



Development of the Numbering Plan

Report on Consultation and Decision

June 2006

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1 INTRODUCTION

In December 2005, the Malta Communications Authority (MCA) published its Consultative document on the future development of the numbering plan. The objective of this document was to seek the views of operators and interested parties on the proposals developed by the MCA.

The proposals included a wide range of issues including:

- the development of the criteria that will apply to different number ranges
- the creation of new number ranges for new services
- the number allocation process.

The Consultative document took account of the prospective migration of networks to IP-based technologies and the latest work on numbering by experts in the European Communications Committee's Numbering Naming and Addressing Working Group.

The purpose of this document is to summarise and analyse the responses and to present the MCA's decisions on the way forward. In the case of the 5 and 8 ranges for special tariff services, the MCA has decided to postpone its decision until it has had more time to consider the issues involved and the responses received and to undertake further consultations if necessary.

In conjunction with the publishing of this decision, the MCA is publishing the Numbering Plan (sections 11-19 of this document) on its website and will update this plan when necessary.

When the issues concerning special tariff numbers have been resolved, the MCA will publish a further decision on the outcome and update the Numbering Plan accordingly.

Due to the potential of a high proliferation of Machine-to-Machine (M2M)/Internet of Things (IoT) connectivity services and other non-interpersonal communications services (Non-ICS), the MCA has identified the need to revise the current national numbering framework, which was established back in 2006 prior to this market development, to cater specifically for these technologies.

As a result of this, following a consultation process, in July 2019 the Authority published the Decision Notice '*Numbering Resources for M2M/IoT Connectivity Services (and other Non-Interpersonal Communications Services (Non-ICS))*' which also includes a number of updates to this Decision Notice.

2 RESPONSES TO THE CONSULTATION

The consultation period for the Consultative Paper entitled "Development of the Numbering Plan" ran from 19th December 2005 to 28th February 2006.

Responses were received from the following:

- Mobisle Communications Ltd (GO Mobile),
- Maltacom p.l.c,
- Melita Cable
- Vodafone Malta Ltd.

MCA wishes to thank all these parties for their responses.

3 LONG TERM TRENDS AND DEVELOPMENTS

The consultative document presented a wide overview of the fundamental trends and changes taking place within the market place. It identified the following list of factors for change:

- The reduction of tariffs could result in fewer services with high tariffs
- Flat rate calling plans are becoming more common place
- Flat rate reduced tariffs reduce demand for freephone services
- Changes to the technology enable users to access services at any location
- Voice over the Internet and high roaming charges lead to increased demand for additional numbers for the purpose of reducing charges
- Numbers may become increasingly associated with services for which they were not originally allocated, although this has not started yet in Malta
- Pressures for secondary allocation between operators increase as Internet based operators want to use the facilities of new entrant telephony networks and the numbers allocated to them
- New ranges may be needed for fixed mobile convergence services
- Pressure for number portability between different services increases, subject to the tariffs not being too different

The respondents did not comment at length on these conclusions.

One of the respondents commented that "the proliferation of various service access technologies such as voice, SMS and MMS would lead to a growing need to associate numbers with services and keep numbers bearer independent." We agree.

Another respondent commented that the trends mentioned are real but that flat rate tariffs are not yet widespread. They also stated that the core network would not become very cheap if the suppliers retained high prices and if the network is designed to deliver high quality of service. They also drew attention to the special situation of Malta as a small island. They considered that the model referred to from ECC Report 75 was only one possible model but they did not elaborate any alternatives.

The MCA welcomes these comments and an on-going discussion on the future of the networks.

Overall, the MCA takes the view that numbering should be organised for the benefit of the user. Thus the primary objective of dividing the numbering space into separate ranges is to reflect different tariff ranges and to make numbers easier to use. Facilitating the process of number allocation and reflecting different regulatory requirements is a subsidiary objective.

In accordance with this approach, the MCA is adding the level of terminating charges to the descriptions of the services that may use given number ranges.

In view of its importance, the MCA will publish the Numbering Plan on the MCA web site and keep it up-to-date. Minor changes will be made as necessary without consultation but the MCA will consult on any major changes.

Decision 1

The MCA will adopt the overall objective of organising numbering for the benefit of the user and will therefore give priority to tariff transparency and ease of use. Facilitating the process of number allocation and reflecting different regulatory requirements is a subsidiary objective.

The MCA will publish and maintain the Numbering Plan on its web site. The contents of sections 11 - 19 will form part of the Numbering Plan. Additional sections will be added for the ranges 5 and 8 after further discussion with the operators following the consultation on special tariff numbers. Further details of the arrangements for short codes will also be added in the near future.

4 NUMBERS FOR NEW MOBILE OPERATORS

The MCA asked "Which number ranges should be used for new mobile operators?"

Some of the respondents objected to the allocation of new ranges to mobile operators since it would be disproportionate compared to fixed operators; they thought that too many number ranges were being earmarked for the mobile market.

A respondent claimed that the range 7X is strongly associated with GO Mobile and therefore should not be shared with other mobile operators. Others commented that they preferred the continuation of the X9 arrangement for mobile and stated that Vodafone should be allowed to use other values of 9X for other services to maintain the "9" branding.

The MCA considers that the argument about branding of the 79 and 99 ranges is weak and goes against the provision of number portability where it will no longer be possible to tell from simple inspection which operator is serving a given number. The MCA is also concerned that the allocation of the whole of the 7 and 9 ranges to individual operators would be unjustifiable and excessive and that it could not do the same for new entrants.

The MCA has therefore decided that new mobile operators will be allocated numbers under 7X and 9X. The MCA will take account of any preferences expressed by the new operators over the choice of a range.

Decision 2:

The MCA has decided that new mobile operators will be allocated numbers under 7X and 9X and that with the introduction of number portability it is no longer appropriate for operators to link number ranges with their brands.

5 PERSONAL NUMBERING SERVICES

"Personal numbering" refers to services where the routing at the terminating end of a call changes according to the request of the called party and may be adapted automatically in real time to their current circumstances.

The MCA proposed to allow operators considerable choice in how they provide personal numbering services and in which number range they operate them. It proposed the following options:

Services on existing numbers in the 2, 3, 79 and 99 ranges may have additional "personal numbering" features added to them provided that the termination rates associated with these numbers are unchanged and number portability continues to be supported (except in the 3 range).

The new ranges 39 and 91 would be introduced for these services where the termination rate levels would equate to fixed and mobile services respectively. Personal number services with termination rates at the level for fixed services but without number portability may be introduced in the 39 range. Personal number services with termination rates at the level for mobile services but without number portability may be introduced in the 91 range.

One of the respondents agreed that additional features could be added to existing numbers but was uncertain about what the MCA was proposing in regard to tariffs and their relationship to the proposals for special tariff numbers. They are of the opinion that it would be better to have one category where the calling party pays for the whole call and another where the called party pays for the extra functionality over a normal call.

Whilst other respondents were in broad agreement with the proposals, they also emphasised the need for a tariff warning if a call is more expensive than expected. Some stated that they were against any restrictions on sharing revenue with the called party because the restrictions would conflict with GO Mobile's Call Me tariff where a post paid subscriber can choose whether to receive a volume discount on out-going calls or a volume award for incoming calls. One of the respondents was against the use of the 91 range because it should remain branded as a Vodafone range. It argued for separate ranges per operator where number portability is not required and proposed the ranges 73 and 93 for GO and Vodafone personal numbering services respectively.

Decision 3:

Concerning personal numbering, the MCA has decided that:

- a) Services on existing numbers in the 2, 3, 79 and 99 ranges may have additional "personal numbering" features added to them provided that the termination rates associated with these numbers are unchanged and number portability continues to be supported (except in the 3 range).**

- b) The new ranges 39 and 91 will be available for personal numbering services where the termination rate levels equate to fixed and mobile services respectively. Number portability will not be required on either range.**

6 GOLDEN NUMBERS AND INDIVIDUAL NUMBER ALLOCATION

Golden numbers are numbers that have economic value arising from the pattern of digits in the number and may include associations with brands or concepts or meanings from the association of digits with letters as occurs on many terminal dial-pads.

Subscribers may wish to acquire golden numbers for various reasons and a number may have considerable value to one subscriber but little or no value to others.

At present, there are no formal arrangements for the allocation of golden numbers. No distinction is made in the charging for numbers established under the Electronic Communications (Regulation) Act. Operators provide golden numbers on request and without charge if the numbers are available from the blocks that have been allocated to them.

