



STATE OF CALIFORNIA

GAVIN NEWSOM, Governor **FILED**

**PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION**

03/21/25

505 VAN NESS AVENUE

12:48 PM

SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94102-3298

A2405011

March 21, 2025

**Agenda ID #23389**  
**Ratesetting**

TO PARTIES OF RECORD IN APPLICATION 24-05-011:

This is the proposed decision of Administrative Law Judge Suman Mathews. Until and unless the Commission hears the item and votes to approve it, the proposed decision has no legal effect. This item may be heard, at the earliest, at the Commission's **4/24/2025** Business Meeting. To confirm when the item will be heard, please see the Business Meeting agenda, which is posted on the Commission's website 10 days before each Business Meeting.

Parties of record may file comments on the proposed decision as provided in Rule 14.3 of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure.

The Commission may hold a Ratesetting Deliberative Meeting to consider this item in closed session in advance of the Business Meeting at which the item will be heard. In such event, notice of the Ratesetting Deliberative Meeting will appear in the Daily Calendar, which is posted on the Commission's website. If a Ratesetting Deliberative Meeting is scheduled, *ex parte* communications are prohibited pursuant to Rule 8.2(c)(4).

/s/ MICHELLE COOKE

Michelle Cooke

Chief Administrative Law Judge

MLC: smt

Attachment

Decision PROPOSED DECISION OF ALJ MATHEWS (Mailed 3/21/2025)

**BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

Application of the North American  
Numbering Plan Administrator, on  
behalf of the California  
Telecommunications Industry, for  
Relief of the 657/714 Numbering Plan  
Area.

Application 24-05-011

**DECISION GRANTING REQUEST FOR AN ALL-SERVICES  
AREA CODE OVERLAY IN THE 657/714  
NUMBERING PLAN AREA**

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**DECISION GRANTING REQUEST FOR AN ALL-SERVICES  
AREA CODE OVERLAY IN THE 657/714  
NUMBERING PLAN AREA**

**Summary**

By this decision, we approve the request of the North American Numbering Plan Administrator to adopt a new, additional all-services distributed overlay (overlay) to resolve the forecasted exhaustion of numbering resources in the existing 657/714 Numbering Plan Area (NPA) overlay (657/714 NPA), with a nine (9)-month implementation schedule that will be completed at least six months prior to the projected exhaustion of numbering in the 657/714 NPA. The additional overlay will provide more numbering resources to meet the demand for telephone numbers while minimizing customer inconvenience. The additional overlay will superimpose a new NPA over the same geographic area covered by the existing 657/714 NPA and is projected to last approximately 10 years.

We approve the request, but implementation need not commence until exhaustion requires it. We order a public education program, within the timeframes provided by this decision, to facilitate implementation of the overlay. We also find that paid advertising is not necessary for the overlay requested in this application.

No existing customers will be required to change their area code or specific telephone number. After the implementation period, the new overlay area code will be available for new telephone number assignments in the same region as the 657/714 NPA upon exhaust of available prefixes in the existing 657/714

NPA. Customers will continue to dial the three-digit area code for all calls to and from telephone numbers with the 657/714 area codes and new area codes.

Application 24-05-011 is closed.

## **1. Background**

The North American Numbering Plan Administrator (NANPA),<sup>1</sup> on behalf of the California Telecommunications Industry (Industry),<sup>2</sup> filed Application (A.) 24-05-011 requesting relief in the 657/714 NPA.<sup>3</sup> NANPA alleges that the 657/714 NPA is projected to exhaust its Central Office codes (often referred to as CO or NXX codes) during the first quarter of 2027 and needs relief. NANPA argues that absent relief, the supply of CO codes in the 657/714 NPA is projected to run out during the projected exhaust quarter.

No protests were filed in response to the application.

On July 11, 2024, the assigned Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) held a telephonic prehearing conference in this matter to discuss and establish the service list for this proceeding, and to determine the scope of the proceeding. The assigned Commissioner issued the Scoping Memo and Ruling on September 23, 2024.

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<sup>1</sup> As a neutral third-party administrator, NANPA has no independent view regarding the relief option proposed by the Industry in this application.

<sup>2</sup> The Industry is composed of current and prospective telecommunications carriers operating in, or considering operations within, the 657/714 Numbering Plan Area (NPA or area code).

<sup>3</sup> An NPA, also known as an area code, normally represents a geographic area within a state. In the current case, the NPA is 657/714. Throughout this decision, NPA and area code are used interchangeably.

Effective January 1, 2019, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) appointed Somos, Inc. (Somos) to replace Neustar, Inc. as the NANPA.<sup>4</sup>

All rulings issued by the assigned Commissioner and ALJ are affirmed herein.

## 2. Jurisdiction

The FCC holds full responsibility over all numbering issues but has delegated to the states area code relief responsibilities.<sup>5</sup> On behalf of the State of California, the California Public Utilities Commission (Commission) is responsible for proactively monitoring area code relief planning and overseeing the integrity and competitive neutrality of the telecommunications industry<sup>6</sup> relief planning process.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Available as of the date of this decision at: <https://docs.fcc.gov/public/attachments/DOC-368493A1.pdf>

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<sup>5</sup> Available as of the date of this decision at: [http://transition.fcc.gov/Bureaus/Common\\_Carrier/Reports/FCC-State\\_Link/IAD/utilizationdec2000.pdf](http://transition.fcc.gov/Bureaus/Common_Carrier/Reports/FCC-State_Link/IAD/utilizationdec2000.pdf).

