



Telecom Public Notice CRTC 2005-5

Ottawa, 9 June 2005

ITS Canada application for access code 5-1-1

Reference: 8698-C12-200506719, 8698-J44-200500240 and 8698-C12-200415522

In this Public Notice, the Commission invites comments on an application received from Intelligent Transportation Systems Society of Canada for the assignment of a three-digit access code, specifically 5-1-1 as a telephone number for the delivery of weather and travel information to the public.

The application

1. On 11 April 2005, the Commission received an application from the Intelligent Transportation Systems Society of Canada on behalf of the Canada 511 Consortium, consisting of Environment Canada, Transport Canada, Canadian Urban Transit Association, Transportation Association of Canada, the Intelligent Transportation Systems Society of Canada, all ten provincial governments and the Yukon Territorial government (ITS Canada et al.), for the assignment of a nationwide access code, specifically 5-1-1, for governments and other service providers to provide weather and travel information to the public. In an earlier application dated 10 January 2005, Environment Canada had proposed to charge for delivery of weather information. ITS Canada et al. in its 11 April 2005 application clarified that Environment Canada no longer proposed to charge for the information.
2. ITS Canada et al. stated that the proposed 5-1-1 service would provide callers with real-time information on severe weather conditions, traffic congestion, the status of roadway closures and conditions, as well as trip and schedule information.
3. According to ITS Canada et al., weather and travel information is currently provided by federal, provincial, territorial and local governments and other service providers across many regions. It indicated that this information is not uniformly available across Canada. ITS Canada et al. submitted that one of the most common means of conveying this information is by telephone and, in most instances, each agency has its own telephone number, or set of numbers, for this purpose, including seven-digit, ten-digit or 1-800 numbers.
4. ITS Canada et al. suggested that a 5-1-1 number allocated specifically to weather and travel information would be universally known, visible and recognized, and easily remembered, allowing travellers to make better choices, including choice of time, choice of route and mode of transportation.
5. ITS Canada et al. submitted that Environment Canada is pursuing a service improvement initiative to enhance its existing nationwide automatic telephone answering service with the goals of offering service to all Canadians in both official languages, accessible from all locations, and more effectively utilizing technology to ensure better access to clients, particularly during significant and severe weather events. The current network receives over 35 million calls per year.

Background

6. Within the North American Numbering Plan (NANP), unique three-digit (N-1-1) codes are assigned as an industry standard to provide abbreviated access to specific types of services. For example, the public can dial 4-1-1 for directory assistance and 9-1-1 for access to emergency services.
7. The 5-1-1 access code has been held in reserve in Canada to provide access to Message Relay Services (MRS) for communication between hearing persons and hearing impaired persons. However, access to MRS is currently provided through the use of a toll-free number. The Canadian Association of the Deaf has recently indicated that it did not object to the reclamation of 5-1-1.
8. Some wireless service providers (WSPs) have been using access code 5-1-1 to allow their customers to place calls while roaming without incurring long distance charges. Due to a recent increase in demand for the assignment of N-1-1 codes, Commission staff, in a letter dated 24 December 2004, requested certain WSPs to comment on the reclamation of 5-1-1. The Commission received comments from TELUS Communications Inc. and TELE-MOBILE Company on 25 February 2005, from Bell Mobility Inc., on behalf of itself, Aliant Mobility Inc., NMI Mobility Inc., Télébec Mobility, a division of Société en commandite Télébec, and NorthernTel Mobility, a division of NorthernTel, Limited Partnership on 1 March 2005, and from Saskatchewan Telecommunications and MTS Allstream Inc. on 3 March 2005, advising that they were prepared to vacate the 5-1-1 access code by the end of June 2006.
9. In *Allocation of three-digit dialing for public information and referral services*, Decision CRTC 2001-475, 9 August 2001 (Decision 2001-475), the Commission adopted the following guidelines to consider the allocation of unused N-1-1 codes in Canada:
 - there must be a compelling need for three-digit access that cannot be satisfied by other dialing arrangements or it is demonstrated that existing dialing arrangements are not suitable for accessing the needed services;
 - the assignment of an unused N-1-1 code should be to a service or services rather than a specific organization;
 - the provision of N-1-1 dialing is to be based on a need to serve the broad public interest (including providing access to the telephone network to disadvantaged individuals or groups);
 - the N-1-1 dialing should not confer a competitive advantage on the service provider(s) reached by this number;
 - the services to be provided through N-1-1 dialing are to be widely available geographically and on a full-time or extended-time basis; and
 - where possible, the N-1-1 allocation to a service does not conflict with NANP and is in keeping with the Canadian Steering Committee on Numbering (CSCN) guidelines for N-1-1.