The MCA outlined a possible method for the distribution of golden numbers and asked for comments including how important it is to establish a scheme for golden numbers.

The respondents all agreed that numbers should be allocated and used only in accordance with the numbering plan and so arrangements for golden numbers should fit within the plan and take precedence over it.

One of the respondents was against the MCA's involvement in golden numbers since operators had worked hard at establishing a market for these numbers and considered that the payments for numbers and authorisations to the MCA were already too high. They thought that there should be a period of say one year after allocation when golden numbers would not be portable to prevent speculation.

Other respondents wanted operators to be able to choose whether to make arrangements for golden numbers and were against paying a percentage to the MCA. They were content with the proposals to allow but not require number trading. Some respondents were against number trading, whilst others were also against any attempts to regulate golden numbers.

The MCA has considered these views and concluded that it does not intend to proceed with the plans as outlined in the consultation paper. Since numbers are a national resource it retains the view that in the future it may be appropriate for a share of any revenues generated from golden numbers to be passed to the Government (not the MCA) and reserves its right to make proposals along these lines to the Government. The MCA would normally consult on any such proposals.

Consequently at present the following situation applies:

- Numbers may be allocated only in blocks to operators in accordance with the numbering plan and the MCA will not allocate individual fixed or geographic numbers to users.
- Operators may charge for the additional administrative costs of allocating a number of the subscriber's choice but may not charge for the "goldenness" of a number, i.e. they may not charge more for one number than for another.
- Operators may offer to support the exchange of numbers between subscribers (number trading) but are not required to do so. They may charge for any such transaction.

7 ENUM AND NUMBER DETACHMENT

The MCA outlined the development of ENUM and the uncertainties surrounding it. It is not planning to take any specific actions at present concerning ENUM.

The MCA noted that there is an emerging trend for numbers to become detached from the service for which they were initially allocated, but concluded that it is too early to address this issue. It asked for comments and proposals on what measures it should consider taking in the future.

The operators were either in broad agreement or made no comment. The MCA will take no action in this area at present.

8 EXTRA-TERRITORIAL USE OF NUMBERS¹

For the scope of this document the term ‘extra-territorial use of numbers’ refers to the use of a particular country’s numbering resources by a foreign service provider in its home country. However, this term does not refer to international roaming situations.

8.1 Extra-Territorial Use of Numbers from the Maltese National Numbering Plan

Extra-territorial use of numbers from the Maltese National Numbering Plan in the case of conventional telephony and any other Interpersonal Communications Services is not permitted, however due to the different characteristics and the cross-border nature of some M2M/IoT connectivity services and other Non-ICS, the extra-territorial use of numbers from the ‘4’ range may be permitted subject to the MCA’s authorisation depending on the circumstances. This would be subject to whether the other country in question permits such use, and that its regulatory requirements and conditions are adhered to, including the requirement for a General Authorisation, consumer protection requirements and other rules related to the use of numbering resources.

Since countries outside the EU/EEA are not legally bound with the EU regulatory framework, the Authority is likely to undertake a more rigorous assessment when determining whether the extra-territorial use of numbers from the ‘4’ range for M2M/IoT connectivity services and other Non-ICS should be permitted outside EU/EEA Member States.

To ensure clarity, Figure 1 is showing the main differences between what constitutes International Roaming (whether permanent or temporary) and Extra-Territorial use of Maltese numbers from a regulatory perspective.

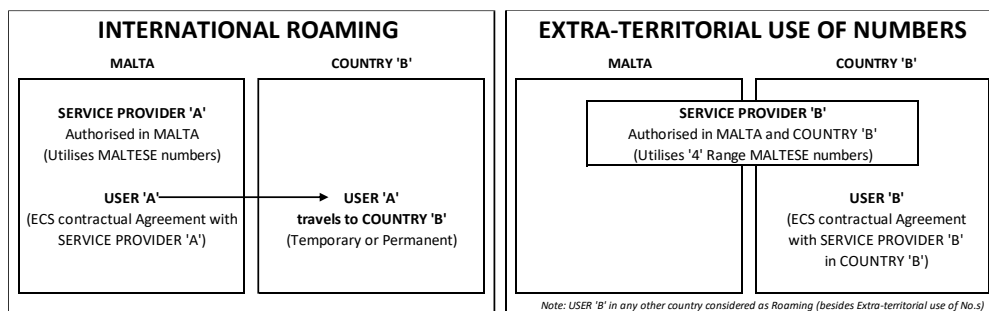


Figure 1

¹ This section was introduced in July 2019 upon the publication of the Decision Notice “Numbering Resources for M2M/IoT Connectivity Services and other Non-Interpersonal Communications Services (Non-ICS)” as a replacement to the previous Section 8 entitled ‘Numbers for Data Terminals’.

8.2 Extra-Territorial Use of Other Countries' Numbers within the Maltese Territory

In the case of conventional telephony and any other Interpersonal Communications Services, extra-territorial use of other countries' numbers is not permitted within the Maltese territory. This is obviously not applicable in the case of conventional international roaming scenarios. If it deems justified the MCA may authorise the extra-territorial use of numbers within the Maltese territory for the provision of M2M/IoT connectivity services and other Non-ICS, and would be subject to adherence to all local regulatory and commercial general authorisation requirements.

One of the MCA's assessment criteria in determining whether numbering resources pertaining to EU/EEA Member States may be permitted for Non-ICS extra-territorial use in the Maltese territory shall be that these numbering resources are included in the specific database on the numbering resources with a right of extra-territorial use within EU/EEA Member States managed by the '*Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications*' (BEREC) for those types of numbering resources included in this database once it becomes available.

Since countries outside the EU/EEA are not legally bound with the EU regulatory framework, a more rigorous assessment will be required when determining whether the extra-territorial use of numbers of countries which are not in the EU/EEA for M2M/IoT connectivity services and other Non-ICS should be permitted within the Maltese territory.

8.3 Utilisation of Global Numbering Resources within the Maltese Territory

The utilisation of global numbering resources allocated directly by the ITU-T (e.g. E.164 country code = 882/883) is not considered as extra-territorial use of numbers. The MCA may authorise the utilisation of such global numbering resources by authorised Non-ICS providers within the Maltese territory for the provision of M2M/IoT connectivity services and other Non-ICS, subject that all local regulatory and commercial general authorisation requirements are met.

9 SHORT CODES

(This section has been updated and expanded in June 2009)

9.1 Introduction and Categories

Telephone numbers containing less number of digits than the conventional 8 digit telephone numbers are considered as Short Codes. Apart from a number of legacy short codes, which existed before the publishing of this decision, these short codes start with '1' and are generally 3 or 4 digits in length. The MCA publishes an updated current Short Code Matrix, which includes a service description of each short code and is available on its home page.

The use of short codes by different operators was uncoordinated before this decision was first published in June 2006. As new companies entered the market the situation was becoming increasingly confusing for users and therefore the MCA proposed to move towards a degree of harmonisation for short codes whilst not disrupting existing usage.

In 2006 the MCA introduced different categories for short codes to distinguish clearly between the interconnection arrangements and those codes that were available on-net only. Subsequently there has been an increase in demand for short codes for various information services and these codes need to be interconnected so that they can be reached by all users. In May 2009 the MCA consulted directly with the operators to add a more detailed framework on the allocation process of short codes including the responsibilities of the various stake holders. After taking into consideration the feedback received, the MCA has updated this section to include a framework for the application process and conveyance of Short Codes.

The MCA's approach is promoting more harmonisation of short codes than is achieved in many other countries and this should benefit users.

There are three categories of short codes:

- Category 1 Short Codes are those that are the same on each network and support interconnected services;
- Category 2 Short Codes are those that have the same value for similar services but are normally provided "on-net" and not necessarily interconnected; and
- Category 3 Short Codes are completely uncoordinated and are served only on-net.

The short code application process for Category 1 Short Codes is not applicable to applications for numbers in the 118X range for directory services, or for numbers in the Harmonised European Short Codes 116XXX range, which has its own application process available on MCA's website.

9.2 Retail charges for calling short codes

The retail tariff for calling a short code shall be one of the following three types.

Tariff Type A: Free to caller from fixed and mobile

Subscribers calling/texting short code numbers falling under this tariff type are not charged whether they originate the call from a fixed telephone, or a mobile phone.

Tariff Type B: Free to caller from fixed, charged from mobile

Subscribers calling/texting short code numbers falling under this tariff type are not charged if they originate the call from a fixed telephone, but charged a charge not exceeding that for a call to a fixed network if the call originates from a mobile phone. In the case of SMSs, a charge not exceeding that of a conventional SMS to the same network is applicable.

Tariff Type C: Charged to caller from fixed and mobile

Subscribers calling/texting short code numbers falling under this tariff type are charged a charge not exceeding that for a call to a fixed network whether the call originates from a fixed telephone or mobile phone. In the case of SMSs, a charge not exceeding that of a conventional SMS to the same network is applicable.

9.3 'Category 1' Short Code Allocation and Interconnection charges

9.3.1 The Allocation Process

The role of the Applicant:

When a potential short code provider wishes to provide a service using a category 1 short code in the '1' Range, it should first approach the telephony service provider to host its number of its choice. Once this contact is established the short code content provider should send a formal communication to the MCA requesting the short code. Such a communication would be considered as the official application and should include the following information:

- Detailed information on the service to be offered.
- The social value such a service shall benefit the consumer on a national level.
- The retail 'Tariff Type' (see below).
- The timeframe this short code shall be in use (minimum 6 months, maximum 12 months which is renewable).
- Details of the Electronic Communications Service Provider to host this short code. (the short code is allocated to the telephony service provider and not direct to the content service provider)
- The preferred short code number (3 preferences).

In practice these short codes are normally required as soon as possible and the timescales in the following sections are written on this basis. If the short code content provider requires a deferred start date then they should agree adjusted deadlines with the telephony service provider accordingly.

The role of the MCA:

Once the application is received, each short code application will be assessed by MCA’s Management Committee on a case by case basis, whose decision is final and will be communicated back to the applicant within 15 working days of receipt of the application, keeping in copy the Electronic Communications Service Provider chosen by the applicant to host the short code. The criteria for MCA’s Management Committee decision on whether a short code application is accepted or refused shall be based on the social value of the service proposed to be provided, and whether such an allocation from this scarce resource would be justifiable.

In case of refusal the MCA shall communicate its reasons. Any appeal or clarification from the applicant deemed reasonable shall once again be brought to the attention of the MCA’s Management Committee after which the MCA’s decision would be final.

Once a short code is allocated, the MCA communicates this decision to the applicant and the hosting telephony provider.

On the following day the MCA updates the Short Code Matrix with all the relevant details and informs all Electronic Communications Service Providers individually that a new short code has been allocated including any relevant details.

The following figure shows the actions between the different parties:

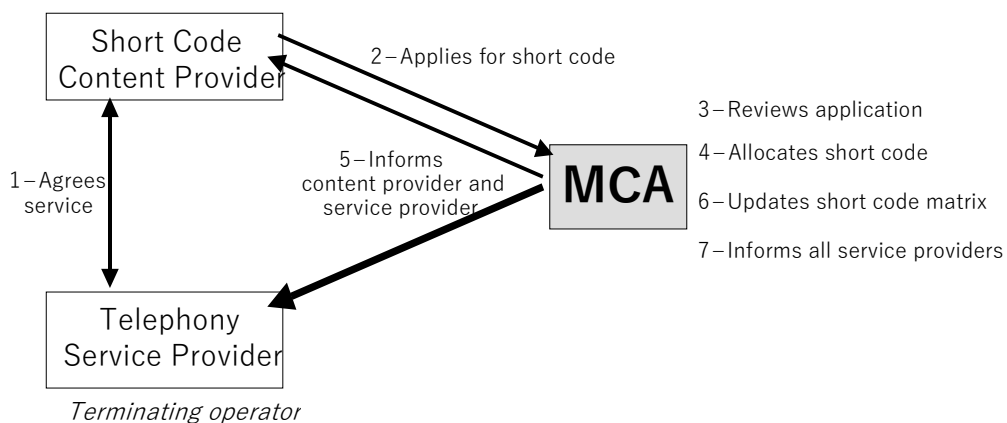


Figure 2: Application for a Category 1 Short Code

The role of the hosting telephony service provider (terminating operator):

Within ten working days from when it is informed by the MCA that the new short code is allocated, the hosting service provider must ensure that their network configuration is set in such a way that other telephony service providers may commence testing to these numbers. The hosting service provider also needs to ensure that if any contractual agreements need updating, they are in a position to provide the necessary means within this timeframe.

Subscribers of other service providers should be able to access the new short code at the same time as the host provider's subscribers. This should take place within a maximum of 20 working days from receipt of the allocation notice from the MCA. The hosting service provider is also responsible to ensure its best efforts to resolve any technical issues arising in the conveyance of this short code directly with other entities.

The hosting service provider shall not be held responsible if other operators fail to communicate and commence testing within the established timeframes.

The role of other telephony service providers not hosting the short code (potential originating operators):

Within nine working days from when it is informed by the MCA that the new short code is allocated (preparation phase in figure 3), the telephony service provider not hosting the short code should ensure that it is technically and administratively prepared to initiate any testing required to commence in the 'testing and final' phase.

It is also responsible to ensure its best efforts to resolve any technical issues arising in the conveyance of this short code directly with the hosting service provider before and during the testing phase.

The electronic communications service provider not hosting the short code should ensure that its subscribers have access to the allocated short code within 19 working days from receipt of the allocation notice from the MCA. Since all Category 1 Short Codes should be accessible by all telephony subscribers, telephony service providers not hosting the short code shall be held responsible if their subscribers are not in a position to access these short codes within the stipulated timeframe, if this is due to not keeping within the timeframes as depicted in the process flows in figure 3 below.

Process Flow

Figure 3 - Short Code Allocation Process flow chart:

****Short Code Allocation Process Flow**

application & allocation phase	1 Short Code provider sends valid application.	<15days*
	2 Assessment by MCA's Management Committee.	
	3 MCA communicates decision to Short Code content provider and hosting telephony service provider.	
preparation phase	4 Hosting telephony service provider initiate processes.	1 day*
	5 MCA communicates allocation of Short Codes to all service providers and updates the Short Code Matrix accordingly.	9 days*
	6 Setting up of any necessary technical and administrative processes by telephony service providers.	
	7 Hosting telephony service provider to notify all other PATS providers that testing on numbers may commence and to update any contractual agreements if applicable.	
testing & final phase	8 Testing with all telephony providers to take place and any other required administrative or technical processes.	10days*
	9 Short Code accessible from all telephony providers.	

* Day/s denotes working days

** Timeframes are not applicable during industry wide Network Data Freeze

9.3.2. Interconnection charges

The interconnection charges² have been designed to be similar to those for the freephone service as per the Decision of July 2008 because the retail charging for Tariff Types A and B are the same as for freephone. The framework for short codes also allows short codes to be hosted by mobile operators in the same way as the framework for freephone numbers.

Interconnection charging for non-network specific Short Codes (excluding those in 118X and 116XXX ranges).

² These charges were previously referred to as "wholesale" or "conveyance" charges.

1. *Calls to 'Tariff Type A' short codes (Free to caller from fixed and mobile)*

The terminating operator shall pay the originating operator a charge equal to the originating operator's interconnection termination rate for voice calls and SMS; or a charge agreed by negotiation.

2. *Calls to 'Tariff Type B' short codes (Free to caller from fixed, charged from mobile)*

For calls originating from fixed telephones, the terminating operator shall pay the originating fixed telephony operator a charge equal to the originating fixed operator's interconnection termination rate. For calls originating from mobile phones the originating mobile operator shall pay the terminating network a charge equal to the termination rate determined by the MCA for calls that terminate on fixed networks; or a charge agreed by negotiation. In the case of text messages normal SMS wholesale charges apply.

3. *Calls to 'Tariff Type C' short codes (Charged to caller from fixed and mobile)*

Standard interconnection charges applicable to calls to conventional fixed numbers, whether they are originated from a fixed telephone or a mobile phone, are applicable. In the case of text messages normal SMS wholesale charges apply.

Operators are required to update any contractual agreements for existing short codes, including applicable reference interconnection offer agreements, as soon as possible and no later than 31th August 2009. The interconnection charging mentioned in this section shall only be applicable once the contractual agreements are updated. Such updates would include the different types and categories of short codes replacing reference to individual short code numbers.

In the case of a transit operator:

When revenue flows are originating from the terminating operator (i.e. Tariff Type A), the terminating operator pays the transit operator. A negotiated rate shall apply between the transit operator and the originating operator.

