number range with a given operator.
- Neither operators nor users have any ownership rights over any numbers allocated by the Authority.

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### **3 Review and amendment of the National Numbering Plan**

The Authority may from time to time amend or withdraw in full or in part the National Numbering Plan already published, or publish additional sections to the National Numbering Plan. Where appropriate, this will take place only after consulting with the relevant operators, end users, and other relevant stakeholders.

In these circumstances, the normal consultation period will be 90 days. However, in exceptional circumstances, a shorter consultation period of not less than 30 days may be appropriate.

Operators will not be required to comply with any such amendment or withdrawal, unless they have been given a reasonable period of notice, such notice being not less than 90 days.



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# 4 Overview of National Number Plan

### 4.1 National Numbering assignments

The following number ranges are currently assigned:

Range	Use	Number of digits
2xx xxx	Dhofar	6
3xx xxx	Izki, Samail, Fanja, PDO	6
4xx xxx	Ibra, Bahla, Firq, Sur, Ibri, (MOD Slh)	6
5xx xxx	Azaiba, Al-Khoudh, Maabella, Wattaya, Ghala,	6
6xx xxx	MOD, Seeb, Rusail, Qurum, Buraimi, PDO, Al-Khuwair	6
7 xxx xxx	Wadi Kabir, Hamriya	7
7xx xxx	Muttrah, Muscat, G/Muttrah	6
8xx xxx	Sohar, Saham, Suwaiq, Musana, Barka, Rostaq, Khaburah, Khassab	6
91 xxx xx	Paging	7
92/3/4/8 xxx xx	GSM (Post Paid)	7
90/5/6/7 xxx xx	GSM (Pre Paid)	7

#### 4.1.1 The existing dialling plan

In addition to the numbering plan, the following national dialling plan numbers are also assigned:

Dialling plan range	Use
1 xx/xxx	Public Services
999	Emergency Services
00	International Access

### 4.2 Country code

The country code allocated by the International Telecommunications Union (ITU-T) to the Sultanate is 968. This code follows the international dialling prefix on calls made from outside the Sultanate, and should be followed by the National Significant Number of the destination within the Sultanate.



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### **4.3 Measures for conservation of numbering capacity**

Geographic numbers will normally be allocated to applicants in blocks of 1,000 consecutive numbers from within the appropriate zone code range. However, in those areas where there is a potential numbering shortage, or in other circumstances determined by the Authority, numbers may be allocated in sub blocks of less than 1,000 numbers.

Accordingly, conservation measures will not only enable the Authority to delay implementing code changes, but may remove the need for some code changes altogether.

Where appropriate, the Authority will publish and revise as appropriate a list of areas where there is a potential shortage of numbers and where conservation measures are deemed to be necessary and appropriate (“Conservation Areas”). The assessment of what constitutes a Conservation Area takes into account the audit returns, actual allocations over recent years, and the Authority’s knowledge of local factors.

### **4.4 Future expansion numbering range**

The Authority is planning a new numbering plan to expand the numbering resources available for all telecommunication services. Details of the plan and migration procedures are expected to be announced during 2004.



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# 5 Dialling Plan for public service codes (1XX and 999)

### 5.1 Use of short codes

Dialling Plan numbers beginning with digit 1 and the code 999 are used for access to public services. These numbers are only reachable from within the Sultanate.

### 5.2 Code length

Currently these codes are typically 3 or 4 digits long i.e. 1XX and 1XXX. But will be soon standardized to 4 digits in length

### 5.3 Categorisation of short codes

The Authority will categorise access codes by the type of service for which they are used. There are two types of access codes: Types A and B.

#### **Type A access codes – Common public services**

Type A access codes are used by callers to reach commonly used services, such as '999' for police. Type A codes will be designated individually by the Authority for such services, and will not be allocated to any particular operator.

All operators must use these codes for their designated purposes, and not for any other service.

#### **Type B access codes - Network specific services**

Type B access codes have network-wide significance and are used by callers to access telecommunication services available from their own operator's system or another public operator's system.

These codes are allocated by the Authority and are unique to a particular operator.

### 5.4 Other access codes

Other access codes are set aside for independent use by operators, to provide particular services exclusively to their directly connected end user. Operators of different systems have the opportunity to choose corresponding codes where it is convenient and potentially beneficial to adopt a common approach, but are not obliged to do so.

