Numbering Rules

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Numbering Rules

Chapter I. Preliminary

§1. Authority
These rules are promulgated pursuant to the powers granted by §428 and §429 of the Act.

§2. Short title
These rules may be cited as the “Numbering Rules of the Republic of Palau, 2021”.

§3. Objectives
(a) Number administration should be simple for the Bureau and licensees. It should aim to avoid number shortages and develop telecommunications.
(b) Number use should be simple for customers and licensees. It should aim to provide unambiguous identification, counter misuse and make number use easy.

§4. Scope
These rules constrain the administration and use of the numbers identified in the Numbering Plan and incorporate the Numbering Plan itself.

§5. Applicability
These rules prescribe the responsibilities of the Bureau and licensees that relate to the numbers identified in the Numbering Plan.

§6. Interpretation
(a) Any word, phrase or expression used in these rules shall have the same meaning as it has in the Act, unless it is expressly defined in these rules or the context requires otherwise.
(b) Headings and titles used in these rules are for reference only and shall not affect the interpretation or construction of these rules.
(c) References in these rules to a word or phrase in the singular encompass references to words or phrases in the plural, and vice versa.

§7. Definitions
(a) “Act” means the Palau National Telecommunications Act of 2017 codified in Title 15 of the Palau national code, and its amendments.
(b) “Allocation” means the granting to a licensee of the right to use a number in ways specific to the number (which may include assigning the number to a customer).
(c) “Allocation status” means an indication of which administrative procedures the Bureau can usefully apply to a number. It can be ‘allocated’, ‘free for allocation’ or ‘protected from allocation’.
(d) “Assignment” means the granting to a customer of the right to use a number to identify the origin or destination of communications with the customer.
(e) “Assignment status” means an indication of which administrative procedures a licensee can usefully apply to a number that the Bureau has allocated to the licensee. It can be ‘assigned’, ‘free for assignment’ or ‘protected from assignment’.

(f) “Communication” means an exchange of information that is originated by the input of a number and that is transmitted electronically by a telecommunications network.

(g) “Country code” means the leading digits of an International significant number that can identify a country, a global service, an international network or a group of countries.

(h) “Fixed communication” means a communication that has an origin or destination in the Republic of Palau but that is not a mobile communication.

(i) “International prefix” means a sequence of characters that can be input before an International significant number to originate a communication from the Republic of Palau to another country.

(j) “International signalling point code” means a sequence of digits that can identify a signalling point in the Republic of Palau which has a signalling relation with a signalling point in another country.

(k) “International significant number” means a sequence of digits that can identify an origin or destination of communications in another country, a global service, an international network or a group of countries.

(l) “Issuer identifier number” means a sequence of digits that can identify a licensee that may issue charge cards.

(m) “ITU” means the International Telecommunication Union, which is the specialized agency responsible for telecommunications within the United Nations.

(n) “ITU-T” means the Telecommunication Standardization Sector of the ITU, which develops standards for telecommunications.

(o) “Leading digits” means a sequence of digits that identifies the numbers that have the sequence as their leftmost digits.

(p) “Licensee” means a person holding a license granted in accordance with §401 or §705 of the Act.

(q) “Mobile communication” means a communication that has an origin or destination in the Republic of Palau which can move at least one hundred (100) meters without the failure of the communication.

(r) “Mobile network code” means a sequence of digits that can identify a mobile network.

(s) “National only number” means a sequence of digits that can identify an origin or destination of communications in the Republic of Palau but that is not a national significant number.

(t) “National significant number” means a sequence of digits that can identify an origin or destination of communications in the Republic of Palau and that, when preceded by the country code for the Republic of Palau, can even be used for this identification in another country.

(u) “Number” means a national significant number, a national only number, an international signalling point code, a mobile network code or an issuer identifier number.

(v) “Number block” means a set of numbers that comprises all of the numbers with particular leading digits, a particular usage and a particular length according to the Numbering Plan.

(w) “Numbering Form” means the templates that form the basis of requests and reports to the Bureau about the numbers identified in the Numbering Register.
(x) “Numbering Plan” means the document that identifies numbers by their leading digits or by all of their digits to specify their usages and lengths in the Republic of Palau.

(y) “Numbering Register” means the records of the allocation statuses and other details of all of the numbers identified in the Numbering Plan.

(z) “Utilization” means the proportion of a set of numbers that comprises the numbers that are either assigned or protected from assignment.