<sup>6</sup> Within this decision, the "telecommunications industry" identifies service providers in general throughout the United States and Canada.

<sup>7</sup> Public Utilities (Pub. Util.) Code Section 7936 states, "The commission shall direct the NANPA to obtain utilization data for any area code for which a relief plan is proposed, prior to adopting a plan for, or setting a date for, relief."

*Footnote continued on next page.*

### **3. Process for Determining Need for a New Area Code**

NANPA's primary responsibility is to ensure numbering resources are available to the telecommunications industry in the United States and Canada.<sup>8</sup> NANPA assigns those resources in the form of area codes and prefixes; tracks their use to ensure effective and efficient utilization; and, on a semi-annual basis, forecasts which area codes will soon run out of prefixes.<sup>9</sup> When it determines that an area code is near exhaustion, NANPA, as a neutral third party, initiates and coordinates the planning process for resolving the utilization of available prefixes, which is known as Area Code Relief Planning (relief planning). Such relief planning, which includes the introduction of a new area code within the

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Pub. Util. Code Section 7943(a) states: "It is the intent of the Legislature that when the commission has no reasonable alternative other than to create a new area code, that the commission do so in a way that creates the least inconvenience for customers." Pub. Util. Code Section 7943(c) states: "Before approving any new area code, the commission shall first perform a telephone utilization study and implement all reasonable telephone number conservation measures."

<sup>8</sup> When projecting that an area code will run out of prefixes, NANPA looks at several factors, including but not limited to: (1) the history of code assignments in the area code; (2) the current growth rate within the telecommunications industry in the NPA; (3) five years of annual code growth in that area code; and (4) each telecommunications service provider's semi-annual growth forecast in the area code in question to determine future demand for new prefixes. NANPA considers all this information to forecast when an area code will run out of, or "exhaust," all available prefixes. This information is also considered in NANPA's determination of the life expectancy for the relief alternatives being considered. (As of this writing, available at <https://www.nationalnanpa.com/index.html>.)

<sup>9</sup> A prefix, also known as a central office code (CO code) is the second set of three digits of a telephone number. Prefixes are assigned to rate centers within an area code. Each prefix consists of 10,000 line numbers.

existing area code in which the exhaust is forecasted to occur, normally begins three years prior to the forecasted exhaust.<sup>10</sup>

After informing the Commission of the forecasted exhaust in an area code, NANPA begins the relief planning process by calling a meeting with the Industry to identify viable solutions to the forecasted exhaust. NANPA and the Industry are required to follow regulations established by the FCC and the Commission, as well as telecommunications industry guidelines.<sup>11</sup> After the Industry develops feasible alternatives, such as an all-services distributed overlay or a geographic split,<sup>12</sup> the Industry then strives to reach consensus on the best plan to resolve the forecasted exhaust in the area code in question.

NANPA then submits its application to the Commission seeking relief for the exhausting area code recommending the Industry's consensus solution. After the Commission has made its decision on a relief plan, telecommunications

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<sup>10</sup> Pub. Util. Code Section 7931(d).

<sup>11</sup> In planning area code relief, the Industry: (1) is required to follow rate center boundaries; (2) may not consider certain types of relief, such as service-specific area codes for cell phones, pagers, or other services, due to current federal regulation; and (3) may consider communities of interest, city and county boundaries, and natural dividing lines like mountains or rivers. The Industry then measures these items against established Industry criteria such as minimizing customer confusion, ensuring that relief plans have adequate projected lives, and maintaining competitive neutrality among service providers. ATIS-0300061-NPA Code Relief Planning and Notification Guidelines at Section 2.4, Section 6.1, Section 6.3.4, and Section 6.4, Alliance for Telecommunications Industry Solutions. (FCC 00-104 at 3.)

<sup>12</sup> An all-services overlay is a plan in which the original and new area codes apply to the same geographic area. A geographic split divides an area code into two area codes, each assigned to a specific geographic area, with one area retaining the original area code and the other area changing to a new area code.



service providers are required to implement the relief plan within a specified period adopted in the decision.

Prior to 2017, Pub. Util. Code Section 7931(e)(2) required Commission staff to conduct at least one public meeting for the local jurisdictions and the public affected by the area code relief activities. Pub. Util. Code Section 7931(e)(2) was subsequently revised to no longer require public meetings for area code relief.<sup>13</sup>

Public meetings may be conducted at the discretion of the Commission but are not required. For the 657/714 NPA relief proceedings, the public meetings that have been held in the past are replaced with a webcast posted on the Commission website.

NANPA alleges that absent NPA relief, the supply of CO codes in the 657/714 NPA is projected to run out during the projected exhaust quarter. In this Application, the Industry reached consensus to recommend to the Commission a new, additional all-services distributed overlay plan as its choice of relief for the 657/714 NPA.

### **3.1. Basics of the Telephone Numbering System**

In each area code in the United States, telephone numbers are made up of an area code, a three-digit prefix, and a four-digit line number (for *example*,

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<sup>13</sup> In 2017, Senate Bill 385 (2017-2018) revised Pub. Util. Code Section 7931(e)(2) to require commission staff to notify representatives of local jurisdictions and the public in affected areas, but, instead of requiring them, would authorize them, at the discretion of the commission, to conduct one or more meetings both for representatives of local jurisdictions and for members of the public in affected geographic areas for those same purposes. The purpose of the revision is to “repeal obsolete auditing, reporting, and other similar requirements on the commission.”

559-555-1234).<sup>14</sup> Specific geographic areas are assigned an area code, while each individual phone line is assigned a line number. Each area code is divided up into local serving areas called exchanges; within each exchange is a rate center. The 657/714 area codes are predominantly in northern Orange County and a small portion of Los Angeles and San Bernardino Counties.

Originally, telephone numbers were assigned to service providers in 10,000 block groups. Thousand-block number pooling implemented a new resource allocation system to divide a prefix or central office code (NXX code or CO code), which is a group of 10,000 telephone numbers, into 10 sequential blocks or groups of 1,000 telephone numbers allowing the allocation of telephone numbers in blocks of 1,000. This system allows multiple service providers operating in the same rate center to share the 10,000 numbers in a prefix at the thousand-block level.

Every prefix, which is assigned to a specific rate center, includes 10,000 line numbers. The FCC has set aside certain prefixes such as 958, 959, and 555, as abbreviated dialing patterns dedicated to special uses. As of April 8, 2024, the 657/714 NPA had 214 available prefixes remaining.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> A line number, which is the last four digits of a customer's phone number, is the number assigned to the phone line that an individual customer uses.

<sup>15</sup> A.24-05-011, Exhibit B, Attachment 2.

Once all the available prefixes are used, a new area code is necessary. Based on its most recent data, NANPA projects the 657/714 NPA to run out of prefixes in the first quarter of 2027.<sup>16</sup>

### **3.2. The 657/714 Area Codes**

The 213 NPA, created in 1947, originally covered all of southern California. The 714 NPA was created as a result of a geographic split (split) of the 213 NPA in 1951. The 714 area code was split again three more times, first in 1982 creating the 619 NPA, then in 1992 creating the 909 NPA, and in 1998 creating the 949 NPA. The 714 NPA needed relief again in 1999 and the Commission approved an overlay as the form of relief. The new 657 NPA was scheduled to be implemented on October 7, 2000. However, due to number conservation measures, the 657 NPA was not implemented as the relief code for the 714 NPA until September 23, 2008.

As previously noted, the 657/714 NPA is predominantly in northern Orange County and a small portion of Los Angeles and San Bernardino Counties. The 657/714 NPA serves all or portions of communities such as Anaheim, Brea, Buena Park, Costa Mesa, Cypress, Fountain Valley, Fullerton, Garden Grove, Huntington Beach, Orange, Placentia, Santa Ana, Westminster, and Yorba Linda. The 657/714 NPA is bordered to the north by the 562 NPA, the 626 NPA, and 909/840 NPA overlay, to the east by the 951 NPA, and to the south by the 949 NPA. Mandatory 1+10 digit dialing has been required in the

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<sup>16</sup> *Id* at 2.

657/714 NPA since August 2008 and is required in all of the bordering NPAs as well.

#### **4. Current Request for a New Area Code**

As required by the FCC, NANPA collects CO code assignment, utilization, and forecasted demand data to determine the projected need for numbering resources. NANPA uses this data to project the exhaust date of each area code and publishes the results twice a year. The NPA Code Relief Planning and Notification Guidelines (NPA Relief Guidelines) direct NANPA to prepare relief options for an NPA prior to the Industry meeting, generally 36 months in advance of the projected exhaust date.<sup>17</sup>

As previously mentioned, the existing 657/714 overlay and its mandatory 1+10-digit dialing has been in place since 2008.<sup>18</sup> NANPA determined that the only relief alternative that meets Industry guidelines for an existing NPA overlay complex is a new all-services distributed overlay. Subsequently, NANPA distributed a notice to the Industry on March 19, 2024 for review of a draft application seeking Commission approval for a new all-services distributed overlay NPA. In April 2024, NANPA published its semi-annual Numbering Resource Utilization Forecast (NRUF) and NPA Exhaust Analysis (collectively, the April 2024 NRUF Report) which indicated that the 657/714

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<sup>17</sup> NPA Relief Guidelines, § 5.12.

<sup>18</sup> A.24-05-011 at 6.

NPA would exhaust during the first quarter of 2027.<sup>19</sup> On April 9, 2024, the Industry met and approved the application that is now before us (*i.e.*, A.24-05-011) for an additional all-services distributed overlay NPA of the existing 657/714 NPA.<sup>20</sup>

Given that 1+10-digit dialing is already in place in the 657/714 NPA, NANPA alleges there is no need for either a permissive dialing period or customer education about 1+10 digit dialing.

## **5. Description of Relief Plan**

Pub. Util. Code Section 7943(a) directs the Commission to provide area code relief using the option that is most convenient for customers. To approve a new area code under Pub. Util. Code Section 7936 and Section 7943(c), the Commission must get utilization data from NANPA for the area code for which relief is proposed, perform a telephone utilization study, and implement all reasonable telephone number conservation measures. Implementing a new area code poses challenges, however. Pub. Util. Code Section 7934(b) acknowledges that new area codes cause unnecessary hardship to people in California, as they lose their existing area codes and longtime telephone numbers. Pub. Util. Code Sections 7934(c) and (d) state that new area codes increase costs to businesses and individuals, as business cards and letterhead stationery must be replaced to show the new area codes. In addition, Pub. Util. Code Section 7931(c) states that rate area boundaries, municipal

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<sup>19</sup> A.24-05-011 at 4.

<sup>20</sup> *Id.*, Exhibit B

boundaries, communities of interest, and other appropriate criteria should be considered when evaluating the boundaries of a new area code. When there is no reasonable alternative to creating a new area code, the Commission must do so in a way that is the most convenient for customers.

In the case of an existing NPA overlay complex in need of relief, such as the 657/714 NPA, the NPA Code Relief Planning and Notification Guidelines (NPA Relief Planning Guidelines) state that when “NPA relief is required for an existing overlay complex, then the Initial Planning Document, relief planning meeting, and industry consensus to recommend an overlay is not required. NANPA shall draft a relief plan filing requesting approval of the overlay and recommending an implementation schedule including a timeframe for network preparation and customer education, with the new NPA effective at the end of the implementation schedule. There is no need for a permissive dialing period because 10-digit local dialing will already be in place. The draft filing shall include the state’s existing overlay dialing plan.”

In this case, the only alternative is an additional overlay. The additional all-services distributed overlay will superimpose a new NPA over the same geographic area covered by the existing 657/714 NPA and is projected to last approximately 10 years. NANPA will assign CO codes from the new overlay NPA once all assignable CO codes from the 657/714 NPA are allocated. All existing customers will retain their current area code in the overlay area and will not have to change their telephone numbers. The new NPA will follow the current dialing plan for the 657/714 NPA, which means that all customers within

and between NPAs will be required to dial 1) 1+10-digits for local and toll calls, and 2) 0+10 digits for operator services (*i.e.*, credit card, collect, third party, etc.)

NANPA projected that 657/714 NPA overlay is projected to exhaust its CO codes during the first quarter of 2027.<sup>21</sup> The reports and data NANPA relied on satisfy the statutory requirements of Pub. Util. Code Section 7936 and Section 7943(c), and persuade us that the only relief alternative for the 657/714 NPA is the additional all-services distributed overlay.

To allow sufficient time for completion of the selected relief plan prior to exhaust of CO codes in the 657/714 NPA, NANPA and the Industry proposed a public education program (PEP) for customers in the current 657/714 NPA. The proposed PEP requests that the Commission approve the nine (9)-month implementation schedule and PEP program outlined in its application.

## **6. Discussion**

The 657/714 NPA is projected to exhaust in the first quarter of 2027, requiring the Commission and NANPA to act before exhaustion occurs. NANPA utilized data in the NRUF in forecasting the 657/714 NPA exhaustion in accordance with Pub. Util. Code Section 7936.<sup>22</sup> There is no indication that conservation measures will adequately address this exhaustion as outlined in Pub. Util. Code Section 7943(c). In this application, NANPA asserts that the only

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<sup>21</sup> A.24-05-011 at 2.

<sup>22</sup> NANPA is required to collect, store, and maintain NRUF data. In accordance with FCC rules, assignees holding geographic and/or certain non-geographic (NPA 5XX and 900) telephone numbers must report on their holdings on February 1 and August 1 of each year.

relief alternative that will meet the NPA Relief Guidelines is the additional all-services distributed overlay.

Therefore, we adopt an additional all-services distributed overlay to resolve the forecasted exhaust in the 657/714 NPA. NANPA has requested a nine (9)-month schedule to implement the overlay. This implementation length is consistent with the authority granted in recent decisions, including Decision (D.) 16-07-014, D.17-02-010, D.17-05-019, and D.19-06-012. Accordingly, we adopt the requested nine (9)-month schedule. Implementation of the overlay shall be completed by the forecasted exhaust date of the 657/714 NPA in the first quarter of 2027.

## **7. Public Education Program**

### **7.1. Historical Overview**

In D.96-12-086, as well as in Rulemaking (R.) 95-04-043 and Investigation (I.) 95-04-044, the Commission decided that an appropriate customer education program was necessary when instituting overlays to explain 1) the concept of an overlay; 2) the fact that the new dialing procedure will not affect the distinction between local and toll calls or the rates charged for the calls; and 3) the mandatory 1+10-digit dialing instructions on payphones and in directories.

In D.98-05-021, also in the R.95-04-043 and I.95-04-044 proceedings, the Commission:

- Required service providers to institute an instructional announcement directing callers to dial 1+10-digits indefinitely after implementing the overlay;



- Required the PEP to communicate changes associated with the overlay to children, the elderly, the disabled community, and the various ethnic groups in the region;
- Prioritized the education of those entities that will need to reprogram equipment due to the new dialing procedure, such as alarm companies;
- Required the PEP to inform customers how to dial directory assistance to locate numbers applicable to different area codes within the overlay region;
- Required the use of press releases, television and radio announcements, billing inserts, and the updating of telephone directories; and
- Extended the coverage of the PEP to include not only the region in which the overlay will be implemented, which should be the first priority, but also the adjacent area codes and, to a lesser extent, the whole state.
- whole state.

