

Office of the Director of  
**Telecommunications  
Regulation**

## **Decision Notice: D1/1998**

### **Carrier Selection and Carrier Access**

**Document No.** ODTR 98/18

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# **Carrier Selection and Carrier Access**

## **1. Introduction**

The Director of Telecommunications Regulation (“the Director”) is committed to facilitating the development of competition for liberalised telecommunications services, and to taking the necessary regulatory initiatives to ensure a transition to a fully liberalised market on 1 December 1998.

This notice describes two new methods by which customers can access telecommunications service providers other than Telecom Eireann by using the Telecom Eireann telephone network.

This is not a legal document. The Director may amend it from time to time. This notice is without prejudice to the legal position or the rights and duties of the Director to regulate the market generally.

## **2. Background**

In January 1998, the Director commenced a review of wholesale charges to telecommunications service providers. As part of this review, Telecom Eireann agreed to introduce new interconnection arrangements between its network and the networks of other service providers. The offering proposed that service providers would have the option to use a Network to Network Interface (NNI) between the Telecom Eireann network and their own, as an alternative to the existing User Network Interface (UNI).

The proposal made provision for the replacement of UNI by NNI, where appropriate, for call traffic both originating on and terminating on the Telecom Eireann network. However in the case of originating traffic, a technical solution is required to enable routing of calls to alternative service providers.

In March of 1998 the Director published a consultation document on telephone numbering (Numbering in Ireland, Proposals for the 21st Century ODTR 98/09). This document outlined the principles to be used for numbering in a liberalised environment, and also addressed the requirements for numbering of new emerging telecommunications services.

One of the issues addressed in the consultation was the designation of short codes for “Carrier Selection”. Carrier selection codes are normally used by callers in a liberalised environment to access alternative service providers.

The Director has now decided to allocate such codes to service providers. Codes will be available for two types of access, carrier selection and carrier access. The latter will be used when a two stage call setup procedure is required.

## **3. Explanation of Carrier Access**

Carrier access operates in conjunction with originating NNI, and enables a caller to connect from the Telecom Eireann network through to the network of other service providers by dialling a short number. A unique carrier access code will be used to identify each service provider.

The calls will be routed over the Telecom Eireann network to the appropriate point of interconnection with the alternative service provider, as agreed between the service provider and Telecom Eireann. Telecom Eireann will not charge the callers for routing the call via their network to the alternative network, but will charge the service provider instead. Carrier access provides indirect access, i.e. a two stage call set-up procedure is required to complete the call.

A further description of Carrier Access is given in Annex 1.

Carrier Access codes may be used to provide access to currently liberalised services, and from 1 December next to provide access to all services including voice services.

#### **4. Explanation of Carrier Selection**

Carrier selection, like carrier access, enables a caller to connect from the Telecom Eireann network through to the network of other service providers by dialling a short number. However carrier selection only requires a single stage call set-up procedure, so callers simply prefix the called number with a carrier selection code.

A further description of carrier selection is given in Annex 2, and notes regarding Switchlink lines and identification numbers in Annex 3.

Carrier selection codes may be used to provide access to currently liberalised services, and from 1 December next to provide access to all services including voice services.

#### **5. Numbering Designation**

In view of the proposals made by the Director in the numbering consultation (ODTR 98/09) and taking into consideration the responses received, the Director has decided to designate a number range to be used to provide carrier selection with immediate effect. The same number range will also be used to provide carrier access codes.

The designated alternative carrier code is **13**, and each service provider will be allocated a unique three-digit identifier to suffix this code. This gives a uniform five-digit numbering range providing for up to 1,000 carrier selection/carrier access codes of the form 13XXX.

Initially the codes 13 XX0 will not be used. This is to avoid confusion when the carrier access code is followed by the trunk (0) or international (00) prefixes. Also

the codes 13 9XX will not be allocated initially, to preserve the option of future expansion of the number length.

## **6. Calling Line Identification (CLI)**

The Director is aware of market demands for CLI as a supplementary service, and has determined that this service must now be made available in the public switched telephone network. TE shall also make CLI available to other service providers across NNI interconnects, subject to appropriate data control conditions.

The ODTR has discussed CLI with the Office of the Data Protection Commissioner, and has confirmed that the data protection issues have been examined, and do not present an obstacle to the introduction of CLI. These issues are explained further in Annex 4.