In the case of revenue flows going towards the terminating operator (i.e. Tariff Type C), the transit operator pays the terminating operator. A negotiated rate shall apply between the transit operator and the originating operator.

9.4 ‘Category 2’ Short Code “Allocation”

Category 2 Short Codes have the same value for similar services but are implemented only "on-net" and therefore they are not normally interconnected. In this case “allocation” means that the MCA identifies the purpose for which a category 2 short code should be used, and the code may then be used for this purpose by an operator. The MCA has therefore identified through the short code matrix a list of category 2 short codes and their intended use and will update this list as necessary.

When a service provider wishes to use a category 2 short code, the service provider shall inform the MCA that it is introducing a service on the short code but is not required to request MCA’s consent.

A service provider shall not use a code value that is listed as a Category 2 short code for any purpose other than the purpose as listed in the Short Code Matrix.

9.5 ‘Category 3’ Short Code Allocation

Category 3 Short Codes are implemented only on-net and may have any meaning chosen by the operator concerned.

To achieve the maximum harmonisation for users, the use of uncoordinated network specific codes should be minimised and the values of the codes should be unique to avoid confusion. Codes will be allocated only if requested, in which case an operator will be allocated a single 3-digit code, which they may subdivide into ten 4-digit codes or 100 5-digit codes or a combination of both. Additional 3-digit codes will be allocated only if justified.

9.6 Numbering fees

At present there are no numbering fees for short codes.

The fees for numbers payable to government as per the Eighth Schedule of the Electronic Communications Networks and Services (General) Regulations, may be subject to changes in the future. Such changes could introduce fees for short codes, possibly taking into consideration the scarcity nature of the ‘1’ range.

9.7 Short code matrix

The Short Code Matrix available on the homepage of MCA’s website shall be updated to include information on the Category and Tariff type of each allocated Short Code.

Decision 4:

Concerning short codes in the '1' numbering range, it has been decided that:

a) Operators shall develop a harmonised approach to short codes into three categories as follows:

Category 1: Short Codes that are the same on each network and support interconnected services, such as the emergency services, where the calls are routed to a single destination.

Category 2: Short Codes that have the same value for similar services but where the services are provided "on-net" and so are not necessarily interconnected.

Category 3: Short Codes that are completely uncoordinated and are served only on-net.

b) New short codes should be allocated only in the ranges starting with '1'. No new allocations are permitted in other ranges. The MCA developed a plan with the operators to migrate any existing short codes in other ranges to the 1 range through a long period of parallel running so that users are not inconvenienced. For the foreseeable future an exception will be made for numbers that are very well known to users such as the use of "2428" by GO Mobile and "247" by Vodafone. Unused short codes will be withdrawn.

c) Unless an exception has been agreed with the MCA (e.g. 118 and 118X), the tariffs for calling short codes in the 1 range shall be as follows:

For Tariff Type 'A' Short Codes: (Free to caller from fixed and mobile)

Subscribers calling/texting short code numbers falling under this tariff type are not charged whether they originate the call from a fixed telephone, or a mobile phone.

For Tariff Type 'B' Short Codes: (Free to caller from fixed, charged from mobile)

Subscribers calling/texting short code numbers falling under this tariff type are not charged if they originate the call from a fixed telephone, but charged a charge not exceeding that for a call to a fixed network if the call originates from a mobile phone. In the case of SMSs, a charge not exceeding that of a conventional SMS to the same network is applicable.

For Tariff Type 'C' Short Codes: (Charged to caller from fixed and mobile)

Subscribers calling/texting short code numbers falling under this tariff type are charged a charge not exceeding that for a call to a fixed network whether the call originates from a fixed telephone or mobile phone. In the case of SMSs, a charge not exceeding that of a conventional SMS to the same network is applicable.

d) Operators should provide access, as per the process flow depicted in figure 3 of this document, to all the Category 1 short codes as listed in the Short Code Matrix.

e) Interconnection charges for Category 1 (non network specific) Short Codes between operators should be based on the following: *(excluding Short Codes in the 118X and 116XXX ranges)*

For calls to 'Tariff Type A' short codes,

The terminating operator shall pay the originating operator a charge equal to the originating operator's interconnection termination rate for voice calls and SMS; or a charge agreed by negotiation.

For Calls to 'Tariff Type B' short codes,

For calls originating from fixed telephones, the terminating operator shall pay the originating fixed telephony operator a charge equal to the originating fixed operator's interconnection termination rate. For calls originating from mobile phones the originating mobile operator shall pay the terminating network a charge equal to the termination rate determined by the MCA for calls that terminate on fixed networks; or a charge agreed by negotiation. In the case of text messages normal SMS wholesale charges apply.

For calls to 'Tariff Type C' short codes,

Standard conveyance charges applicable to calls to conventional fixed numbers, whether they are originated from a fixed telephone or a mobile phone, are applicable. In the case of text messages normal SMS wholesale charges apply.

These interconnection charges shall be applicable as from 15th July 2009. Operators are required to update any contractual agreements, including applicable reference interconnection offer agreements, as soon as possible and by no later than 31th August 2009 with the revised charges being applicable as from 15th July 2009. These updates shall reflect the interconnection charges mentioned in this section and updated in a way to accommodate future short code allocations, and existing short codes.

f) Uncoordinated network specific codes that are served only on-net should be unique to avoid confusion. If requested, operators will each be allocated a single 3-digit code, which they may subdivide into ten 4-digit codes or 100 5-digit codes or a combination of both. Additional 3-digit codes may be allocated only if justified.

10 NUMBER CHARGING³

Numbers are charged in accordance with Part C of the Eighth Schedule of the Electronic Communications Networks and Services (General) Regulations (Subsidiary Legislation 399.28).

The MCA considers that the following arrangements for charging for ported numbers are in line with the current regulations and are fair to the operators:

- When a number is imported, the recipient is not required to pay an annual charge for the number block that contains the number.
- When a number is exported, the block operator will continue to pay the annual charge for the number block that contains the number even if they are not serving other numbers in the block. The likelihood of all numbers in a block being ported is low provided that operators are allocating numbers efficiently.

The operators shall therefore report on this basis and pay the MCA accordingly.

Where a large proportion of the numbers in a block are ported, the MCA has considered the option of re-allocating the block to the recipient, but appreciates that this could cause an element of confusion with respect to the allocation tables and the operation of onward routing as the identity of the block operator would change. The MCA is therefore not proposing to make re-allocations, but is open to reconsidering this approach if requested by the operators and if there is a high proportion of blocks where all numbers are ported.

Decision 5:

Where numbers are ported, the following charging arrangements shall apply in accordance with Part C of the Eighth Schedule of the Electronic Communications Networks and Services (General) Regulations (Subsidiary Legislation 399.28):

- **When a number is imported, the recipient is not required to pay an annual charge for the number block that contains the number.**
- **When a number is exported, the block operator will continue to pay the annual charge for the number block that contains the number even if they are not serving other numbers in the block.**

³ Updated in July 2019 upon the publication of the Decision Notice “Numbering Resources for M2M/IoT Connectivity Services and other Non-Interpersonal Communications Services (Non-ICS)”.

11 THE FUTURE NUMBERING PLAN

Until such a time when a completely new decision on the National Numbering Plan is published, any new national numbering plan related information will be integrated in Figure 7 found in Section 20 of this document⁴.

⁴ Upon the publication of the Decision Notice “Numbering Resources for M2M/IoT Connectivity Services and other Non-Interpersonal Communications Services (Non-ICS)” the applicable retail tariff levels which were included in this section in previous versions of this decision can be found in the summary table found in Section 20.

12 THE 2 RANGE FOR "FIXED" "PATS" OPERATORS

12.1 Service description

Services that qualify under the current European framework as providers of Publicly Available Telephone Services, where:

- the terminating rate associated with the numbers in this range does not exceed the mean of the termination rates specified by the MCA for fixed operators with Significant Market Power in call termination by more than 10%. (Note: This is to ensure an adequate level of tariff transparency for callers);
- operators do not share revenue with their subscribers. (Note: Operators who give subscribers discounts based on the volume of outgoing calls may offer credit of similar value against similar volumes of incoming calls.)

There is no geographical structuring required for the range, although operators may choose to use their own structure within their own allocations.

Operators are encouraged to provide location portability but are not required to do so.

The services may be delivered by any technology and are not restricted to wireline technologies.