Call for comments

10. The Commission initiates a proceeding to deal with ITS Canada et al.'s application for the assignment of access code 5-1-1, as a telephone number to provide weather and travel information to the public. The Commission invites parties to comment on the following:
 - i) whether ITS Canada et al.'s application meets the guidelines outlined in Decision 2001-475;
 - ii) the services to be provided through access code 5-1-1;
 - iii) the timelines for implementing the services to be provided through 5-1-1;
 - iv) any other related matters for consideration in this proceeding.

Procedure

11. ITS Canada et al. is made a party to this proceeding.
12. Other parties wishing to participate fully in this proceeding must notify the Commission of their intention to do so by **16 June 2005**. They should contact the Secretary General by mail at CRTC, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0N2, by fax at (819) 994-0218 or by email at procedure@crtc.gc.ca. They are to indicate in the notice their email address where available. If parties do not have access to the Internet, they are to indicate in their notice whether they wish to receive disk versions of hard copy filings.
13. The Commission will issue, as soon as possible after the registration date, a complete list of parties and their mailing address (including their email address, if available), identifying those parties who wish to receive disk versions.
14. The Commission invites parties to file written comments with the Commission by **11 July 2005**, serving a copy on all other parties. Parties should include with their comments any evidence that they consider necessary to support their arguments. This includes any research studies or other material that parties wish to refer to in this proceeding.
15. Any person who wishes merely to file written comments, without receiving copies of the various submissions, may do so by submitting their comments in writing to the Commission at the address noted above or by sending an email to procedure@crtc.gc.ca by **11 July 2005**.
16. All parties may file reply comments relating to this application, with the Commission by **8 August 2005**, serving a copy on all other parties.
17. The Commission will not formally acknowledge comments. It will, however, fully consider all comments and they will form part of the public record of the proceeding.
18. Where a document is to be filed or served by a specific date, the document must be actually received, not merely sent, by that date.
19. Parties can file their submissions electronically or on paper. Submissions longer than five pages should include a summary.

20. Where the submission is filed by electronic means, the line *****End of document***** should be entered following the last paragraph of the document, as an indication that the document has not been damaged during electronic transmission.
21. Please note that only those submissions electronically filed will be available on the Commission's website and only in the official language and format in which they are submitted.
22. Each paragraph of your submission should be numbered.
23. The Commission also encourages interested parties to monitor the public record of this proceeding (and/or the Commission's website) for additional information that they may find useful when preparing their submissions.

Important

24. All information submitted, including your email address, name and any other personal information as provided, will be posted on the Commission's website. Documents received in electronic format will be posted on the Commission's website exactly as you send them, and in the official language and format in which they are received. Documents not received electronically will be available in .pdf format.

Location of CRTC offices

25. Submissions may be examined or will be made available promptly upon request at the Commission offices during normal business hours:

Central Building

Les Terrasses de la Chaudière
1 Promenade du Portage, Room 206
Gatineau, Quebec J8X 4B1
Tel: (819) 997-2429 - TDD: 994-0423
Fax: (819) 994-0218

Metropolitan Place

99 Wyse Road, Suite 1410
Dartmouth, Nova Scotia B3A 4S5
Tel: (902) 426-7997 - TDD: 426-6997
Fax: (902) 426-2721

205 Viger Avenue West, Suite 504
Montréal, Quebec H2Z 1G2
Tel: (514) 283-6607

55 St. Clair Avenue East, Suite 624
Toronto, Ontario M4T 1M2
Tel: (416) 952-9096

Kensington Building
275 Portage Avenue, Suite 1810
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3B 2B3
Tel: (204) 983-6306 - TDD: 983-8274
Fax: (204) 983-6317

Cornwall Professional Building
2125 - 11th Avenue, Suite 103
Regina, Saskatchewan S4P 3X3
Tel: (306) 780-3422

10405 Jasper Avenue, Suite 520
Edmonton, Alberta T5J 3N4
Tel: (780) 495-3224

580 Hornby Street, Suite 530
Vancouver, British Columbia V6C 3B6
Tel: (604) 666-2111 - TDD: 666-0778
Fax: (604) 666-8322

Secretary General

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