## **7. Uncompleted Calls**

One of the features of carrier access is that a two stage call set-up procedure is required, with the customer first accessing the switch of their service provider, and then being connected onwards to the called party. The first stage of call connection through the TE network is recorded as a completed call by TE, even if the called person does not answer. In the context of the wholesale price review earlier this year, Telecom Eireann indicated that uncompleted calls would not be charged to service providers.

## **8. Application/Allocation Procedure and Conditions**

An application and allocation procedure has been developed, as outlined in Annex 5. Allocation conditions are currently being developed, and will be communicated to applicants when allocations are being notified, however an outline of these conditions is given in Annex 5.

Allocations will initially be made under the current telecommunications services licences<sup>1</sup>, and it is proposed to modify the relevant licences to include provision for allocation of these codes, and also to include allocation conditions.

A new licencing framework is being currently developed, and will be implemented before the year end. At that time, the existing licences may be replaced by a new form of licence, and licensees who receive an appropriate new-form licence will be permitted to continue to use previously allocated codes, subject to the new licensing conditions.

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<sup>1</sup> issued under section 111(3) of the Postal and Telecommunications Services Act, 1983

Initially the ODTR will not charge for carrier access allocations, however this position will be reviewed in the future.

## **9. Invitation for Applications**

The Director now invites applications for carrier selection and carrier access codes in accordance with the application procedure described in annex 4. Applications must reach the ODTR before 17.30 on **13 July 1998** to be considered as part of the start-up application process.

Applications should be addressed to: Ms. Martina Sheridan, ODTR, Abbey Court, Irish Life Centre, Lower Abbey Street, Dublin 1. Applications should be clearly marked "Carrier Selection/Access Application".

## **10. Supervision of Use**

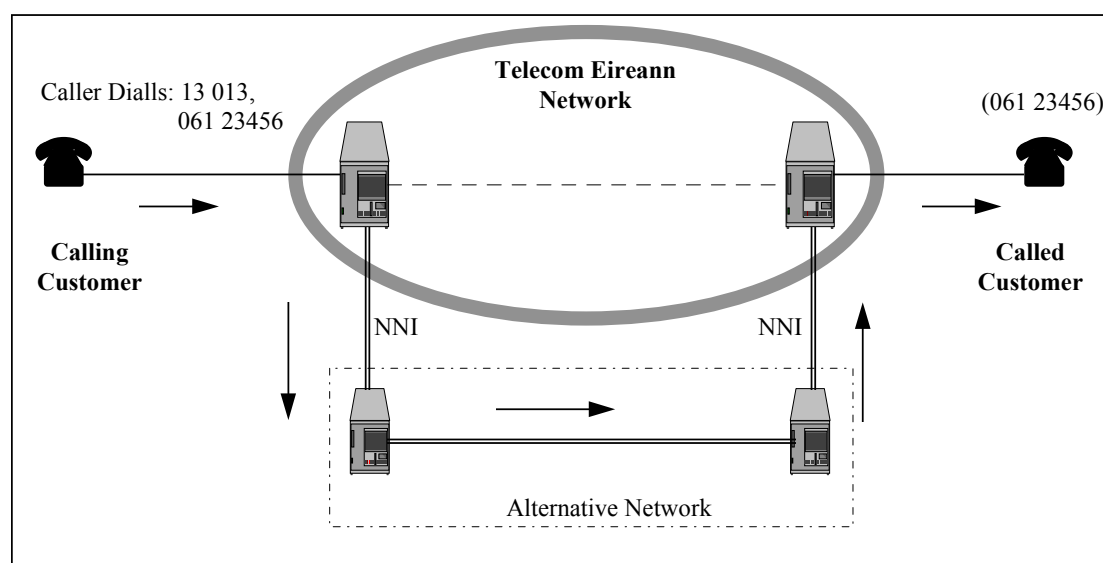
The Director reserves the right to carry out investigations to ensure that carrier selection and carrier access codes are used only as specified in this notice.

## Carrier Access Description

Carrier access allows a calling customer to access the network of telecommunications service providers other than Telecom Eireann (TE) from the TE network, by dialling a short carrier access code. The main features are as follows:

- A unique carrier access code is allocated to each alternative network.
- The alternative network interconnects with the TE network using NNI, according to a network plan agreed between TE and the alternative network provider.
- TE does not bill the caller for dialling a carrier access code.

The call set-up procedure is described below:



1. The calling customer goes off-hook and receives dial tone from the TE network.
2. The calling customer dials the carrier access code for their chosen service provider (e.g. 13 013).
3. The caller is connected via the TE network to the network of their chosen service provider. This network will then return a second dial tone, or appropriate alternative.
4. The calling customer dials the number of the person being called (e.g. 061 23456) and is connected via their service provider.