Chapter II. Number administration

§8. Allocating numbers

(a) A licensee may request that the Bureau allocate numbers to it by making a request for an allocation using the Numbering Form.

(b) By making a request, the licensee certifies compliance with these rules and with international standards. Relevant international standards include, but are not limited to:

1. ITU-T Recommendation E.164 for national significant numbers;
2. ITU-T Recommendation Q.708 for international signalling point codes;
3. ITU-T Recommendation E.212 for mobile network codes; and
4. ITU-T Recommendation E.118 for issuer identifier numbers.

(c) At most five (5) days after receiving a request for an allocation from a licensee the Bureau shall suggest any clarifications or corrections that it considers desirable.

(d) At most ten (10) days after receiving a request for an allocation from a licensee the Bureau shall acknowledge receipt of the request and of any clarifications or corrections.

(e) The Bureau shall not disclose any contents of a request for an allocation except those implicit in the Numbering Register.

(f) The Bureau shall consider requests in the order of receiving them.

(g) The Bureau may allocate numbers to a licensee only if:

1. the licensee has made a request for it to do so; and
2. the numbers are free for allocation (unless the numbers are national only numbers that the Bureau has already allocated to another licensee).

(h) The Bureau may adjust the choice and quantity of any national significant numbers to be allocated, with objectives that include, but are not limited to:

1. simplifying administration, by allocating numbers in number blocks comprising at least one hundred (100) numbers each;
2. facilitating routing, by allocating numbers in number blocks with short sequences of leading digits for identifying and aggregating communications between Palau and other countries;
3. avoiding fragmentation, by allocating to a licensee numbers with a given usage according to the Numbering Plan alongside numbers with the same usage that the Bureau has already allocated; and
(4) conserving numbers, by allocating to a licensee numbers with a given usage according to the
Numbering Plan only if the Bureau judges that at least fifty (50) percent of the number blocks
with the same usage that the Bureau has allocated to the licensee have utilizations of at least
fifty (50) percent.

(i) At most thirty (30) days after receiving a request for an allocation from a licensee the Bureau shall
inform the licensee in writing of reasoned decisions about the request and about any adjustment in
the choice and quantity of the numbers, unless the licensee agrees to a delay because of the
complexity or novelty of the request.

(j) If the Bureau allocates numbers to a licensee, it shall update the Numbering Register with the
information identified in §15(a), amend the Numbering Form as in §15(c) and inform others as in
§15(d). In particular, it shall change the allocation statuses of the numbers from ‘free for allocation’
to ‘allocated’ (unless the numbers are national only numbers that the Bureau has already allocated
to another licensee) and insert the name of the licensee in the relevant entries in the Numbering
Register and the Numbering Form.

§9. Withdrawing numbers

(a) A licensee may request that the Bureau withdraw numbers from it by making a request for a
withdrawal using the Numbering Form.

(b) The Bureau may withdraw numbers that it has allocated to a licensee, thereby protecting them from
allocation when they would otherwise remain allocated to the licensee, only if:

(1) the numbers have not been used in communications during the preceding three hundred and
ninety (390) days; or

(2) the Bureau considers that doing so is justified by a reason explicit in §16(b).

(c) If the Bureau withdraws numbers that it has allocated to a licensee, it shall update the Numbering
Register with the information identified in §15(a), amend the Numbering Form as in §15(c) and
inform others as in §15(d). In particular, it shall change the allocation statuses of the numbers from
‘allocated’ to ‘protected from allocation’ (unless the numbers are national only numbers that the
Bureau has not yet withdrawn from another licensee) and remove the name of the licensee from the
relevant entries in the Numbering Register and the Numbering Form.

(d) If the Bureau withdraws numbers that it has allocated to a licensee, the licensee shall end all
assignments and other uses of the numbers.

§10. Transferring numbers

(a) A licensee may request that the Bureau transfer numbers to it by making a request for a transfer
using the Numbering Form.

(b) The Bureau may transfer numbers that it has allocated to a licensee, thereby allocating them to
another licensee when they would otherwise remain allocated to the licensee, only if:

(1) the numbers have not been used in communications during the preceding three hundred and
ninety (390) days; or

(2) the licensee from whom it is transferring the numbers consents in writing to the transfer.
(c) If the Bureau transfers numbers that it has allocated to a licensee, it shall update the Numbering Register with the information identified in §15(a), amend the Numbering Form as in §15(b)(c) and inform others as in §15(d). In particular, it shall replace the name of the licensee from whom it has transferred the numbers by the name of the licensee to whom it has transferred the numbers in the relevant entries in the Numbering Register and Numbering Form.

