

## **Local Numbers Must Be Geographically Related to the User in Germany**

According to recent decisions, the Regulatory Authority for Telecommunications and Posts (RegTP) made sure that local numbers continue to provide consumers with information on the geographic location of the person they are calling.

RegTP ordered five companies, which reallocated local numbers in breach of the geographic rules, to stop this practice after 15 October 2004. If the companies fail to comply, the numbers will be discontinued from 1 August 2005. This will give end users time to find an alternative that could be the allocation of numbers with the same non-geographic code. The orders apply to both traditional fixed-line providers and Internet telephone service providers.

RegTP had also previously defined conditions for the use of local network call numbers for Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) in two Administrative Orders dated 19 August 2004. In fact, RegTP ensured the locality-based allocation of local network call numbers by providers of VoIP by ruling that local network call numbers for Internet telephony offers may only be allocated to customers within their relevant local networks.

RegTP argued that it is important to maintain the geographic information of the local network call number from a consumer's point of view. Furthermore, it does not deplete the scarce quotas of call numbers of the relevant local networks and, therefore, endanger the overall national numbering plan. Finally, it secures fair competition.

See: "Use of telephone numbers in local areas" (available in German only) at <http://www.regtp.de> under the heading "[Nummernverwaltung](#)".

Caroline Simard, GREX Advisor

Adapted from: Regulatory Authority for Telecommunications and Posts (RegTP)  
(Source: [http://www.regtp.de/en/aktuelles/start/fs\\_03.html](http://www.regtp.de/en/aktuelles/start/fs_03.html)) (6 October 2004 and 20 August 2004)