

NAME: CARRIER SELECTION REGULATIONS

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Definitions

Article (1): In the application of these regulations, the following terms and expressions shall have the meanings assigned to each of them unless the text otherwise requires:

- (1) **Access Operator** means any Class I licensee who is having access to its own subscribers.
- (2) **Carrier Selection** means the process whereby a subscriber may access an operator other than his access operator for the provision of calls. Carrier Selection consists of Call-by-call Carrier Selection and Carrier Pre-Selection;
- (3) **Carrier Pre-Selection (CPS)** means the process whereby a subscriber may designate his choices of selected operator, or operators as the case may be, to provide his calls with the choice being effected by the network of the access operator and not the subscriber or the subscriber's terminal equipment;
- (4) **Call-by-call Carrier Selection (CCS)** means the process whereby a subscriber may access an operator other than his access operator, or an operator that it has selected under CPS, on a call-by-call basis by adding a short access code to the front of a dialled number; irrespective of whether the access code is added either manually by the subscriber during the dialling process or automatically by terminal equipment such as an auto-dialler;
- (5) **Carrier Selection Prefix** means a set of digits that is allocated to either CCS or CPS selected operators.
- (6) **Dialling Parity** means the ability of customers to select different long distance or international operators without having to dial extra digits.
- (7) **National Numbering Plan** means the national numbering plan of the Sultanate of Oman.
- (8) **Ordering System Specification** means a detailed specification of the procedures for ordering CPS by a subscriber, and the subsequent interactions between the operators including the procedures for handling errors and unauthorised orders;
- (9) **Selected Operator** means a telecommunications operator who is licensed to provide services that may be accessed by CCS or CPS and is selected by a subscriber for a given call.

Requirements to offer carrier selection

Article (2) Carrier Selection shall be offered by a licensee and added to the Reference Interconnection Offer in a manner to be approved by the TRA as follows:

1. All current Class 1 licensees of fixed or mobile services shall offer CCS and add it to their Reference Interconnection Offer within three months from the publication of these regulations.
2. New Class 1 licensees of fixed and mobile services shall make available CCS within three months from the publication of these regulations or from the date of launch of their operations in the Sultanate, whichever is earlier.
3. Class 1 licensees of fixed or mobile access shall be obliged to offer CPS and to add it to their Reference Interconnection Offer within 4 months after TRA's announcement on CPS implementation.

The above requirements shall apply to international calls only (i.e. calls dialled in the international format by dialling prefix "00" or "+").

Ordering Carrier Selection

Article (3) (1) All licensed operators supporting carrier selection may place their order with Access Operator only if they are licensed to carry calls involving carrier selection.

(2) Each operator that orders Carrier Selection shall send copies of its order for the initial establishment of CCS and CPS to the TRA for its approval.

Timescales for implementing Carrier Selection

Article (4) The operator providing Carrier Selection shall cooperate with the operator ordering Carrier Selection to implement CCS and the corresponding interconnection arrangements for call origination within 4 months of receiving the order.

Article (5) The operator providing Carrier Selection shall cooperate with the operator ordering Carrier Selection to implement CPS and the corresponding interconnection arrangements for call origination within 10 months of receiving the first order from the selected operator, and within 4 months for subsequent orders from other operators given that the 10 months for the first order are elapsed.

Specific requirements for CPS

- Article (6)** Licensees who are required to offer CPS shall permit different selected operators to be chosen for each carrier selection call types.
- Article (7)** Licensees who use CPS may choose whether or not to offer their subscribers each of the call types available under CPS and may combine types in the offers that they make to their subscribers.
- Article (8)** If a subscriber who has chosen to use CPS dials a valid CCS prefix in front of a number then the call shall be routed in accordance with the CCS prefix rather than the CPS settings. If the prefix dialled is not valid it shall be ignored and the network shall act in accordance with the CPS settings.
- Article (9)** All licensees shall cooperate together in a manner to be approved by the TRA and taking account of any instructions from the TRA to develop the Ordering System Specification for CPS.
- Article (10)** All licensees shall apply whatever verification methods to orders for CPS that the TRA may require.