(d) If the Bureau transfers numbers that it has allocated to a licensee, the licensee from whom it has transferred the numbers shall end all assignments and other uses of the numbers.

§11. Protecting numbers from allocation

(a) The Bureau may protect numbers from allocation that would otherwise remain free for allocation.

(b) The Bureau may protect numbers from allocation only if it invites licensees to comment on its proposals throughout the preceding thirty (30) days, in which the numbers are free for allocation.

(c) If the Bureau protects numbers from allocation, it shall update the Numbering Register with the information identified in §15(a) and amend the Numbering Form as in §15(c). In particular, it shall change the allocation statuses of the numbers from ‘free for allocation’ to ‘protected from allocation’.

§12. Freeing numbers for allocation

(a) The Bureau may free numbers for allocation that would otherwise remain protected from allocation.

(b) The Bureau may free numbers for allocation only if it invites licensees to comment on its proposals throughout the preceding thirty (30) days, in which the numbers are protected from allocation.

(c) If the Bureau frees numbers for allocation, it shall update the Numbering Register with the information identified in §15(a) and amend the Numbering Form as in §15(c). In particular, it shall change the allocation statuses of the numbers from ‘protected from allocation’ to ‘free for allocation’.

Chapter III. Number documentation

§13. Amending the Numbering Plan

(a) The Bureau shall publish as the Numbering Plan Schedule I of these rules.

(b) The Bureau shall amend the Numbering Plan only in accordance with the Act.

(c) At most five (5) days after amending the Numbering Plan the Bureau shall amend the Numbering Register to maintain its correspondence with the Numbering Plan.

(d) At most thirty (30) days after amending the Numbering Plan the Bureau shall inform the ITU about the amendments. If the amendments relate to national significant numbers, the information shall be in the format described in ITU-T Recommendation E.129.

§14. Auditing the Numbering Register

(a) A licensee shall provide to the Bureau on demand up-to-date records of the allocation statuses and other details of all of the numbers that the Bureau has allocated to it.

(b) At most thirty (30) days after the end of each calendar year the licensee shall make a report for an audit using the Numbering Form.
(c) The Bureau shall not disclose any contents of a report for an audit except those implicit in the Numbering Register.

(d) The Bureau shall reconcile the Numbering Register with the reports for the audit made by the licensees.

(e) The Bureau shall consider possible amendments to these rules, taking account of:
   (1) the utilizations of the number blocks that the Bureau has already allocated; and
   (2) any developments likely to affect the market in the Republic of Palau.

(f) If the Bureau has allocated all of the international signalling point codes, mobile network codes or issuer identifier numbers made available by the ITU for allocation by it, it shall request that the ITU make available more of them.

§15. Amending the Numbering Register

(a) The Bureau shall publish as the Numbering Register up-to-date records for all of the numbers identified in the Numbering Plan. The records shall provide:
   (1) the allocation statuses of the numbers;
   (2) the dates when the Bureau changed the records most recently; and
   (3) the names of the licensees to whom the Bureau has allocated the numbers (if the allocation statuses of the numbers are ‘allocated’).

(b) The Bureau may amend the Numbering Register only if:
   (1) it is allocating, withdrawing or transferring numbers;
   (2) it is protecting numbers from allocation;
   (3) it is freeing numbers for allocation;
   (4) it does so only to reconcile the Numbering Register with the reports for the audit of numbers provided by the licensees; or
   (5) it does so only to maintain the correspondence of the Numbering Register with the Numbering Plan.

(c) At most five (5) days after amending the Numbering Register the Bureau shall amend the Numbering Form to maintain its correspondence with the Numbering Register.

(d) At most thirty (30) days after amending the Numbering Register because of the allocation, withdrawal or transfer of numbers the Bureau shall inform the ITU and all of the licensees about the amendments.

§16. Indicating the availability of numbers for allocation

(a) A number identified in the Numbering Plan shall have ‘allocated’, ‘free for allocation’ or ‘protected from allocation’ as its allocation status, following the actions of the Bureau.

(b) A number identified in the Numbering Plan may have ‘protected from allocation’ as its allocation status for reasons that include, but are not limited to:
   (1) ensuring compliance with these rules and with international standards;
   (2) avoiding confusion with similar important numbers;
(3) keeping numbers in reserve to become free for allocation in future without amending the Numbering Plan; and

(4) having replacements for other numbers following possible amendments to the Numbering Plan.