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The Authority will designate a range of codes for this purpose, but it will not allocate codes. The codes in use by each operator will however be recorded in the National Numbering Plan database.

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## **6 Management of the National Numbering Plan**

The Authority shall be responsible for the overall management of the National Numbering Plan.

The Authority will undertake any tasks, or require the operators to undertake any tasks that it considers necessary, in order to allow it to manage the National Numbering Plan.

### **6.1 The audit process**

Each holder of an allocation shall submit to the Authority an 'Annual Numbering Return'. The Annual Numbering Return shall refer to information at the calendar year end and shall be submitted to the Authority as requested, but usually within 45 days of the end of that year.

The following information shall be provided in the Annual Numbering Return for each allocation:

- the current use of the allocation
- numbers in service allocated to end users
- details of numbers set aside for planned growth, customer orders or other usage, with explanations
- blocks of numbers allocated to any person for purposes other than to end users, and

Each Annual Numbering Return shall also provide:

- a three year forecast of demand within significant ranges, as specified by the Authority
- the justification for continuing reservation by the operator of numbering capacity, and
- any other information requested by the Authority.

This information shall be supplied in a format specified by the Authority. The Authority will not require information where the collection or analysis of the information would place an undue burden on the organisation submitting the Annual Numbering Return.



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### **6.2 Annual numbering report**

The Authority will prepare and publish an annual numbering report on the organisation and use of the National Numbering Plan.

### **6.3 Re-allocating, withdrawing and return of numbers or codes**

#### **Withdrawal**

The Authority can withdraw capacity, or part of the capacity that it has allocated, if its continued use or allocation is not in compliance with:

- the Standards
- the National Numbering Plan, or
- any specific conditions of the allocation.

Withdrawal of an in-service numbering range, which has been allocated by the Authority, can be made only after the Authority has consulted with interested parties for a period of not less than 45 days. It will be subject to a period of notice of not less than 90 days following that consultation.

If an allocation or part of an allocation is not brought into service within six months, it may be withdrawn, after consultation with such interested parties and for such period as specified in the Standards above. Such withdrawal will be subject to a notice period of not less than 90 days following that consultation.

#### **Return of allocations**

If an operator no longer requires the use of an allocation that has been made, then the allocation should be returned to the Authority at the earliest opportunity.

On the return of a numbering allocation, the Authority will refund any number charges paid for the remaining quarters of the year that have not yet commenced.

Only complete blocks can be returned. The Authority will not accept partial return of any blocks.

### **6.4 Liability on withdrawal and re-allocation**

In the event that an allocation has to be withdrawn at the request of the Authority and an alternative re-allocation made (for example in order to invoke a change to the National Numbering Plan), then the Authority will, as far as possible, endeavour to make a re-allocation of a similar “standard” number.

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However, notwithstanding the above, the Authority will accept no liability (financial or otherwise) in the event of withdrawal and re-allocation.

### **6.5 Requirement to notify others**

When activating a number allocation, it is the responsibility of the holder of the allocation to notify all relevant operators in the Sultanate and, where appropriate, overseas authorities. This will be done within a timescale agreed between the operators and/or organisations.

Those who have been allocated numbering capacity are required to advise the Authority, on an ongoing basis, of the contact in their organisations to whom notifications of the dates for activation of the allocated codes and number blocks should be sent.

The Authority will maintain a list of such contacts and will make it available on request to all organisations listed on it, as well as others who, in the Authority's opinion, have need of that information.

### **6.6 National Numbering Plan records and database**

The Authority will maintain comprehensive records and a database of the status of all number ranges, codes and blocks of numbers within the National Numbering Plan. The full National Numbering Plan will be set out in a document maintained by the Authority. This will be made available to all relevant parties as required.

Where available and not commercially sensitive, details of the operator's plans for reserved numbering will be included in the National Numbering Plan. However, those requiring further details of reservations are advised to contact the person for whom the code or block of numbers has been reserved.

#### **Publication of changes**

In addition to updating the National Numbering Plan, the Authority will publish (at appropriate intervals of time) details of allocations, reservations or withdrawals. This will set out the number range(s) being allocated, reserved or withdrawn, the person to whom the allocation has been made or from whom it has been withdrawn, and the action date.