In D.98-12-081 and in the R.95-04-043 and I.95-04-044 proceedings, the

Commission set four major objectives for the PEP:

- Public awareness of the change in dialing patterns and area code identification resulting from the implementation of the overlay;
- Public understanding of how they will be affected by the change and the rationale behind the change;
- Public assurance that the cost and quality of service will not be adversely affected; and
- Promotion of positive acceptance by customers of the change.

To achieve those goals, the Commission required:

- The operation of a call center for consumers to obtain information regarding the overlay;
- Targeted paid advertising in the relevant zoned editions of major newspapers as well as newspapers targeted to ethnic communities;
- Bill insert notices to the adjacent area codes;
- Limited use of billboard and radio advertising; and
- Mailing letters, brochures, and collateral materials to local government officials in the overlay and adjacent area codes.

In D.05-08-040, and also in the R.95-04-043 and I.95-04-044 proceedings, the Commission required:

- The activities and standards previously required for the 310-area code and 408-area code overlay PEPs to achieve at least 70 percent public awareness level;
- Outreach to specifically target key governmental agencies, community leaders, chambers of commerce, major airports, hospitals, alarm providers, pay telephone providers, and the state coordinator for E-911; and
- Special outreach to senior citizens, children, the disabled, and ethnic minorities including targeted newspaper, billboard, radio, and television advertising.

In D.16-07-014 and subsequent area code relief decisions, the Commission did not require the Industry to conduct a public awareness survey.<sup>23</sup> The

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<sup>23</sup> The Commission's Communications Division analyzed the results of the public awareness survey conducted by the Industry in prior area code proceedings for overlays requiring a

*Footnote continued on next page.*

Commission reasoned that because the content of the adopted program would contain the same activities used in prior PEPs that have met the 70 percent minimum customer awareness requirement established in D.05-08-040, there would be little possibility that the 70 percent threshold would not be met with the same amount of effort put forth by the Industry. However, the Commission continued to require the Industry to achieve the previously-established 70 percent minimum customer awareness requirement.<sup>24</sup>

Telecommunications service providers must develop a detailed PEP that is consistent with those adopted in D.17-05-019. The Commission's Communications Division Director (CD Director) is authorized to oversee the finalization and implementation of the PEP and authorized to take all actions necessary, including requiring the Industry to achieve a 70 percent awareness level of the overlay in all major customer and telephone user groups. Such actions may include additional educational efforts, obtaining outside professional services, reviewing and approving all educational materials, and overseeing the customer awareness assessment process.

As the Commission explained in D.17-05-019, the bureaucracy that a PEP creates is outweighed by the broader responsibility of oversight and

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change in dialing procedure (D.05-08-040, D.07-11-030, D.08-04-058, D.08-04-059, D.11-10-031, and D.13-12-055) and found that all achieved an overall awareness level of over 70 percent.

<sup>24</sup> See D.16-07-014, approving boundary elimination overlay of 213/323 area codes; D.17-02-010, approving an overlay for the 916 area code; D.17-05-019, approving an overlay for the 805 area code; and D.17-04-027, approving boundary elimination overlay of 619/858 area codes.

accountability provided to the people of California.<sup>25</sup> Therefore, as in previous decisions, the Commission will require a Task Force<sup>26</sup> to implement the PEP. The Task Force shall consist of representatives from the service providers holding numbering resources in the 657/714 NPA as of the effective date of this decision, as well as Commission staff to oversee the implementation. All service provider representatives on the Task Force should contribute to the implementation effort and those unwilling to participate shall be reported to the Commission. The Commission requires the Task Force to develop a reasonable means of delineating the division of responsibility for the public education activities to ensure adequate tracking and compliance.

The Task Force will be responsible for developing the materials and content of the PEP, maximizing the use of prior education efforts, and conforming to the requirements of this order. The PEP should contain the same activities used in prior programs that have achieved the 70 percent customer awareness requirement, which result in customer awareness, prior to exhaustion anticipated to occur during the first quarter of 2027. There is no requirement for either the Industry or the Task Force to formally report the 70 percent customer awareness to the Commission.

Educational, outreach, and advertising materials should explain the type of area code change being implemented and the new dialing procedure and explain that the cost and quality of telephone service will not be adversely

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<sup>25</sup> D.17-05-019 at 26-27. (*See also* Section 2(c).)

<sup>26</sup> The Task Force is a separate group from the Industry.

affected by the change. The materials should also address the permissive dialing period, the mandatory dialing period, the tasks consumers should do in preparation for the overlay, and the reasons for the area code change. The Task Force shall submit all public education outreach materials to the CD Director for review and approval.

The CD Director is authorized to oversee the finalization and implementation of the PEP and authorized to take all actions necessary to achieve a 70 percent awareness level of the overlay in all major customer and telephone user groups. As noted above, such actions may include additional educational efforts, obtaining outside professional services, reviewing and approving all educational materials, and overseeing the customer awareness assessment process.

## **7.2. Discussion**

As part of this application, NANPA attached Exhibit B, which includes the final minutes of the California 657/714 NPA Draft Application Review Meeting via Conference Call Final Minutes (Minutes) held April 9, 2024.<sup>27</sup> These Minutes became final on April 30, 2024.<sup>28</sup> Within Exhibit B, the Industry Statement for the Record states that no paid advertising is necessary for successful implementation of the additional 657/714 NPA overlay for the following reasons:

1. The existing 657/714 NPA overlay and its mandatory 1+10-digit dialing has been in place since 2008;

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<sup>27</sup> A.24-05-011, Exhibit B.