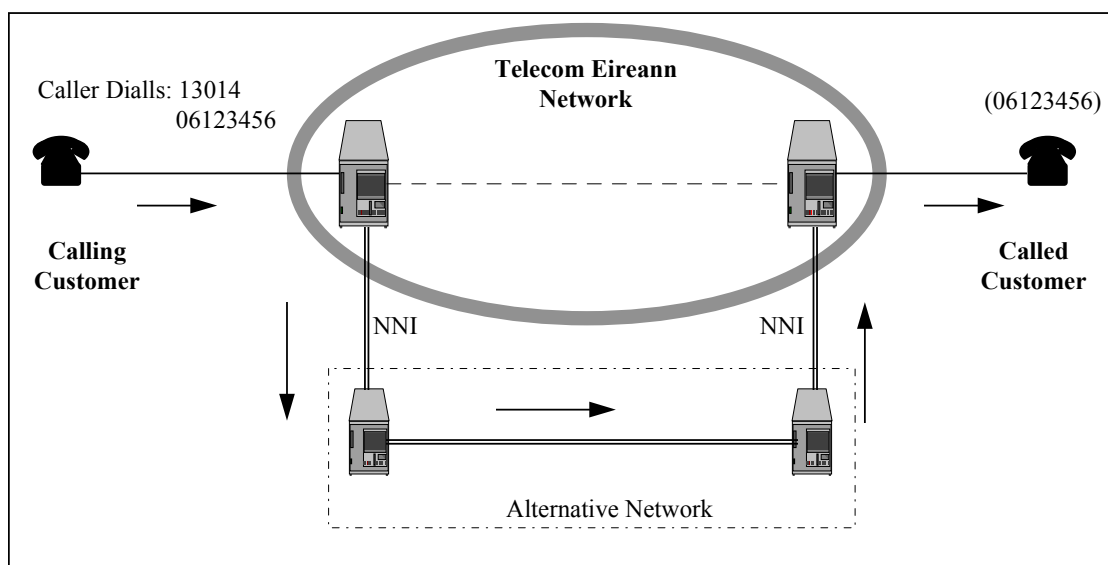
**Note:** In some cases, the caller may be required to enter an identification/validation number, e.g. for calling card services.

## Carrier Selection Description

Carrier selection allows a calling customer to directly access the network of telecommunications service providers other than Telecom Eireann (TE) from the TE network, by dialling a short carrier selection prefix. The main features are as follows:

- A unique carrier selection code is allocated to each network.
- The alternative network interconnects with the TE network using NNI, according to a network plan agreed between TE and the alternative network provider.
- TE does not bill the caller for calls made using the carrier selection prefix.

The call set-up procedure is described below:



1. The calling customer goes off-hook and receives dial tone from the TE network.
2. The calling customer dials the carrier selection prefix, followed by the number for the person being called (13 014 061 23456).
3. The call is connected via the alternative network.

### **Switchlink Lines and Identification Numbers**

It should be noted that the Switchlink access mechanism (as described in decision notice D1/97) utilises the immediate hotline function in the originating telephone exchange. This results in a two-stage call set-up procedure. Carrier access can be used in conjunction with Switchlink lines, however as carrier selection requires a single stage call set-up it can not be used in conjunction with Switchlink lines.

It should also be noted that in cases where there is a requirement for account numbers or PINs to be inserted by the caller after the carrier code is dialled, then a two-stage call set-up procedure is required, i.e. carrier access.



## **Calling Line Identification - Data Protection Issues**

Calling Line Identification raises important data protection issues. At the outset, it is necessary to distinguish between the presentation of the calling party's number to the party called, and the presentation and use of that information by telecommunications service providers.

Telecom Eireann has confirmed that they have the technical capability to provide CLI at all locations with the exception of a small number of analogue exchanges in Dublin. Discussions have taken place between Telecom Eireann and the Data Protection Commissioner in connection with the presentation of a calling party's number to the called party, and the Commissioner has agreed the basis on which such a service might be introduced by Telecom Eireann in compliance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act. The Commissioner awaits sight of Telecom Eireann's promotional material for customers in respect of the introduction of this service. Assessment by the Commissioner of such material is a prerequisite to the determination of whether or not this service will on its introduction comply with the requirements of the Data Protection Act.

