

## New draft numbering plan for public comments in South Africa

The Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (ICASA) issued a draft numbering plan on 14 June 2004. The Telecommunications Act (1996), sections 89 and 96, mandate the authority to prescribe and manage a numbering plan for telecommunications services. The plan was developed in response to the growing need for number allocations, especially with the proposed entrance of a second national operator and the pressing need to reach under-served areas.

The numbering plan indicates that its management shall be carried out in an objective, non-discriminatory, equitable, proportionate, timely, and transparent manner. It also takes into account the following guiding principles:

- a) Flexible to meet future needs
- b) Should promote competition
- c) Cost-effective and easy to manage
- d) Address customer needs
- e) Take into account international developments

A public education campaign is also considered to assure smoothness in the transition period. The plan covers fixed and mobile numbers, but excludes the 10-digit dialing plan and number portability, which apparently will be dealt with separately. The numbering plan is considered a national resource and its design, adoption, and management affect the public interest. For that reason, the Authority is seeking comments from interested parties until 12 July, when the plan will be finalized and submitted to the Minister of Communications.

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Based on: [Government Gazette 26471 - Notice of intention to make regulations on the Numbering plans in respect of Telecommunications Services](#)