

15 June 2022

Communications Alliance
PO Box 444
Milsons Point NSW 1566

Submitted online at <https://www.commsalliance.com.au/Documents/public-comment/submit-comments>

Dear Communications Alliance

C540:2022 Local Number Portability Industry Code
C566:2022 Number Management – Use of Numbers By Customers Industry Code

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on Communications Alliance’s review of its revised *C540:2022 Local Number Portability Industry Code (LNP Code)* and new *C566:2022 Number Management – Use of Numbers By Customers Industry Code (NM Code)*.

Broadly speaking, we support the proposed revisions to both Codes. In particular, we commend Communications Alliance for working to strengthen protections for victims of domestic and family violence and reduce timeframes for landline ports.

We support the added protections for victims of domestic and family violence

We support the new sections 4.7.2 and 4.7.3 of the NM Code. These sections allow a provider to recall a number when an account holder breaches its Terms and Conditions, and issue the number to a previous end-user. The end-user may be a victim of domestic or family violence, or the victim’s family member. As noted in our systemic report *‘Meeting the needs of consumers impacted by family violence’*, some consumers find it difficult to keep their mobile number (or a child’s number) if the perpetrator is the account holder.¹ It is often essential that consumers impacted by family violence keep their mobile number in order to communicate with their support network or specialist services. These new sections in the NM Code may be a lifeline to such consumers.

We are also pleased to see references to *G660:2018 Assisting Customers Experiencing Domestic and Family Violence Industry Guideline (the Guideline)* in the NM Code, under both the Introduction and the note below section 4.3.3. In our feedback on revising *C566:2005 Rights of Use of Numbers Industry Code* in May 2021, we suggested that providers could follow the process for keeping a mobile number set out under Chapter 9 of the Guideline. Referencing the Guideline in the NM Code can help draw providers’ attention to examples of best industry practice, and over time this may lead to the suggestions in the Guideline becoming common industry practice.

We support the proposed changes to the Cat A (simple) and Cat C (complex) porting processes

Over the last two years, the number of complaints my office has received about delayed landline ports has trended down. This includes complaints from both small business and residential consumers.

However, we continue to receive a low number of these complaints. Additionally, over the past two years we have heard from providers who have expressed difficulty with managing the volume or

¹ TIO, *Meeting the needs of consumers impacted by family violence*, TIO website, 9 December 2020.

complexity of porting business landline numbers. Shorter timeframes and simpler processes for completing landline ports may help further reduce the number of complaints made to my office.

We look forward to using both Codes when handling complaints

My office looks forward to using the revised LNP Code and the new NM Code when handling complaints.

While the exposure draft for the LNP Code no longer includes section 1.5 'Powers of the Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman to handle complaints under the Code', we understand this will not affect our jurisdiction. Our Terms of Reference allows us to handle complaints about number loss or a provider's failure to comply with a Code, where the provider is a member of our scheme.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Cynthia Gebert', followed by a long horizontal flourish.

Cynthia Gebert
Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman