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SERIES E: OVERALL NETWORK OPERATION,
TELEPHONE SERVICE, SERVICE OPERATION AND
HUMAN FACTORS

Operation, numbering, routing and mobile service –
International operation – Operation of international
telephone services

**Conditions of operation and setting up
of conference calls**

Reedition of CCITT Recommendation E.151 published in
the Blue Book, Fascicle II.2 (1988)

NOTES

1 CCITT Recommendation E.151 was published in Fascicle II.2 of the *Blue Book*. This file is an extract from the *Blue Book*. While the presentation and layout of the text might be slightly different from the *Blue Book* version, the contents of the file are identical to the *Blue Book* version and copyright conditions remain unchanged (see below).

2 In this Recommendation, the expression “Administration” is used for conciseness to indicate both a telecommunication administration and a recognized operating agency.

Recommendation E.151

CONDITIONS OF OPERATION AND SETTING UP OF CONFERENCE CALLS^{1), 2)}

Conference calls may be accepted in the international service by agreement between the Administrations concerned, subject to the following conditions:

1 Types of conference calls

Conference calls are normally of two types:

- bidirectional calls in which each participant can listen and speak whenever he wishes to intervene in the conversation;
- unidirectional calls in which only one of the participants can speak, the other participants being able only to listen.

However, a conference call may consist of a combination of both types of call defined above.

2 Operating conditions

2.1 The technical equipment shall in every case be such that good quality of service is guaranteed for conference calls.

Administrations wishing to offer this service shall equip at least one of their international exchanges with facilities for handling:

- bidirectional conference calls with about 10 participants;
- unidirectional conference calls with about 20 participants.

The CCITT will keep an up-to-date list of the international exchanges so equipped, with information in each case as to the maximum possible number of bidirectional or unidirectional connections. This list will also supply the names of countries which, although not possessing the appropriate equipment, agree to the setting-up of conference calls via a foreign exchange. This list shall be distributed to all Administrations.

2.2 The use of satellite circuits and of loudspeakers for conference calls is allowed provided that they are in conformity with the CCITT Recommendations in that respect.

It is recommended that several satellite circuits should not be used to set up conference calls, even though this type of circuit is being more and more widely used in both international and national links.

2.3 Conference calls may be set up by semiautomatic or manual working, according to the facilities available in the Administrations concerned.

3 Conditions for setting up a call by semiautomatic or manual working

3.1 In setting up a conference call, two diagrams may be used:

- a) The operator of the country in which the originator is located connects all the called subscribers to the appropriate equipment. Each foreign participant will therefore be connected by an international circuit and the connection diagram will thus take the form of a single-star network.

1) *Important note* – The denomination “conference calls” without further clarification or addition has been chosen to designate communications between several subscribers in different countries, known before the Vth Plenary Assembly of the CCITT (1972) as “multiple calls” or as “conference (multiple) calls”.

2) The tariff and accounting provisions applicable to conference calls are contained in Recommendation D.110.

- b) The operator in the country in which the originator is located asks the operator in one or more foreign international exchanges with the appropriate equipment to call the called subscribers and to connect them, through that equipment, to the equipment of the international exchange of the Administration in the country of origin. In this way, several interconnected star networks will be created.

The choice of the diagram to be used for setting up each conference call shall be left to the operator in the controlling exchange (operator in the international outgoing exchange which has the appropriate equipment).

It should be noted that there are significant operating advantages in the single star network, in terms of setting up, charging and supervision of the call.

3.2 All or some of the communications making up conference calls may be set up either with specified stations or individuals (or with additional stations).

3.3 Conference calls may be granted priorities in each relation concerned for all or some of the calls involved, in accordance with the provisions cited in [1]. These calls shall normally take their turn, depending on their class and the priority with which they were requested. Nevertheless, in view of their special nature, efforts should be made to set them up as near as possible to the time specified by the originator, due regard being paid to the availability of circuits and special equipment.

3.4 Administrations which accept collect or credit card facilities for telephone calls may extend these facilities to conference calls.

In the case of a collect call, the subscriber in question shall be consulted before the call is set up in order to ascertain whether he agrees to pay the charge for the call.

4 Assessment of the chargeable duration of calls

4.1 In determining the chargeable duration of an international conference call, the basic principles outlined in Recommendation E.230 shall be applied. It should moreover be noted that:

4.1.1 the chargeable duration shall begin when all participants have been connected to the originator of the call;

4.1.2 the chargeable duration shall end when the originator gives the clearing signal;

4.1.3 if, by prior agreement, the originator of the call asks for the withdrawal or introduction of one or more participants during the call, the original call shall be regarded as terminated. In the case of withdrawal, the end of the original call coincides with the start of the next call. In the case of an addition, the start of the next call coincides with the moment when the new participant(s) is/are connected to the others;

4.1.4 no charge shall be levied when a call cannot be set up.

Note – Some Administrations offer the facility of setting up conference calls, treated as personal calls or station calls, with the introduction or withdrawal of participants, on request, during the call. The introduction of such a service is a national affair and is not contrary to the provisions of the present Recommendation, provided that the bridging equipment for conference calls is used solely in the country of origin and that the call with each of the participants situated outside the country of origin appears in the international accounts as a separate international call of the appropriate type between the country of origin and the country of each of the participants. In this case, the provisions of § 4.1.3 above do not apply.

References

- [1] CCITT, *Instructions for the international telephone service (1 October 1985)* Articles 48 and 49, ITU, Geneva, 1985.

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