

LOUISIANA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

ORDER NUMBER U-36659

LOUISIANA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION, EX PARTE,
EX PARTE

Docket No. U-36659, In re: Notification by the North American Numbering Plan Administrator of the need for relief for the 318 Numbering Plan Area Code.

(Decided at the April 26, 2023 Business and Executive Session.)

Overview and Procedural History

On January 24, 2023 the North American Numbering Plan Administrator (“NANPA”) notified Louisiana Public Service Commission (“LPSC” or “Commission”) Staff of the need for relief in the 318 numbering plan area (“NPA” or “area code”). Subsequently, NANPA submitted a letter, providing notice that the 318 area code is projected to exhaust during the first quarter of 2026.

Per NANPA’s letter, relief planning generally needs to begin thirty-six months prior to the projected exhaust of the NPA. Based on this timeframe, Staff initiated this proceeding and issued a Proposed Recommendation on February 1, 2023, wherein Staff recommended that the Commission approve the overlay method for 318 area code relief.

Staff’s Proposed Recommendation was published in the Commission’s Official Bulletin # 1290, dated February 3, 2023. Timely interventions were received from the following: T-Mobile USA, Inc.; NANPA; BellSouth Telecommunications, LLC d/b/a AT&T Louisiana; the Louisiana Telecommunications Association (“LTA”); and MCI Communications Services LLC d/b/a Verizon Business Services, MCImetro Access Transmission Services LLC d/b/a Verizon Access Transmission Services, Verizon Long Distance LLC, Verizon Select Services Inc., XO Communications Services, LLC, Alltel Corporation, and Cellco Partnership (collectively, “Verizon”).

Comments in support of Staff’s Recommendation were filed into the docket on March 20, 2023 by the Louisiana Telecommunications Association and the Joint Telecommunication Carriers. As such, no changes were made to the Proposed Recommendation and Staff issued a Final Recommendation on April 13, 2023 for consideration at the Commission’s April 26, 2023 Business and Executive Session

Commission Jurisdiction

The Commission's jurisdiction over common carriers and public utilities is found in Article IV, Section 21 of the Louisiana Constitution of 1974 and La. R.S. 45:1161, *et seq.* Louisiana Constitution, Article IV, Section 21 provides in pertinent part:

The Commission shall regulate all common carriers and public utilities and have such other regulatory authority as provided by law. It shall adopt and enforce reasonable rules, regulations, and procedures necessary for the discharge of its duties, and shall have other powers and perform other duties as provided by law.

The Federal Telecommunications Act of 1996 ("Act") grants the Federal Communications Commission ("FCC") exclusive jurisdiction over the North American Numbering Plan and NANPA in the United States. However, the FCC may delegate specific authority to state commissions, and one such delegation is number conservation measures. Pursuant to 47 C.F.R. § 52.19, state commissions have been delegated authority to resolve matters involving the introduction of new area codes within their states. 47 C.F.R. § 52.19 reads, in pertinent part:

- (a) state commissions may resolve matters involving the introduction of new area codes within their states. Such matters may include, but are not limited to: Directing whether area code relief will take the form of a geographic split, an overlay area code, or a boundary realignment; establishing new area code boundaries; establishing necessary dates for the implementation of area code relief plans; and directing public education efforts regarding area code changes.
- (b) State commissions may perform any or all functions related to initiation and development of area code relief plans, so long as they act consistently with the guidelines enumerated in this part, and subject to paragraph (b)(2) of this section. For the purposes of this paragraph, initiation and development of area code relief planning encompasses all functions related to the implementation of new area codes that were performed by central Office code administrators prior to February 8, 1996. Such functions may include: declaring that the area code relief planning process should begin; convening and conducting meetings to which the telecommunications industry and the public are invited on area code relief for a particular area code; and developing the details of a proposed area code relief plan or plans.

Staff's Recommendation

After a review of the Act, data provided by NANPA, and comments from intervenors, Staff filed its Final Recommendation on April 13, 2013, recommending that the Commission approve an overlay plan for 318 area code relief over the alternative of a geographical split plan. This recommendation was based on historical data showing that twenty-seven states have chosen to implement an overlay plan in the last ten years in lieu of a geographical split, as persevering seven-digit dialing has declined over the years given the more prevalent use of wireless communication. Further, in order to implement a geographical split, additional decisions would need to be made, such as where to draw the boundary for the two area codes and which area will receive a new area

code. Dividing an area code that has been in existence since 1957, which 318 has, would likely require approximately one half of current consumers to change their telephone number.

Commission Consideration

After discussion, on motion of Commissioner Skrmetta, seconded by Vice Chairman Francis, and unanimously adopted, the Commission voted to adopt Staff’s Proposed Final Recommendation filed into the record April 13, 2023 and approve an overlay plan for 318 area code relief over the alternative of a geographical split plan and direct NANPA to begin the process to conduct an overlay.

THEREFORE, IT IS ORDERED:

That the Staff’s Proposed Final Recommendation is accepted by this Commission and that NANPA is directed to begin the process of area code relief for the 318 area code by using the overlay method over the alternative of a geographical split.

This Order is effective immediately.

**BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION
BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA
May 5, 2023**



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**BRANDON M. FREY
SECRETARY**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Foster Campbell".

**DISTRICT V
CHAIRMAN FOSTER L. CAMPBELL**

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mike Francis".

**DISTRICT IV
VICE CHAIRMAN MIKE FRANCIS**

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Eric F. Skrmetta".

**DISTRICT I
COMMISSIONER ERIC F. SKRMETTA**

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**DISTRICT II
COMMISSIONER CRAIG GREENE**

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**DISTRICT III
COMMISSIONER DAVANTE LEWIS**