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### **6.7 Status indicators**

The Authority will structure the National Numbering Plan so that all numbers or codes will fall into one of two categories: either designated or not designated.

Designated numbers or codes are those set aside within the National Numbering Plan for particular usage: e.g. PSTN geographic, mobile etc.

Designation is no indication of the availability of a number or code or otherwise.

Those parts of the National Numbering Plan that are not designated are not available for allocation or reservation.



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# 7 Application for number allocations and reservations

### 7.1 Criteria for eligibility of applicants

All licensed operators providing publicly available telecommunications services and / or running a licensed telecommunication system are eligible to apply for allocations and reservations of numbering capacity.

Other persons (e.g. users) who require the use of numbers must seek an allocation from an eligible operator.

### 7.2 Information to be supplied by an applicant for a numbering allocation and/or reservation

When applying for an allocation or reservation of numbering capacity, the applicant shall apply in writing and should provide the following information to the Authority:

- Name and contact details of the applicant, specifying the full registered name and registered postal address of the business, name of the contact person responsible, and his/her contact telephone and fax numbers, e-mail address and web site if available.
- Where a person submits an application form on behalf of the applicant, a signed and dated letter of authorisation shall accompany it from that applicant.
- Where relevant, details of the type of telecommunications service intended on the range (including qualitative and quantitative characteristics of the service), and the proposed tariff rate of the service.
- Expected starting date of the service.
- A preferred numbering code and/or block and, where appropriate, second and third preferences should be indicated.
- The estimated need for numbers and number series, supported by forecast plans for the telecommunications services in question for a 5-year period. Note: This information is not required in the case of individual numbers
- Details of the relevant telecommunications licence or authorisation under which the applicant intends to operate the numbering capacity sought and of the system being operated.
- Details of the operator's interconnection and number portability arrangements.



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- Details of any existing ranges held that are relevant to that application.
- Details of the applicant's utilisation of existing number allocations. For example:
  - Numbers in service allocated to end users
  - Capacity not currently in use
  - Numbers set aside for geographic growth or customer orders,
  - A forecast of expected utilisation over a specified period and anticipated exhaustion date of current allocation
  - Any other information that the applicant considers necessary or appropriate to justify the application.
- 

In addition, applicants shall provide to the Authority any other information judged by the Authority to be relevant to the application, and the supply of which does not place an undue burden on the applicant. This may include a brief description of the applicant's technical and operational system configuration.

If the Authority cannot make the allocation based on the information supplied on the original application form or accompanying documentation, then it will request for additional details in writing.

### **7.3 Timing of applications**

Applications for numbering allocations should not, in general, be made more than six months prior to the planned in-service date.

Allocations are usually be made for a minimum 12-month period, based on the forecast information provided. However, in exceptional circumstances, the Authority may make allocations for a shorter period. If it chooses to make an allocation for a shorter period, then the Authority will provide the applicant with the reasoning behind this decision.

If an operator has been allocated numbers within the last 12 months for the same service or service area, and then requests an additional allocation, then the operator must provide an explanation as to why this further allocation is being requested.



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### 7.4 Reserving numbers or codes

#### 7.4.1 Making reservations

In addition to allocating numbering capacity, the Authority may, at its discretion, agree to reserve numbering capacity to licensed operators.

Reservations are appropriate where:

- an applicant does not want to be identified
- reasons for the application should not be divulged prior to an application for the allocation, or
- a customer order has not been finalised.

A reservation may be made:

- in anticipation of an application being made for numbering capacity in accordance with a three year rolling forecast provided by licensed operators entitled to apply for an allocation, or
- against a specific request submitted by an operator eligible to receive allocations (e.g. for the expansion or growth of existing services, or for the introduction of new services).

An application for reservation shall be made to the Authority in accordance with these standards. Applications for reservations will be treated in confidence, unless the applicant requests otherwise.

#### 7.4.2 Limitations

Wherever possible, the Authority will endeavour to convert a reservation into an allocation within 15 days. However, it should be noted that a reservation does not automatically entitle an applicant to activate the capacity. Nor, where numbering capacity is reserved, is there any guarantee that a corresponding allocation will subsequently be made.

Reservations will normally be limited to a period of three months. Reservations may be renewable on request to the Authority.