Nomadic use of the service is permitted at the discretion of the operator concerned. Thus subscribers may use numbers with a nomadicity feature to receive calls at any location inside or outside Malta and may also use the number as a CLI when they make calls in such circumstances.

12.2 Allocation method

The MCA will allocate numbers in blocks of 10,000 for which a charge is payable. Operators will not be able to reserve blocks.

Additional blocks will normally be allocated only when existing allocations have already been used to a reasonable level. In selecting which blocks to allocate, the MCA will aim to allow appropriate space for expansion so that an operator's allocations can be contiguous and not interleaved, but the MCA cannot guarantee that this will always be possible and the amount of expansion space that can be allowed will depend on the amount of unallocated numbering capacity remaining.

Requests for allocations that go beyond an operator's immediate needs will be considered only if the operator concerned:

- a) requires a larger range of numbers to support some aspect of its marketing or operations
- b) has potential demand for its services that will eventually make reasonably efficient use of the numbers, and
- c) has or is developing network coverage of at least 90% of the Maltese Islands through its own infrastructure.

In terms of the choice of blocks, the MCA will take account of the applicant's wishes but cannot undertake that they will always be met if they are not compatible with the further development of the numbering plan.

The MCA reserves the right to withdraw any allocated but unused blocks.

Arrangements for the allocation of blocks of 100,000 and 1,000,000 numbers (i.e. 5-digit (i.e. 2XX) and 6-digit (i.e. 2X) ranges) may be introduced in the future, in which case corresponding charges would probably be specified by the Government.

No distinctions will be made in future between DDI and non-DDI numbers.

12.3 Criteria for the range

The following criteria apply:

- All numbers in the 2 range are required to be portable between operators, provided that the numbers are still used for the purpose for which they were allocated, so that DDI numbers and individual numbers do not become mixed up. When a number is ported there should be no constraint on the location where the recipient operator serves the subscriber.
- In accordance with ITU-T Recommendation E.164, operators shall provide an interconnection point in Malta to receive calls. Provided that this is done, numbers may be allocated to subscribers who do not have an address in Malta. In this case the calls would be delivered to the number holder by a means determined by the operator.
- The location of the network terminating point shall be provided on request for the support of location information to be associated with calls to the emergency services.
- Operators shall not sub-allocate numbers to other operators without first notifying the MCA who may decline to allow the sub-allocation.

- Operators may allocate DDI numbers to subscribers for the purpose of supporting incoming calls on services such as VoIP services, which are run from behind the network termination point and so do not have any interconnection rights.
- Operators are required to support calls to the Maltese emergency services when the caller is currently located within Malta.

13 THE 3 RANGE FOR "NON-PATS" OPERATORS

13.1 Service description

Services that do not qualify under the current European framework as providers of Publicly Available Telephone Services, where

- the terminating rate associated with all numbers in this range does not exceed the mean of the termination rates specified by the MCA for PATS fixed operators with Significant Market Power in call termination by more than 10% to ensure an adequate level of tariff transparency; and
- operators do not share revenue with their subscribers other than credit for the volume of incoming calls to the number against subscriptions or outgoing call charges from the same number.

There is no geographical structuring required for the range.

Operators are encouraged to provide location portability but are not required to do so.

The services may be delivered by any technology but the range was opened to accommodate VoIP providers, especially ones to provide services over the Internet.

Nomadic use of the service is permitted at the discretion of the operator concerned. Thus subscribers may use numbers with a nomadicity feature to receive calls at any location inside or outside Malta and may also use the number as a CLI when they make calls in such circumstances.

13.2 Allocation method

The MCA will allocate numbers in blocks of 10,000 for which a charge is payable. Operators will not be able to reserve blocks.

Additional blocks will normally be allocated only when existing allocations have already been used to a reasonable level. In selecting which blocks to allocate, the MCA will aim to allow appropriate space for expansion so that an operator's allocations can be contiguous and not interleaved, but the MCA cannot guarantee that this will always be possible and the amount of expansion space that can be allowed will depend on the amount of unallocated numbering capacity remaining.

In terms of the choice of blocks, the MCA will take account of the applicant's wishes but cannot undertake that they will always be met if they are not compatible with the further development of the numbering plan.

The MCA reserves the right to withdraw any allocated but unused blocks. Arrangements for the allocation of blocks of 100,000 (i.e. 5-digit (i.e. 3XX) ranges) may be introduced in the future, in which case corresponding charges would be specified by the Government.

13.3 Criteria for the range

The following criteria apply:

- There is no requirement for number portability.
- In accordance with ITU-T Recommendation E.164, operators must provide an interconnection point in Malta to receive calls. Provided that this is done, numbers may be allocated to subscribers who do not have an address in Malta. In this case the calls from the other public network operators in Malta and overseas would be received at the interconnection point in Malta and then delivered to the number holder by a means determined by the operator.
- Operators shall not sub-allocate numbers to other operators without first notifying the MCA who may decline to allow the sub-allocation.
- Operators are not required to support calls to emergency services when the caller is currently located within Malta but must ensure that subscribers are aware of any limitations in the ability to make calls to emergency services.

13.4 Migration between PATS and non-PATS

Whilst the distinction between PATS and non-PATS cannot be regarded as stable for the longer term, in the absence of further clarification or any overriding requirement from the EU, the MCA proposes to apply these distinctions to the number ranges as follows:

- Services provided using the 2 range will be treated as PATS and the requirements relating to PATS will continue to apply to the services delivered to subscribers with numbers in the 2 range. These requirements primarily are the support of number portability and access to emergency services.
- An operator that starts by providing PATS in the 2 range may use the same network with the same features to provide services in the 3 range, but the services delivered to numbers in the 3 range will be treated as non-PATS and the numbers in the 3 range will not be subject to number portability requirements. Thus users with numbers in the 3 range will continue to have no right to number portability.

- An operator that starts by providing non-PATS in the 3 range may enhance the network's capabilities and use the enhanced network to provide services in the 2 range provided that the service meets the requirements for PATS. The numbers in the 2 range will be subject to number portability, but the ones in the 3 range will continue not to be subject to number portability.

14 THE 4 RANGE⁵

14.1 Service Description

Dedicated specifically and solely for M2M/IoT connectivity services and other non-interpersonal communications services (Non-ICS) requiring national E.164 numbering resources.

The term Non-ICS encompasses different types of services which include mobile Internet Access Services (SIMs used for the provision of internet access), M2M/IoT services and other services also provided within a M2M/IoT context such as in the case of communication with autonomous devices (e.g. remote setting of devices, etc.). Although M2M/IoT services may also incorporate a limited ‘voice element’ solely for a specific purpose, and not all the voice services generally associated with conventional telephony (e.g. eCall, autonomous calls from security systems, etc.), the utilisation of numbering resources from the ‘4’ range is applicable however is subject that they would not be utilised also for Interpersonal Communications Services, since this would require the utilisation of numbering resources from number ranges allocated specifically for Interpersonal Communications Services e.g. PATS.

To this effect, one should note that when an E.164 number is utilised for the purpose of Interpersonal Communications Services (e.g. conventional calls, SMSs, OTT telephony and messaging services etc.), even in cases when such services are offered in conjunction with Non-ICS (e.g. Internet Access Services, etc.), then the number should not be assigned from the ‘4’ range. For clarification purposes, if a SMS is solely used for device configuration purposes, such as for Over-The-Air (OTA) provisioning, it would not be considered as an Interpersonal Communications Service. On the other hand Interpersonal Communications Services may at times be offered in conjunction with M2M/IoT connectivity services providing a limited ‘voice element’ (e.g. eCalls in the case of connected vehicles or calls to an emergency contact number in the case of wearables) while utilising the same E.164 number. In such a scenario, the E.164 number should not be assigned from the ‘4’ range.

No parameters for termination rates are being set for services utilising numbering resources from this range.

14.2 Numbering Format

Due to Malta’s population size, the length of a conventional telephone number is limited to 8 digits (excluding country code). However since emerging Non-ICS, such as M2M/IoT services, could potentially require much larger volumes

⁵ The content of this entire section was introduced in July 2019 upon the publication of the Decision Notice “Numbering Resources for M2M/IoT Connectivity Services and other Non-Interpersonal Communications Services (Non-ICS)”

of numbering resources and do not typically require human intervention, the individual number length to be used in this range shall be that of 10 digits (excluding country code) increasing the numbering capacity within this range by a hundred-fold. If it transpires that the utilisation of numbering resources from this range is leading to capacity constraints, the MCA could then consider increasing the number digit format of unallocated sub-ranges from 10 digits to a maximum of 12 digits (excluding country code) in the future following a broad consultation with stakeholders.

