

FCC Seeks Comment on VoIP Numbering Issues

April 24, 2013

On April 19, the US Federal Communications Commission (“FCC”) released a *Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, Order, & Notice of Inquiry* on the management and assignment of telephone numbers. In the document, the FCC seeks comment on how interconnected Voice over Internet Protocol (“VoIP”) providers should obtain access to telephone numbers, and how the management of telephone numbers should change as wireless and IP-based technologies become increasingly prevalent.

In the ***Notice of Proposed Rulemaking***, the FCC sought comment on a number of issues associated with permitting interconnected VoIP providers direct access to telephone numbers, including:

- Should interconnected VoIP providers should be permitted to obtain telephone numbers directly from the Number Plan Administrator and the Pooling Administrator?
- What amendments to the Commission’s definition of interconnected VoIP service or the telephone numbering rules would be needed to permit direct access to telephone numbers by interconnected VoIP providers?
- To what extent should the Commission expand access to telephone numbers for other services and applications that use telephone numbers as an addressing system for communications (e.g., home security systems, programmable appliances, payment authorization services, text messaging services, and telematics)?

In the ***Order***, the Commission established a six-month trial to permit certain interconnected VoIP providers direct access to limited amounts of telephone numbers. The trial is limited to those VoIP providers with direct-access waiver petitions pending at the FCC, and will permit direct access to only 5% of the numbers used by those providers.

In the ***Notice of Inquiry***, the Commission sought comment on the relationship between geography and telephone numbering resources, including:

- Should the Commission should retain the current connection between telephone numbers and geographic areas in light of the increasing consumer use of wireless and IP-based technologies?
- How would the removal of the relationship between telephone numbers and geographic areas affect the ability of consumers to access emergency services and services for those with disabilities?
- How would the elimination of the relationship between telephone numbers and geographic areas affect the routing and rating of telephone traffic?

View the full *Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, Order, & Notice of Inquiry*

Comments on issues raised in the document are due 30 days after publication in the Federal Register, with reply comments due 30 days after that. Typically, Federal Register publication occurs within a month of release of the

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