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### 7.4.3 Cancellation

Once a reservation has been made, that numbering capacity will be unavailable to anyone, except for the organisation for which the reservation was made. However, a reservation will automatically be cancelled if:

- the time limit has expired
- the applicant withdraws the reservation, or
- the Authority and the applicant agree a substitute reservation or allocation.

#### Handling competing requests for reservation

Where available number ranges are limited, and more than one licensed operators have requested the same number block, the Authority may reserve the block for more than one operator. The Authority will allocate that block to the first operator who provides the Authority with firm evidence of a customer order.

### 7.5 Considering applications

On the basis of the application, the Authority will decide the extent to which the application may be met, and the specific numbers, number series and addresses that may be assigned. In choosing the specific numbers and number series in the numbering plan, the Authority will have regard to existing allocations in the National Numbering Plan and the rules given in the National Numbering Standards.

If several applications for the same numbering resource are received, then the application first registered as received by the Authority will be dealt with first. This means that the administration will generally be based on a "first come first served" principle.

When making number allocations or reservations within the National Numbering Plan, the Authority will take the following into account:

- the guiding principles within the National Numbering Plan
- any relevant licence conditions
- whether the Authority considers that the proposed use of the numbering range is appropriate
- the views of the applicant and other interested parties (through consultation, where appropriate), and
- any other matters that the Authority deems relevant (e.g. any requirement to open a new range or make changes to the National Numbering Plan in order to allocate the required numbers or codes).

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In considering the application, the Authority will take account of the operator's wishes to the greatest possible extent. If any questions in connection with the application need further clarification, the Authority will contact the applicant directly.

### **7.6 New number ranges or changes to the National Numbering Plan**

Before opening any new ranges, or significant parts of ranges, the Authority will issue a public notification to invite operators to express any wishes for specific short codes. At least 45 days' notice will be given, with a specified date for the initial receipt of applications for those ranges. No applications will be accepted prior to that date.

Where operators' wishes coincide, assignment may be based on a procedure of drawing lots.

Where appropriate, the Authority will notify the ITU Telecommunications Standardisation Sector ('ITU-T') of changes to the National Numbering Plan and ensure that the correct notification is given in the ITU-T Operational Bulletin. Where the Authority considers it appropriate, it will also notify other overseas administrations, such as those that do not subscribe to the ITU-T Operational Bulletin.

### **7.7 The assignment process**

The Authority will use all reasonable endeavours to make an allocation or reservation within a period of 45 days following receipt of an application that contains all of the relevant information.

The period referred to above may be exceeded where:

- additional information is required from the applicant
- a period of consultation is necessary, as initiated by the Authority
- significant issues relating to the application cannot reasonably be handled within that period
- evidence is required that an applicant is running a system with a relevant authorisation, or
- the Authority considers that an alternative period of time is justified.

Where the Authority considers that an exception to the normal period is required, the applicant will be informed of the reasons and of the revised period in writing by the Authority. Generally, this period will not exceed 90 days from receipt of an application.

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As soon as the application has been fully considered and the number lists have been updated, the applicant will be notified in writing of the assignment.

Other operators and users will not automatically receive notification of assignments from the Authority. It is therefore the responsibility of the operator who has been assigned numbering resources to contact other operators and users as necessary for the purpose of informing these of the assignment.

The assignment will appear in an updated version of the National Numbering Plan as published from time to time by the Authority.

Where appropriate, the Authority will notify the ITU of the assignment of numbers, number series and addresses for the purpose of insertion and announcement in the ITU's Operational Bulletin.

### **7.8 Changes to allocations**

Those who have been allocated numbering capacity are required to apply to the Authority to make any changes:

- to the ownership of the block or code
- to the purpose or use of the numbering allocation, or
- which relate to conditions of use placed on the allocation.

### **7.9 Terms pertaining to the assignment**

In line with the National Numbering Standards, the Authority may lay down various terms regarding the use of any particular numbering allocation, including the following:

- that assigned numbering resources may exclusively be used for the type of service for which they have been allocated, (e.g. numbers specified for mobile may only be used for mobile service.)
- that the use shall be in accordance with the National Numbering Standards and any relevant international standards and agreements,
- that the resources shall be taken into use not later than 12 months from the date of assignment,
- that the use shall respect the need of ensuring efficient utilisation of the overall numbering plan.