<sup>28</sup> *Id.*

2. Californians are already familiar with multiple area codes and mandatory 1+10-digit dialing since mandatory 1+10-digit dialing is the predominant dialing plan in California, required in all but two area codes by the time this additional overlay to the 657/714 NPA overlay is implemented;
3. The Industry is experienced in educating customers about the introduction of new overlay area codes when mandatory 10-digit or 1+10-digit dialing is already in place;
4. Paid advertising requirements in PEPs create the need for a funding mechanism; and
5. Paid advertising and a funded PEP doesn't make fiscal sense for the simple informational message needed for the additional overlay to the existing 657/714 NPA overlay.

The Commission agrees that a paid advertising effort is not necessary for the reasons explained above. However, the Commission recognizes the importance of customer notification. In addition to the news release issued by the Commission after the final decision is issued (which is not considered a PEP news release), the following notifications in the proposed PEP regarding the additional 657/714 NPA overlay shall be issued, including, but not limited to:

(1) a first news release announcing the 657/714 additional overlay area code relief plan, the area code overlay geographic boundaries, and the new overlay area code for issue within the 657/714 area code and adjacent area codes, to media and key entities, including chambers of commerce and local governments, with the news release posted to the CPUC website and social media platforms;

(2) a second news release reminding the public of the 657/714 additional overlay area code relief plan, the overlay area code geographic boundaries, and the new overlay area code for issue within the 657/714 area code overlay region, with the news release posted to the CPUC website and social media platforms;

(3) a single customer notification that runs for two bill cycles announcing the new additional area code overlay to the existing 657/714 area code overlay and identifying the affected areas and the new area code effective date.

All the news releases will reach various media sources such as television stations, which in turn may announce the 657/714 NPA overlay on their respective media platforms.

To further ensure customer awareness of the overlay, the Commission requires the Industry to provide the Commission staff with confirmation that the above-referenced announcements of the overlay are made on the local major broadcast television stations within the 657/714 NPA. The confirmation shall be either in an e-mail or other written communication from the Industry, confirming that local major television stations have carried the announcement of the overlay. This notification shall be provided to the CD Director.

The Applicant will also issue special outreach notices, originally required pursuant to D.05-08-040, via targeted email letters to groups including (1) community-based organizations and key government agencies, including senior, consumer, and other advocacy/activist organizations, chambers of commerce, city councils, and other key government agencies; (2) alarm service provider organizations; (3) public safety organizations and PSAPs; (4) telephone directory

publishers; and (5) California Relay Services throughout the 657/714 NPA overlay region. The PEP plan adopted herein is attached to this decision as Appendix A.

The PEP requirements adopted for the 657/714 NPA overlay implementation do not set a precedent for future area code relief implementations. The Commission may adopt different PEP requirements for future overlays.

### **7.3. Conclusion**

The Commission finds that the PEP plan attached as part of Exhibit B to the Application should be adopted. This adopted PEP plan is attached as Attachment A to this decision. The completion dates listed in this plan shall be adjusted to reflect the actual exhaustion date, when determined. The overlay shall be implemented over a nine-month period.

The notifications discussed above comply with the requirements of an NPA overlay, given the reasons detailed above.

## **7. Categorization and Need for Hearing**

In Resolution ALJ 176-3546, dated May 30, 2024, the Commission preliminarily categorized this application as ratesetting. The Commission received no protests, and this application is unopposed. Therefore, hearings were not held.

## **8. Comments on Proposed Decision**

Rule 14.6(c)(2) of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure (Rules) provides that, in a proceeding in which the Proposed Decision grants the relief requested in the application, and there are no protests to the application,



the Commission may waive public review or comment. Although public review is not required for this application, the Commission is mailing this decision for comments by the NANPA, or other interested persons, in accordance with Pub. Util. Code Section 311 and Rule 14.3.

### **9. Assignment of Proceeding**

Matthew Baker is the assigned Commissioner and Suman Mathews is the assigned ALJ in this proceeding.

### **Findings of Fact**

1. The FCC holds full responsibility over all numbering issues but has delegated responsibilities surrounding area codes to the states. The Commission is responsible for proactively monitoring area code relief planning and oversees the integrity and competitive neutrality of the Industry relief planning process in California.

2. Effective January 1, 2019, the FCC appointed Somos to replace Neustar, Inc. as the NANPA.

3. The 213 Numbering Plan Area (NPA), created in 1947, originally covered all of southern California. The 714 NPA was created as a result of a geographic split (split) of the 213 NPA in 1951.

4. The 714 area code was split again three more times, first in 1982 creating the 619 NPA, then in 1992 creating the 909 NPA, and in 1998 creating the 949 NPA.

5. The 714 NPA needed relief again in 1999 and the Commission approved an overlay as the form of relief. The new 657 NPA was scheduled to be implemented on October 7, 2000. However, due to number conservation

measures, the 657 NPA was not implemented as the relief code for the 714 NPA until September 23, 2008.