14.3 Allocation method

Initially the MCA will allocate blocks of 100,000 numbers solely within 10 digit sub-ranges 40YYY XXXXX to 42YYY XXXXX.

Additional blocks will normally be allocated only when existing allocations have already been used to a reasonable level. In selecting which blocks to allocate, besides taking into consideration the applicant's preferences and their compatibility with the further development of the numbering plan, the MCA will also aim to allow appropriate space for expansion so that an undertaking's allocation can be contiguous and not interleaved. The MCA however cannot guarantee that this will always be possible, and the amount of expansion space that can be allowed will depend on the amount of unallocated numbering capacity remaining.

Requests for allocations that go beyond an applicant's immediate needs will not be considered unless in evidently justifiable circumstances. As in the case of other number ranges, undertakings will not be able to reserve number blocks from this number range.

The MCA reserves the right to withdraw any allocated but unused number blocks.

14.4 Criteria for the range

The following criteria apply:

- The undertaking is authorised to provide Non-ICS within the Maltese territory.
- No obligation to provide number portability although numbers from the '4' range may be ported subject to a voluntary agreement between the donor and recipient operators.
- Due to the cross-border nature of some M2M/IoT services and other Non-ICS, the MCA may authorise the extra-territorial use of numbers from the '4' range. This would be subject to whether the other country in question permits such use, and that its regulatory

requirements and conditions are adhered to, including the requirement for a General Authorisation, consumer protection requirements and other rules related to the use of numbering resources.

- Undertakings may not sub-allocate and/or transfer the rights of use of numbering resources from this range to other operators and/or service providers.
- There could be circumstances when Non-ICS providers will be required to support electronic communications services to the Maltese emergency services when the device with the number from the '4' range is located within the Maltese territory if it is considered technically possible and appropriate by the competent authorities (e.g. numbers from this range utilised for eCall services).
- In cases where electronic communications services to emergency services are supported, the location of the network termination point shall be provided for the support of location information to be associated with electronic communications services to the emergency services if it is considered technically possible and appropriate by the competent authorities.
- Where it is considered technically possible and appropriate by the competent authorities, any services offered using numbering resources from the '4' range shall be in line with the applicable Legal Interception and Calling Line Identification obligations.
- Undertakings allocated numbering resources from the '4' range are required to utilise the infrastructural and/or technical connectivity solutions of local authorised 'Public Communications Network' providers.

14.5 Definitions

The following is a list of definitions relevant to this section:

Machine-to-Machine (M2M)/Internet of Things (IoT)

Interpretations on the distinctions between these two terms within the industry are varied, however in this document 'M2M' refers to device-to-device communication generally not involving any human intervention. On the other hand the term 'IoT' denotes a service which includes a higher complexity of applications involving data analysis and resulting action, possibly emanating

from a network of 'M2M' devices. In fact 'M2M' is often referred to as a subset of 'IoT'.

For clarity, the term M2M/IoT within this document may also include electronic communication which may not involve device-to-device communication but is still provided within a M2M/IoT context, such as in the case of communication with autonomous devices (e.g. remote setting of devices, etc.). Some M2M/IoT services may also incorporate a limited 'voice element' to enable voice communication solely for a specific purpose and not all the voice services generally associated with conventional telephony, such as in the case of eCall, autonomous calls from security systems, etc.

Non-Interpersonal Communications Services (Non-ICS)

Non-ICS encompass those electronic communications services which are not of an Interpersonal Communications Services nature (such as in the case of conventional fixed and mobile telephony, SMS services, Over-The-Top (OTT) telephony and messaging services, etc.). Such Non-ICS include Internet Access Services and services consisting wholly or mainly in the conveyance of signals such as transmission services used for the provision of M2M/IoT services and for broadcasting.

15 THE 5 RANGE

The following requirements are intended to capture the decision published by the MCA in November 2010 entitled “A Framework for Premium Rate Services in the ‘5’ Numbering Range” and subsequent amendments⁶.

15.1 Service Description for the 50XX XXXX range

- Existing and new services accessible by SMS where the sender is charged a rate that is higher than that of a normal SMS.

- Services accessible by telephone calls where the caller is charged a rate that is higher than that of a normal call, but only where the services were introduced before 31 January 2011.

Notes:

- a. The MCA plans to migrate the numbers used in the 50 range to other ranges in the 5X range in the future.*
- b. As from the 1 February 2011, the MCA shall not allocate any further blocks to operators from the 50 range for voice premium rate services.*

With effect from 30 June 2011 numbers used for call related services in the 50 range may be used only in accordance with the following conditions:

- a) Terminating operators who provide access to these numbers shall interconnect with an originating operator for calls to numbers in the ‘50’ range within two months of receiving a written request for interconnection from that originating operator.
- b) The numbers may not be used for services designed for access by dial-up modems.
- c) The interconnection and inter-operator payment for call termination shall consist of:
 - a duration-independent premium rate element that shall not exceed the maximum shown in the figure 4 that corresponds to the retail price;
 - a duration-dependent conveyance element that shall not exceed the termination charge used for fixed services in Malta.

⁶ This section has been updated in September 2020 to reflect the updates to the “A Framework for Premium Rate Services in the ‘5’ numbering range” decision published by the MCA in September 2020.

Maximum Retail Price for the premium rate element	Amount to be retained by the Originating Operator	Max inter operator payment for the premium rate element
€ 0.30	€ 0.05	€ 0.25
€ 0.50	€ 0.07	€ 0.43
€ 0.75	€ 0.09	€ 0.66
€ 1.00	€ 0.10	€ 0.90
€ 2.00	€ 0.16	€ 1.84
€ 5.00	€ 0.35	€ 4.65
€ 10.00	€ 0.60	€ 9.40
€ 15.00	€ 0.75	€ 14.25
€ 25.00	€ 1.00	€ 24.00
€ 50.00	€ 1.50	€ 48.50

Figure 4: Premium Rate Services Retail & Wholesale price bands table for the 50 range, inclusive of any applicable VAT but exclusive of any other applicable taxes and duties (legacy services)

- d) If requested by the MCA, a terminating operator shall block access to a premium rate number specified by the MCA while complaints are investigated.
- e) The number may not be used in the CLI field of call signalling.
- f) Without prejudice to the requirements that may be established by other competent authorities, when the number is quoted in any advertisement or other form of publicity, the premium rate element of the retail tariff shall always be stated in a way that can be seen clearly by a reader or viewer, or heard clearly by a listener.
- g) The terminating operator shall record the identity of a responsible director or officer of the premium rate service provider that uses the number and retain a copy of their ID card, or their passport in the case of a foreign national. The terminating operator shall reconfirm or update this information every three years.
- h) A number that may be called at normal fixed telephony rates from both fixed and mobile shall be provided for complaints about products and services provided through the premium rate number. The terminating operator shall update its list containing all of the Premium Rate Service complaints' fixed line contact number.
- i) A service offered under an existing number may not be replaced by a different service.
- j) Any failure to conform to these conditions shall be rectified within a reasonable timeframe, otherwise service to the number shall be suspended until the problem is resolved.

15.2 Service Description for the 51XX XXXX; 52XX XXXX ranges

Services accessible by telephone calls where the caller is charged a rate which is higher than that of a normal call. These ranges can be accessible as from 1 February 2011, and may not be used for SMS based services until a future decision on such services is published.

There are three new different number ranges within the '5' range for premium rate services' categories, namely:

- 51 - A range for donations that supports opt-out
- 52 - A range for normal services that supports opt-out
- 54 - A range for services offering network specific features of telephony service by nature, and can only be offered by the originating operator. There will be no requirement for interconnection but supports opt-out (see section 15.3)

Note: 53XX XXXX may be introduced in the future for higher risk services that may require opt-in.

The numbers shall have the format:

Number Format: **5YT0 ZZXX**

Where:

- 'Y' indicates the service category: 1 = donation, 2 = normal; (3 = higher risk for future allocation);
- 'ZZ' indicates the operator to which the range is allocated;
- 'X' identifies the service;
- 'T' is used for tariff information.