(c) A number other than a number identified in the Numbering Plan shall have ‘protected from allocation’ as its allocation status.

§17. Amending the Numbering Form

(a) The Bureau shall publish as the Numbering Form a template for licensees to use in providing requests and reports to the Bureau.

(b) The Bureau may amend the Numbering Form only if:

(1) it invites licensees to comment on its proposals throughout the preceding thirty (30) days, in which the Numbering Form is not amended; or

(2) it does so only to maintain the correspondence of the Numbering Form with the Numbering Register.

Chapter IV. Number use

§18. Maintaining the integrity of numbers

(a) A licensee shall be responsible for ensuring the fulfillment of all of the legal and regulatory obligations that relate to the numbers that the Bureau has allocated to it, even if it outsources to agents the sale or operation of telecommunications services using the numbers. In particular, it shall require contractually that such agents comply with these rules and with international standards.

(b) A licensee shall not associate particular numbers with itself or any other licensee except to provide contact details. In particular, it shall avoid branding its services with numbers (though it may mention the facilities available on particular national only numbers, for example).

(c) A licensee shall not permit uses of numbers that are deceitful about the origins, destinations, purposes or natures of communications.

(d) The Bureau shall take swift action if the ITU or organizations in other countries report to it uses of numbers with the country code ‘680’ that might be contrary to these rules or to international standards. In particular, it shall attend to reports made in accordance with the protocols described in ITU-T Recommendation E.156.

§19. Assigning numbers

(a) A licensee may assign numbers to a customer only if:

(1) the numbers are national significant numbers that the Bureau has allocated to the licensee;

(2) the numbers are free for assignment;

(3) the numbers have not been used in communications during the preceding one hundred and eighty (180) days; and

(4) the customer has provided an address in the Republic of Palau.

(b) A licensee shall determine the choice and quantity of any national significant numbers to be assigned, with objectives that include, but are not limited to:
(1) avoiding fragmentation, by assigning numbers alongside numbers that the licensee has already assigned; and

(2) conserving numbers, by assigning numbers with a given usage according to the Numbering Plan to a customer at a given address only if the licensee judges that the quantity of numbers with the same usage that the licensee has assigned to customers at that address will be at most two (2) times the expected maximum quantity of people living or working at that address.

(c) If a licensee assigns numbers to a customer, it shall change the assignment statuses of the numbers from ‘free for assignment’ to ‘assigned’ and record the name and address of the customer.

§20. Ending assignments of numbers

(a) A licensee may end its assignments of numbers to a customer, thereby protecting the numbers from assignment, only if:

(1) the licensee has made available replacements for the numbers throughout the preceding one hundred and eighty (180) days, in which the replacements are alternatives to the numbers;

(2) the numbers have not been used in communications during the preceding one hundred and eighty (180) days; or

(3) the Bureau considers that doing so is justified by a reason explicit in §16(b).

(b) A licensee shall end its assignments of numbers to a customer if:

(1) the numbers have not been used in communications during the preceding three hundred and ninety (390) days; or

(2) the Bureau requires it to do so.

(c) If a licensee ends its assignments of numbers to a customer, it shall change the assignment statuses of the numbers from ‘assigned’ to ‘protected from assignment’.

(d) A licensee shall notify its customers periodically about the principles and timescales that it applies to ending assignments. In particular, it shall inform them that their assignments will end after certain periods of disuse, are to end soon or have just ended.

§21. Indicating the availability of numbers for assignment

(a) A national significant number that the Bureau has allocated to a licensee shall have ‘assigned’, ‘free for assignment’ or ‘protected from assignment’ as its assignment status, following the actions of the licensee.

(b) A national significant number that the Bureau has allocated to a licensee may have ‘protected from assignment’ as its assignment status for reasons that include, but are not limited to:

(1) ensuring compliance with these rules and with international standards;

(2) avoiding confusion with similar important numbers; and

(3) keeping numbers for use in internal network communications, such as those in roaming.

(c) A number other than a national significant number that the Bureau has allocated to a licensee shall have ‘protected from assignment’ as its assignment status.
§22. Preventing the misuse of numbers
(a) A licensee may bar communications originated at or destined for numbers only if:
   (1) the customers to whom the licensee has assigned the numbers request that it does so;
   (2) the licensee has ended its assignments of the numbers;
   (3) the numbers are national only numbers;
   (4) the Bureau has not allocated the numbers more than thirty (30) days previously; or
   (5) the Bureau considers that doing so is justified by a reason explicit in §16(b).
(b) A licensee shall bar communications originated at or destined for numbers if the Bureau requires it to do so.