6. The 657/714 NPA is predominantly in northern Orange County and a small portion of Los Angeles and San Bernardino Counties. The 657/714 NPA serves all or portions of communities such as Anaheim, Brea, Buena Park, Costa Mesa, Cypress, Fountain Valley, Fullerton, Garden Grove, Huntington Beach, Orange, Placentia, Santa Ana, Westminster, and Yorba Linda.

7. Mandatory 1+10-digit dialing has been required in the 657/714 NPA since August 2008 and is required in all of the bordering NPAs as well.

8. Pub. Util. Code Section 7936 requires the Commission to direct NANPA to obtain utilization data for any area code for which a change is proposed before approving any new area code.

9. NANPA utilized data from its April 2024 Numbering Resource Utilization/Forecast (NRUF) Report to project that the 657/714 NPA would exhaust during the first quarter of 2027.

10. Pub. Util. Code Section 7943(c) requires the Commission to perform a telephone utilization study and implement all reasonable telephone number conservation measures.

11. NANPA convened a relief planning meeting with the Industry on April 9, 2024 to identify viable solutions to the forecast exhaust.

12. For the relief planning meeting, Industry followed regulations established by the FCC, this Commission, and telecommunications industry guidelines.

13. In accordance with Pub. Util. Code Section 7943(c), NANPA, Industry, and Commission staff determined that an additional all-services distributed overlay is the only relief that meets the Industry guidelines for an existing NPA overlay complex.

14. An additional all-services distributed NPA overlay is the Industry's recommended consensus solution to address the projected exhaustion of the 657/714 NPA.

15. On July 19, 2024, a webcast was posted on the Commission website regarding the Industry's proposed relief plan.

16. A public education program (PEP) is needed to implement the 657/714 NPA overlay.

17. In D.05-08-040, the Commission mandated outreach efforts specifically aimed at key agencies and special groups.

18. The PEP does not need to include paid advertising because, among other reasons, mandatory 1+10-digit dialing has been required in the 657/714 NPA since August 2008.

19. The PEP approved with Industry input requires a single customer notification that runs for two bill cycles announcing the new additional area code overlay to the existing 657/714 area code overlay and identifying the affected areas and the new area code effective date.

20. The Industry is composed of current and prospective telecommunications carriers operating in, or considering operating within, the 657/714 NPA.

21. The Task Force is a separate group from the Industry. The Task Force consists of representatives from the service providers holding numbering resources in the 657/714 NPA as of the effective date of this decision, as well as Commission staff to oversee the implementation.

22. There is no requirement for either the Industry or the Task Force to formally report the 70 percent customer awareness to the Commission.

23. The FCC holds full responsibility over all numbering issues but has delegated responsibilities surrounding area codes to the states. The Commission is responsible for proactively monitoring area code relief planning and oversees the integrity and competitive neutrality of the Industry relief planning process in California.

### **Conclusions of Law**

1. The NANPA and Industry complied with Pub. Util. Code Section 7936 and considered utilization data from the April 2024 Numbering Resource Utilization/Forecast (NRUF) in forecasting the 657/714 Numbering Plan Area (NPA) exhaustion and determining a consensus solution to the forecasted exhaust of the 657/714 NPA.

2. The additional all-services distributed overlay in the 657/714 NPA should be completed by the forecasted exhaust of the 657/714 NPA in the first quarter of 2027.

3. The additional all-services distributed overlay should be implemented since it is the only relief alternative that meets the Industry guidelines for an existing NPA overlay complex

4. Since the statutory requirements of Pub. Util. Code Section 7936 and Section 7943(c) have been satisfied, the Commission should adopt the overlay option to resolve the forecasted exhaust for the 657/714 NPA.

5. Pub. Util. Code Section 7931(e)(2) states that area code relief no longer requires public meetings, and that public meetings may be conducted at the discretion of the Commission but are not required.

6. The PEP plan as modified by this decision is consistent with the program requirements adopted in D.17-05-019, and prior Commission decisions D.08-04-059 and D.08-10-038, as modified in D.16-07-014.

7. The PEP attached as Attachment A to this decision should be adopted.

8. All the news releases will reach various media sources such as television stations, which in turn may announce the 657/714 NPA overlay on their respective media platforms.

9. As part of the adopted PEP, the Industry should provide the CD Director with confirmation indicating that the above-referenced announcements of the overlay are made on the local major broadcast television stations within the 657/714 NPA. The confirmation should be either an e-mail or other written communication from the Industry, confirming that local major television stations have carried the announcement of the overlay.

10. Paid advertisement should not be required in the PEP.

11. The Task Force should be utilized to implement the PEP. The Task Force should include Commission staff and representatives from the service providers

holding numbering resources in the 657/714 NPA as of the effective date of this decision.

12. The Task Force should be responsible for developing the materials and content of the PEP, maximizing the use of prior education efforts, and conforming to the requirements of this order.

13. The Task Force should contribute to the implementation effort, and those unwilling to participate shall be reported to the Commission.

14. The CD Director should be authorized to oversee the finalization and implementation of the PEP and authorized to take all actions necessary, including requiring the Industry to achieve a 70 percent awareness level of the overlay in all major customer and telephone user groups.