Numbers assigned from these ranges may be used only in accordance with the following conditions:

- a) Terminating operators who provide access to these numbers shall establish interconnection with an originating operator for calls to numbers in the '51' and '52' ranges within two months of receiving a written request for interconnection from that originating operator.
- b) The numbers may not be used for services designed for access by dial-up modems.
- c) The inter-operator and interconnection payment for call termination shall consist of:
 - a duration-independent premium rate element that shall not exceed the maximum shown in the figure 5;
 - a duration-dependent conveyance element that shall not exceed the termination charge used for fixed services in Malta.

- d) If requested by the MCA, a terminating operator shall block access to a premium rate number specified by the MCA while complaints are investigated.
- e) The number may not be used in the CLI field of call signalling.
- f) Without prejudice to the requirements that may be established by other competent authorities, when the number is quoted in any advertisement or other form of publicity, the premium rate element of the retail tariff shall always be stated in a way that can be seen clearly by a reader or viewer, or heard clearly by a listener.
- g) The terminating operator shall record the identity of a responsible director or officer of the premium rate service provider that uses the number and retain a copy of their ID card, or their passport in the case of a foreign national. The terminating operator shall reconfirm or update this information every three years.
- h) A number that may be called at normal fixed telephony rates from both fixed and mobile shall be provided by the PRSP for complaints about products and services provided through the premium rate number.
- i) Any failure to conform to these conditions shall be rectified within a month otherwise service to the number shall be suspended until the problem is resolved.

Number Range	Maximum Retail Price for the Premium Rate Element	Amount to be retained by the Originating Operator	Max Inter-Op payment for the Premium Rate Element
5Y00 ZZXX	€ 20.00	€ 1.00	€ 19.00
5Y10 ZZXX	€ 0.50	€ 0.07	€ 0.43
5Y20 ZZXX	€ 0.75	€ 0.09	€ 0.66
5130 ZZXX	€ 100.00	€ 98.00	€ 2.00
5230 ZZXX	€ 1.00	€ 0.10	€ 0.90
5Y40 ZZXX	€ 2.00	€ 0.16	€ 1.84
5Y50 ZZXX	€ 5.00	€ 0.35	€ 4.65
5Y60 ZZXX	€ 10.00	€ 0.60	€ 9.40
5Y70 ZZXX	€ 15.00	€ 0.75	€ 14.25
5Y80 ZZXX	€ 25.00	€ 1.00	€ 24.00
5Y90 ZZXX	€ 50.00	€ 1.50	€ 48.50

Figure 5: Premium Rate Services Retail & Wholesale price bands table for the 51 and 52 range, inclusive of any applicable VAT but exclusive of any other applicable taxes and duties

15.3 Service Description for the 54XX XXXX range

Services accessible by telephone calls where the caller is charged a rate which is higher than that of a normal call and where the nature of the service is such that it can only be provided by the originating operator. This range can be accessible as from 1 February 2011, and may not be used for SMS based services until a future decision on such services is published.

The numbers shall have the format:

Number Format: **5YT0 ZZXX**

Where:

- ‘Y’ indicates the service category: 4 = Network Specific;
- ‘ZZ’ indicates the operator to which the range is allocated;
- ‘X’ identifies the service;
- ‘T’ is used for tariff information.

Numbers assigned from these ranges may be used only in accordance with the following conditions:

- a) The numbers may not be used for services designed for access by dial-up modems.
- b) The maximum retail price shall conform to Figure 6.

Number Range	Maximum Retail Price for the Premium Rate Element
5400 ZZXX	€ 20.00
5410 ZZXX	€ 0.50
5420 ZZXX	€ 0.75
5430 ZZXX	€ 1.00
5440 ZZXX	€ 2.00
5450 ZZXX	€ 5.00
5460 ZZXX	€ 10.00
5470 ZZXX	€ 15.00
5480 ZZXX	€ 25.00
5490 ZZXX	€ 50.00

Figure 6: Premium Rate Services Retail bands table for the 54 range, inclusive of any applicable VAT but exclusive of any other applicable taxes and duties

- c) The number may not be used in the CLI field of call signalling.
- d) Without prejudice to the requirements that may be established by other competent authorities, when the number is quoted in any advertisement or other form of publicity, the premium rate element of the retail tariff

shall always be stated in a way that can be seen clearly by a reader or viewer, or heard clearly by a listener.

15.4 Allocation method

Number Format: **5YT0 ZZXX**

The MCA will allocate numbers identifying the first 6 digits in which the 5th and 6th digits denoted as 'ZZ' in the *Number Format* shall be allocated to the applicant operator.

The entity allocated such a numbering range shall have the flexibility in assigning the last two digits as it deems fit. It shall utilise the 'Y' digit depending on the service being offered (51T0 ZZXX for donations that supports opt-out; 52T0 ZZXX for normal services that supports opt-out; and 54T0 ZZXX for services offering network specific features of telephony) and the 'T' digit depending on the chosen price band.

The MCA will aim to allow appropriate space for expansion so that an operator's allocations can be contiguous and not interleaved, but the MCA cannot guarantee that this will always be possible and the amount of expansion space that can be allowed will depend on the amount of unallocated numbering capacity remaining.

The MCA reserves the right to withdraw any allocated but unused blocks.

15.5 Criteria for the range

The following criteria apply:

- Number portability is required for all numbers used for voice related services in the ranges 50, 51 and 52 from 1 October 2011 (provisional date).
- Operators shall not sub-allocate numbers to other operators without first notifying the MCA who may decline to allow such a sub-allocation.

16 THE 6 RANGE

This range is reserved for future expansion and should not be used for any new services.

17 THE 7 RANGE

17.1 Service description

Mobile and other services, where:

- the terminating rates are similar to those of mobile services, i.e. with the exception of the 71 range, the terminating rate associated with all numbers in this range does not exceed the mean of the termination rates specified by the MCA for mobile operators with Significant Market Power in call termination by more than 10% to ensure an adequate level of tariff transparency; and
- operators do not share revenue with their subscribers other than credit, not payment.

Subscribers may use the numbers to make and receive calls from any location inside or outside Malta if their service provides roaming or supports nomadicity.

17.2 Allocation method

The MCA will allocate numbers in blocks of 10,000 for which a charge is payable. Operators will not be able to reserve blocks.

Additional blocks will normally be allocated only when existing allocations have already been used to a reasonable level. In selecting which blocks to allocate, the MCA will aim to allow appropriate space for expansion so that an operator's allocations can be contiguous and not interleaved, but the MCA cannot guarantee that this will always be possible and the amount of expansion space that can be allowed will depend on the amount of unallocated numbering capacity remaining.

Requests for allocations that go beyond an operator's immediate needs will be considered only if the operator concerned:

- a) requires a larger range of numbers to support some aspect of its marketing or operations
- b) has potential demand for its services that will eventually make reasonably efficient use of the numbers, and
- c) has or is developing network coverage of at least 90% of the Maltese Islands through its own infrastructure.

In terms of the choice of blocks, the MCA will take account of the applicant's wishes but cannot undertake that they will always be met if they are not compatible with the further development of the numbering plan.

The MCA reserves the right to withdraw any allocated but unused blocks.

Arrangements for the allocation of blocks of 100,000 and 1,000,000 numbers (i.e. 5-digit (i.e. 7XX) and 6-digit (i.e. 7X) ranges) may be introduced in the future, in which case corresponding charges would be specified by the Government.

No distinctions will be made in future between DDI and non-DDI numbers.

17.3 Criteria for the range

The following criteria apply to the 7 range:

- All numbers are required to be portable with other mobile operators. This will be extended to other similar services.
- Operators shall not sub-allocate numbers to other operators without first notifying the MCA who may decline to allow the sub-allocation.
- Operators are required to support calls to emergency services when the caller is currently located within Malta.

The same criteria will apply to allocations of other ranges to new mobile operators.

17.4 Interim Numbering Solution for M2M/IoT Services⁷

In the absence of a number range dedicated to M2M/IoT services in the National Numbering Plan, in the past years the MCA authorised the utilisation of numbering resources from the 7 range for the provision of M2M/IoT connectivity services as an interim solution. This is subject to the requirement that the service provider in question keeps a record of any sub-ranges allocated specifically for M2M/IoT connectivity services and adheres to the condition that these numbering resources are not utilised on an extra-territorial basis.

In order to be exempted from adhering to all PATS obligations, those service providers utilising such numbering resources from the 7 range as an interim solution specifically for M2M/IoT connectivity services may inform the MCA so it can indicate that such sub-ranges have been allocated specifically for M2M/IoT connectivity services in its National Numbering Plan Allocations matrix found on the MCA website.