§23. Charging for communications
(a) A communication originated at a national significant number in the Republic of Palau and destined for a national significant number in the Republic of Palau shall not have charges that depend on attributes of the destination number other than the usage according to the Numbering Plan. In particular, the charge may depend on whether the destination number is used for fixed communications or mobile communications but not on which licensee assigned the destination number or which address of the customer was recorded when the destination number was assigned.
(b) A communication originated at a national significant number in the Republic of Palau and destined for a national only number in the Republic of Palau shall be free of any charge at its origin until information transmitted within it from the origin indicates acceptance of charging.

§24. Establishing international service communications
(a) A licensee that provides voice telecommunications services shall ensure that a communication from the Republic of Palau to another country can be originated by the input of an international prefix before an international significant number.
(b) A licensee that provides voice telecommunications services may arrange that a communication from the Republic of Palau to another country can be originated by the input of a national only number to originate a communication within which is transmitted information identifying the destination in the other country.
(c) A communication to another country originated at a national significant number or a national only number in the Republic of Palau shall transmit in the calling line identity the country code ‘680’ and a national significant number identifying the origin, along with any presentation restriction indicated for the origin.

§25. Establishing emergency service communications
(a) A licensee that provides voice telecommunications services shall ensure that a communication destined for an allocated emergency service number can be originated by the input of that number. In particular, the customer can originate the communication even if the customer is not in credit with the licensee offering the service or has not already used the service.
(b) A communication originated at a national significant number or a national only number in the Republic of Palau and destined for an allocated emergency service number shall be free of any charge at its origin.

(c) A communication originated at a national significant number or a national only number in the Republic of Palau and destined for an allocated emergency service number shall transmit in the calling line identity a national significant number identifying the origin.

(d) A communication originated at a national significant number or a national only number in the Republic of Palau and destined for an allocated emergency service number shall be given priority in transmission over other communications if it might not otherwise be completed satisfactorily.

(e) A licensee that provides voice telecommunications services shall publicize the availability of ‘112’ and ‘911’ as emergency service numbers.

(f) A licensee that provides voice telecommunications services shall notify its customers periodically about what caller location information is associated with their numbers in emergency service call centers. In particular, it shall warn if the information relates only to the addresses of the customers recorded when the numbers were assigned, not to the locations of the customers during emergency service calls.

Chapter V. Numbering fees

§26. Recovering costs

(a) The Bureau shall determine annual fees for numbers only in accordance with the Act.

(b) The fees shall vary between licensees only by being directly proportional to the quantities of national significant numbers that the Bureau has allocated to the licensees.

Chapter VI. Transitional provisions

§27. Adapting usage

(a) The Numbering Register shall be deemed to be complete and correct as soon as the Bureau has adopted these rules.

(b) For one hundred and eighty (180) days after adopting these rules the Bureau shall not require compliance with the specifications of the usages and lengths of the numbers identified in the Numbering Plan.
Schedule I. The Numbering Plan

§1. National significant numbers

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<th>Usage</th>
<th>Additional information</th>
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§2. National only numbers
(a) The national only numbers are ‘11n’ for $n \geq 0$, ‘n11’ for $n \geq 2$, ‘100’ and ‘999’.
(b) The Bureau has allocated ‘112’ and ‘911’ to all licensees for use in emergency service communications.
(c) The Bureau may allocate ‘11n’ for $n \geq 0$ (except $n=2$) and ‘999’ to all licensees for use in emergency service communications or public service communications. Communications destined for such a number and implemented by different licensees shall reach the same service center.
(d) The Bureau may allocate ‘n11’ for $n \geq 2$ (except $n=9$) and ‘100’ to all licensees for use for customer service communications or international service communications. Communications destined for such a number and implemented by different licensees shall reach similar service centers but not necessarily the same service center.

§3. International signalling point codes

§4. Mobile network codes
The mobile network codes for mobile country code ‘552’ are the pairs of digits between ‘00’ and ‘99’ inclusive.

§5. Issuer identifier numbers
The issuer identifier numbers for major industry identifier ‘89’ and country code ‘680’ are the pairs of digits between ‘00’ and ‘99’ inclusive.

§6. International prefixes
The international prefix is ‘011’, which may also be input as ‘+’.