In connection with any particular assignment, the Authority may lay down further individual terms, as it deems necessary and appropriate.



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### **7.10 Payment for Assigned Numbering Resources**

The Authority will fix the number charge annually and the latest charges will be available in writing upon request from the Authority.

The Authority collects number fees from operators who have been or are being assigned numbers or codes *by* the Authority. The fees are assessed to cover all the costs of the Authority's overall administrative duties to the extent that these concern or are of benefit to the telecommunications sector and where those costs are not being covered by separate financing. The charge is fixed annually, based on a calculation of costs and the quantity of assigned numbers and codes.

The number fees are collected annually in advance for numbering resources already assigned. For numbering resources assigned during the year, the number charge will be collected for the remaining quarters of the year, including the quarter in which assignment is made.

Any number allocation for which there is non-payment of the relevant fees will be withdrawn.

### **7.11 Refusal of applications for numbering capacity**

The Authority may refuse an application for an allocation or reservation of numbering capacity. Alternatively, the Authority may not grant the application in full, or may attach specific conditions to the allocation that are consistent with the Standards and related to the use and management of the numbering capacity allocated. Such specific conditions will be set out in the letter that accompanies the allocation.

In the event of a refusal, whether in part or in full, or where specific conditions are attached, the Authority will inform the applicant, in writing, of its reasons.

The Authority may, following consultation with the applicant, make an alternative allocation that has the potential to satisfy the applicant's requirements without conflicting with the criteria that caused the original application to be refused.



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### **7.12 Complaints procedure**

Where the Authority refuses an application, either in part or in full, or attaches specific conditions to the allocation, the applicant may write to the Authority to dispute the reasons given by the Authority for its decision or for its request for further information to support the application. Such appeals should be made in accordance with the Authority statutes.

Any complaints must be submitted in writing within 45 days after the date on which the decision was notified. The Authority will then consider the request and respond to the applicant within 45 days.



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## **8 The terms and conditions of the use of numbers within the allocated ranges**

### **8.1 General Conditions**

The following general conditions, relating to the use and management of numbering capacity, apply to all allocations made by the Authority:

- The allocation shall be used for the purpose specified in the application (including any classification by type or tariff as set out in the National Numbering Plan)
- The operator originally allocated numbers shall be responsible for them
- Numbers and blocks of numbers must not be traded between operators
- A number allocation is made to an operator “in perpetuity”. However, neither operators nor users have any ownership rights over any numbers allocated by the Authority
- Numbers must, at all times, be used only for the purposes granted to the operator to whom the allocation was made
- The holder of the allocation shall maintain a record of the percentage of numbers in use
- Holders of numbering capacity shall not, unless the Authority consents otherwise, charge any person for a number allocated to him (other than a coveted number allocated to a user at the request of such a person)
- Number transfer between users is permitted, to the extent that the number can be technically activated for the new subscriber. However, in order to prevent number hoarding, the user must bring their number into service within (six months); "in service" being defined as "if an access in the public telephone network can be reached by dialling the number" (“use it or lose it”)
- A operator shall not use numbers from the National Numbering Plan other than those allocated by the Authority
- All operators will simultaneously implement any numbering changes which are required

### **8.2 Conditions applicable to the geographic numbering plan**

In addition to the above general conditions, the following conditions will also apply to allocations made from within the geographic ranges of the numbering plan.



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- Geographic codes will have national significance, rather than be associated with a particular operator
- the Authority will define the geographic area for each code and will publish information defining these areas. Initially these areas will correspond to existing zone designations in the current numbering plan<sup>1</sup>
- the Authority will allocate blocks of numbers to operators in each geographic area as required, from the numbering space behind the relevant zone code. Each block will typically be 1,000 sequential numbers, but in some circumstances could be either larger or smaller blocks

### 8.3 Other specific conditions on allocations

Where necessary and appropriate, the Authority may impose additional specific conditions on any particular allocation.

Where the Authority chooses to apply such conditions, then the Authority will provide the operator with the reasoning behind this decision.

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<sup>1</sup> This designation will be done either by a description of the boundary of the zones (in comparison with other physical or demographic boundaries) or by the publication of maps.