Charging and cost recovery

- Article (11)** Licensees who are required to provide CPS may recover the actual setup costs that they incur for CPS according to calculations to be approved by the TRA through a supplement to their call origination charges for calls handled by CPS. The level of the supplement and the period over which it may be charged shall be approved by the TRA.
- Article (12)** Licensees who are required to provide CCS or CPS shall charge cost-based charges for:
- (1) Establishing interconnection.
 - (2) Call origination
 - (3) Per subscriber order charges for each subscriber order for CPS including changes of the selected operator and cancellation of CPS
 - (4) Amendments to routing data in switches for the routing of calls according to the prefix used.

Exclusion of short numbers

Article (13) All calls to numbers shorter than 8 digits shall be excluded from CCS and CPS, and if the caller adds prefixes to such numbers then the access network shall reject the call.

Winback and slamming

Article (14) When an Access Operator becomes aware through the ordering process that a given subscriber has ordered CPS, or ordered a change to the selected operator under CPS, the access operator and the previous selected operator may communicate with the subscriber in a manner to be approved by the TRA to inform them that CPS has been ordered and to advise them what action to take in case the CPS order is incorrect or has not been correctly authorised. The access operator may not discuss the services of the selected operator or make offers to subscribers to cancel the new CPS order until one month after the CPS order has been put into effect. If problems occur in handling the order, then contacts are permitted to resolve the problems.

Article (15) No operator shall switch a subscriber's selected operator without the subscriber's knowledge or consent or after obtaining consent based upon a misrepresentation or deceptive practices by the operator, or any other agents or representatives of the operator.

Reporting of statistics

Article (16) Each Access Operator shall report each quarter or as frequently as requested by the TRA the following information:

- (1) The number of operators to whom they are providing CPS at the end of the reporting period.
- (2) Statement showing total number of CPS requests received from each operator.
- (3) Statement showing the total number of CPS requests received from each operator that were rejected.
- (4) The number of times they have activated CPS or changed a CPS setting for another operator within the required timescale
- (5) The number of times they have activated CPS or changed a CPS settings

successfully for another operator outside the timescale stated in these rules.

(6) The two most common reasons for refusing CPS authorisations and the number of occurrences that each such reason has been given.

CCS and CPS Prefixes

Article (17) Carrier selection prefixes will be assigned to all the operators who are authorised to carry calls involving Carrier Selection. Carrier selection prefixes will be allocated as per the National Numbering Plan.

Article (18) All Access Operators are required to support and provide Carrier Selection choice to their subscribers through call by call carrier selection or carrier pre-selection. For ensuring that Dialling Parity requirement is met carrier selection prefix shall be required to be dialled for all calls where carrier selection choice is on offer.

Penalties

Article (19) Where an access operator fails to make the CCS or CPS facility available within the time specified in these rules the access operator shall waive the charges for establishing the facility, i.e. the charges for adding the prefix to the routing tables and the charges for setting up the inter-operator ordering procedure in the case of CPS. This penalty shall not apply for the first order of CPS but shall apply for subsequent orders.

Article (20) After CPS has been provided by an access operator for three months, where the access operator fails to respond to a CPS request or fails to activate or change a carrier pre-selection setting within the timescale specified in the ordering system specification then the charge for the transaction shall be waived. If the delay exceeds seven (7) calendar days, then for each seven (7) calendar days of delay, the access operator shall pay a penalty to the selected operator equal to the charge for the transaction. The penalty shall be doubled for each subsequent seven (7) calendar days of delay based on the Authority's decision.

Article (21): For both CCS and CPS, any prefix assigned shall be of an equal number of digits for any relevant category of service (Local, Long distance, International).