As from 1st August 2020, the allocation of new numbering resources for M2M/IoT connectivity services and other Non-ICS from the 7 range will not be permitted. Where service providers are aware, they should ensure that any

⁷ This sub-section was introduced in July 2019 upon the publication of the Decision Notice “Numbering Resources for M2M/IoT Connectivity Services and other Non-Interpersonal Communications Services (Non-ICS)”.

numbering resources allocated from the 7 range as an interim solution for M2M/IoT connectivity services and other Non-ICS are replaced by numbering resources from the 4 range at the earliest possible opportunity and by not later than the 31st December 2024.

In the case of exceptional circumstances service providers may request the Authority to extend even further the migration timeframe providing appropriate justification which will be analysed on a case by case basis.

18 THE 8 RANGE

18.1 Service description for the 8000 XXXX range

Services accessible by telephone calls or SMS or MMS messages where the caller is not charged for the call or SMS/MMS, whether from a fixed or mobile network

18.2 Service description for the 8003 XXXX, 8004 XXXX, 8006 XXXX, 8007 XXXX, 8009 XXXX ranges

Services accessible by telephone calls or SMS or MMS messages where the caller is not charged for the call or SMS/MMS if made from a fixed network but may be charged a charge that shall not exceed the charge for a call to a Maltacom/GO fixed number for a call from a mobile network.

18.3 Allocation method

The MCA will allocate numbers in blocks of 1000 for which a charge is likely to be introduced in the near future. Operators will not be able to reserve blocks.

Additional blocks will normally be allocated only when existing allocations have already been used to a reasonable level. In selecting which blocks to allocate, the MCA will aim to allow appropriate space for expansion so that an operator's allocations can be contiguous and not interleaved, but the MCA cannot guarantee that this will always be possible and the amount of expansion space that can be allowed will depend on the amount of unallocated numbering capacity remaining.

In terms of the choice of blocks, the MCA will take account of the applicant's wishes but cannot undertake that they will always be met if they are not compatible with the further development of the numbering plan.

The MCA reserves the right to withdraw any allocated but unused blocks.

The MCA reserves the right to replace this allocation system with individual allocation to freephone content providers in the future.

18.4 Criteria for the range

The following criteria apply:

- Number portability shall be introduced by 31 December 2008.
- Operators shall not sub-allocate numbers to other operators without first notifying the MCA who may decline to allow the sub-allocation.⁸

⁸ This section was included in August 2008 as per "A Framework for Freephone Services in the 800 range" decision published by the MCA in August 2008.

19 THE 9 RANGE

19.1 Service description

Mobile and other services, where:

- the terminating rates are similar to those of mobile services, i.e. the terminating rate associated with all numbers in this range does not exceed the mean of the termination rates specified by the MCA for mobile operators with Significant Market Power in call termination by more than 10% to ensure an adequate level of tariff transparency; and
- operators do not share revenue with their subscribers other than credit, not payment..

Subscribers may use the numbers to make and receive calls from any location inside or outside Malta if their service provides roaming or supports nomadicity.

19.2 Allocation method

The MCA will allocate numbers in blocks of 10,000 for which a charge is payable. Operators will not be able to reserve blocks.

Additional blocks will normally be allocated only when existing allocations have already been used to a reasonable level. In selecting which blocks to allocate, the MCA will aim to allow appropriate space for expansion so that an operator's allocations can be contiguous and not interleaved, but the MCA cannot guarantee that this will always be possible and the amount of expansion space that can be allowed will depend on the amount of unallocated numbering capacity remaining.

Requests for allocations that go beyond an operator's immediate needs will be considered only if the operator concerned:

- a) requires a larger range of numbers to support some aspect of its marketing or operations
- b) has potential demand for its services that will eventually make reasonably efficient use of the numbers, and
- c) has or is developing network coverage of at least 90% of the Maltese Islands through its own infrastructure.

In terms of the choice of blocks, the MCA will take account of the applicant's wishes but cannot undertake that they will always be met if they are not compatible with the further development of the numbering plan.

The MCA reserves the right to withdraw any allocated but unused blocks.

Arrangements for the allocation of blocks of 100,000 and 1,000,000 numbers (i.e. 5-digit (i.e. 9XX) and 6-digit (i.e. 9X) ranges) may be introduced in the future, in which case corresponding charges would be specified by the Government.

No distinctions will be made in future between DDI and non-DDI numbers.

19.3 Criteria for the range

The following criteria apply to the 9 range:

- All numbers are required to be portable with other mobile operators.
- Operators shall not sub-allocate numbers to other operators without first notifying the MCA who may decline to allow the sub-allocation.
- Operators are required to support calls to emergency services when the caller is currently located within Malta.

The same criteria will apply to allocations of other ranges to new mobile operators.

19.4 Interim Numbering Solution for M2M/IoT Services⁹

In the absence of a number range dedicated to M2M/IoT services in the National Numbering Plan, in the past years the MCA authorised the utilisation of numbering resources from the 9 range for the provision of M2M/IoT connectivity services as an interim solution. This is subject to the requirement that the service provider in question keeps a record of any sub-ranges allocated specifically for M2M/IoT connectivity services and adheres to the condition that these numbering resources are not utilised on an extra-territorial basis.

In order to be exempted from adhering to all PATS obligations, those service providers utilising such numbering resources from the 9 range as an interim solution specifically for M2M/IoT connectivity services may inform the MCA so it can indicate that such sub-ranges have been allocated specifically for M2M/IoT connectivity services in its National Numbering Plan Allocations matrix found on the MCA website.

As from 1st August 2020, the allocation of new numbering resources for M2M/IoT connectivity services and other Non-ICS from the 9 range will not be permitted. Where service providers are aware, they should ensure that any numbering resources allocated from the 9 range as an interim solution for

⁹ This sub-section was introduced in July 2019 upon the publication of the Decision Notice “Numbering Resources for M2M/IoT Connectivity Services and other Non-Interpersonal Communications Services (Non-ICS)”.

M2M/IoT connectivity services and other Non-ICS are replaced by numbering resources from the 4 range at the earliest possible opportunity and by not later than the 31st December 2024.

In the case of exceptional circumstances service providers may request the Authority to extend even further the migration timeframe providing appropriate justification which will be analysed on a case by case basis.

20 SUMMARY OF THE MAIN NUMBER RANGES

Figure 7 gives a high level view of the revised numbering plan proposed in this document. The column on number charging states the current position and may be changed in the future.

Range	Detail	Allocations	PATS	Number Portability	Emergency Access	Revenue Sharing	Nomadcity or Roaming	Number Charging	Retail Tariff
0 - Access Codes	00 - International access	-	-	-	-	-	-	No	*
	05XX - Number Portability Codes	1	-	No	-	-	-	No	*
1 - Other Codes	1XX/XX - Short codes	1	-	No	-	-	-	No	Low
	10XX - Carrier selection	1	-	No	-	-	-	No	*
	116XXX - HESC	1	-	No	-	-	-	No	Low
	118X - Directory services	1	-	No	-	-	-	No	High
2 - Fixed PATS	2XXX XXXX	10k	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Low
3 - Non-PATS ECS	3XXX XXXX	10k	No	No	No ¹	No	Yes	Yes	Low
4 - Non-ICS	40XXX XXXXX - 42XXX XXXXX	100k	No	No	No ¹	No	Yes	Yes	**
5 - Premium	50XX XXXX - Legacy & SMS PRS	1k	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	High
	5YT0 Z0XX - Voice PRS	100	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	High
6 - Spare for future use	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
7 - Mobile PATS	7XXX XXXX	10k	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	High
8 - Freephone	800X XXXX	1k	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	Low
	8000 XXXX	1k	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	Zero
9 - Mobile PATS	9XXX XXXX	10k	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	High

¹ Except in particular circumstances

* Not Relevant

** Variable

Updated July 2019

Figure 7: Revised numbering plan

21 CORRECT USE OF NATIONAL NUMBERING RESOURCES¹⁰

Whenever Maltese national numbering resources are utilised for the provision of any electronic communications service, the national codes applicable to the various types of numbering resources associated with the same subscription profile shall pertain to Malta (i.e. national codes 356 and 278 for E.164/E.118 and E.212 numbering resources respectively).

¹⁰ This section was introduced in July 2019 upon the publication of the Decision Notice “Numbering Resources for M2M/IoT Connectivity Services and other Non-Interpersonal Communications Services (Non-ICS)”.