The presentation of a calling party's number to other telecommunications providers, and their use of that number, without disclosure of such information to the called party requires a different assessment for compliance with the Data Protection Act. The Data Protection Commissioner has indicated to Telecom Eireann and another service provider that the essential ingredient in such a situation is that the primary service provider, as the data controller who has obtained information from the subscriber, should secure an undertaking from the secondary service provider that the choices regarding CLI which have been indicated by the subscriber will be honoured.

## **Carrier Selection and Carrier Access Codes**

### **Proposed Conditions and Procedures for Application and Allocation**

*The following gives an outline of the conditions which will apply to carrier access allocations, the final conditions will be specified at the time of allocation*

#### **1. Application**

##### **Eligibility**

Carrier selection and carrier access codes will be allocated only to telecommunications service providers licensed under sections 111(3) of the Postal and Telecommunications Services Act, 1983 (24 of 1983) as amended.

Only one carrier selection code, and one carrier access code will be allocated to any telecommunications service provider.

Applicants will be required to justify their requirement for carrier selection, or carrier access codes by reference to provision of telecommunications services to the public.

All eligible applicants will have equal access to the available carrier access codes.

Initially, carrier access codes will only be available for routing from the public switched telephone network to alternative networks via NNI interconnection points.

##### **Selection of Code**

Applicants will be given the option to indicate their preferred choice from the available carrier selection/carrier access codes.

With the exception of the “start-up” procedure, carrier selection/carrier access codes will be allocated on a first-come-first-served basis.

On the first day of allocations of carrier selection/carrier access codes, it may be expected that a number of coinciding applications will be received for the same code. To cater for this possibility, a separate “start-up” application procedure will be used, as described below.

#### **2. Withdrawal or Change of Code**

A carrier selection/carrier access code may be withdrawn by the Director if it is not being used to provide telecommunications services to the public; if the individual or company to whom it has been allocated is found to be in breach of the conditions of

allocation, is declared bankrupt, or ceases to hold an appropriate licence; or if withdrawal is in the overall national interest.

### **3. Transfer and Ownership**

A carrier selection/carrier access code shall not be transferable, and may only be used to route telecommunications traffic to the individual or company to whom it has been allocated by the ODTR.

The individual or company to whom a carrier selection/carrier access code has been allocated shall have a right of use in relation to the allocated carrier access code, (subject to allocation conditions), but shall have no proprietary rights in relation to that code.

### **4. Start-up Allocation Procedure**

During the start-up of allocation of carrier selection/carrier access codes, there will be a short period during which all applications received from eligible applicants will be deemed to have been received at the same time. This “open” period will end at 17.30 on **13 July 1998**.

In the first instance, all applications will be assessed for eligibility, and all eligible applications will progress to selection of the carrier access code. No further distinction will be made between eligible applicants, they will be regarded as equal.

Up to two codes will be allocated to each telecommunications service provider, one for carrier selection, and one for carrier access. Applications received during the “open” period should indicate the five preferred carrier selection codes, and the five preferred carrier access codes, clearly showing the order of preference. A sample indication form is shown in section 6 below.

Applications may be made only for a carrier selection code, or only for a carrier access code, or for both.

All carrier access codes will be allocated first, before any carrier selection codes are allocated. Service providers will be allowed to interchange their allocated carrier access codes and carrier selection codes, before they are brought into service.

If a first preference code is available, the applicant is deemed to be eligible, and no other application has been received for that code, then it will be selected for the applicant.

Where two or more coinciding first preference applications are received for the same code, a fair and neutral mechanism will be used to decide who is selected for allocation of the code, e.g. lottery. For the unsuccessful applicant, the original second preference code will then be deemed to become their first preference, and similarly their third preference will be deemed to become their second preference etc.

**5. Duration of Allocation**

The Director may set a time limit for the allocation, which will be communicated to the licensee at the time of allocation.

**6. Indication of Preferred Code**

Applicants should use a format similar to the following to indicate their preferred choice of both carrier access code, and carrier selection code as part of the start-up allocation procedure:

<b>Startup Allocation</b>	
<b>Preferred Carrier Selection/Carrier Access Code</b>	
Name and Address of Applicant:	_____
Telecommunications Service Licence Number:	_____
Preferred Carrier Access Code:	
1.	13 ____
2.	13 ____
3.	13 ____
4.	13 ____
5.	13 ____
Preferred Carrier Selection Code:	
1.	13 ____
2.	13 ____
3.	13 ____
4.	13 ____
5.	13 ____