15. An evidentiary hearing is not necessary.

16. It is appropriate to issue this decision for comments in accordance with Pub. Util. Code Section 311 and Rule 14.3.

17. This proceeding should be closed.

## **O R D E R**

**IT IS ORDERED** that:

1. The proposed all-services distributed area code overlay in the 657/714 Numbering Plan Area is adopted.

2. The Task Force, comprised of California Public Utilities Commission (Commission) staff and representatives from the service providers holding numbering resources in the 657/714 Numbering Plan Area as of the effective date of this decision, shall implement the public education program. All service

provider representatives on the Task Force shall contribute to the implementation effort and those unwilling to participate shall be reported to the Commission.

3. The all-services distributed area code overlay in the 657/714 Numbering Plan Area (NPA) shall be completed by the forecasted exhaust of the 657/714 NPA in the first quarter of 2027.

4. The public education program (PEP), consistent with the PEP attached herein as Attachment A, is adopted for the all-services distributed area code overlay for the 657/714 Numbering Plan Area.

5. The public education program (PEP) shall include a single customer notification that runs for two bill cycles announcing the new additional area code overlay to the existing 657/714 area code overlay and identifying the affected areas and the new area code effective date.

6. The Task Force shall determine a start date for implementation of the public education program (PEP), attached herein as Attachment A, and implementation shall be completed within nine (9) months from this start date.

7. The carriers shall complete any network preparation necessary to implement the all-services distributed area code overlay in the 657/714 Numbering Plan Area (NPA) by the forecasted exhaust of the NPA area code in the first quarter of 2027.

8. The Task Force shall submit all public education outreach materials to the California Public Utilities Commission's Communications Division (CD) Director for review and approval. The CD Director shall be authorized to oversee the

finalization and implementation of the public education program and authorized to take all actions necessary to achieve a 70 percent awareness level of the overlay in all major customer and telephone user groups.

9. Application 24-05-011 is closed.

This order is effective today.

Dated \_\_\_\_\_, 2025, at Sacramento, California.



## ATTACHMENT A

**Public Education Program (PEP) for Additional Overlay to the Existing 657/714 NPA  
Nine-month Implementation Plan**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Audience</b>	<b>Shared or Individual Service Provider Effort</b>	<b>Completion Date</b>
1	Effective date of decision approving an additional area code overlay for relief of the existing 657/714 overlay.	N/A	N/A	Date of Decision (DOD)
2	Post-Commission meeting news release announcing the 657/714 additional overlay area code relief plan, the overlay area code geographic boundaries, and the new overlay area code for issue within the 657/714 area code region. Post CPUC news release to CPUC website and social media platforms.	All customers	CPUC	DOD
3	NANPA 657/714 additional overlay implementation meeting, and request for industry participation on Public Education Plan (PEP) task force. Determination of Implementation Start Date (ISD).	CPUC staff and industry	Shared	6 weeks after DOD
4	Start Implementation	Industry	Industry	Implementation Start Date (ISD)
5	Additional overlay information distributed internally as a job aid for customer service representatives to answer customer questions. Representatives should not need to refer questions to the CPUC.	Customer service representatives	Individual service provider	2 months after ISD
6	First news release announcing the 657/714 additional overlay area code relief plan, the area code overlay geographic boundaries, and the new overlay area code for issue within the 657/714 area code and adjacent area codes, to media and key entities, including chambers of commerce and local governments. Post	All customers	Industry and CPUC staff	2 months after ISD

	news release to CPUC website and social media platforms.			
7	Provide to CPUC Communications Division first email or written confirmation from the California Telecommunications Industry identifying media coverage (including major local broadcast television stations) of the 657/714 additional area code overlay.	CPUC staff	Industry	3 months after ISD
8	Provide by email targeted letters with the information in the Customer Notification, along with PEP Task Force contact information, to (1) community based organizations and key government agencies, including senior, consumer and other advocacy/activist organizations, chambers of commerce, city councils, and other key government agencies, (2) alarm service provider associations, (3) public safety organizations and PSAPs, (4) telephone directory publishers, and (5) California Relay Services throughout the 657/714 area code overlay region. Request that these organizations distribute the information to their members	Senior, consumer and other advocacy/activist organizations, chambers of commerce, city councils and other key government agencies, alarm service provider associations, public safety organizations and PSAPs, telephone directory publishers, and California Relay Services	Industry	3 months after ISD
9	657/714 additional overlay update to industry websites	All customers	Individual service provider	3 months after ISD
10	Second news release reminding the public of the 657/714 additional overlay area code relief plan, the overlay area code geographic boundaries, and the new overlay area code for issue within the 657/714 area code overlay region. Post CPUC news release to CPUC website and social media platforms.	All customers	Industry and CPUC staff	8.5 months after ISD

11	Published Directories: Add information on cover to alert customers in 657/714 overlay area about the new overlay area code	All customers	Individual service provider	9 months after ISD
12	Single customer notification runs for two bill cycles: Announce the new additional area code overlay to the existing 657/714 area code overlay, indicate the affected areas, and the new area code effective date.	All customers	Individual	9 months after ISD
13	New NPA/Area Code effective and implementation completed			9 months after ISD
14	Provide to CPUC Communications Division second email or written confirmation from the California Telecommunications Industry identifying media coverage (including local broadcast television stations) of the 657/714 additional area code overlay.	CPUC staff	Industry	9.5 months after ISD

**(END OF ATTACHMENT A)**