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For preliminary consultation

STUDY MANDATE TO ETSI

CONCERNING THE INTRODUCTION OF NUMBER PORTABILITY

IN THE GSM SYSTEM FAMILY

1. Purpose

The purpose of this study mandate is to identify the areas for further standardisation to allow for the introduction of number portability (i.e. the transferability of numbers) between GSM/DCS network operators and or resellers. The implementation of number portability in the GSM system family should ensure that basic parameters are not affected e.g. use and control of supplementary services, correct display of calling number, international roaming.

2. Justification

Subscribers attach a high value to their number. Polls have indicated that some 80 - 90 percent of business customers would not consider switching operators if they can not take their number with them.

Number portability allows subscribers to retain their number when they decide to switch operators. Number portability thus is an important pre-requisite, if users are to be able to choose from whom they obtain telecommunications services and if competition is to become genuinely effective.

Analysis shows that number portability for mobile services should be considered as a matter of urgency and is critical for creating equal conditions for access and opportunity for new entrants.

The Numbering Green Paper therefore proposes that Member States should ensure that any technical restrictions that still prohibit number portability for mobile and personal communications services are removed as quickly as possible, and at the latest that number portability is available by 1 January 2000.

In this context, it is important to start action in ETSI to identify what amendments to the GSM system standard are necessary.

3. Scope of mandate

This mandate requires that a report is produced which describes the necessary amendments to the GSM system standard such that all technical restrictions that still prohibit number portability between GSM/DCS operators and or resellers are removed. The report shall include a concrete proposal for a subsequent standardisation mandate to ETSI.

4. Responsible Technical Committee

ETSI TC SMG X

5. Work programme and timescales

X

A detailed work proposal shall be defined by ETSI SMG for approval by the Commission. This will include the timescales for the report and for the subsequent standardisation activity. The timescales shall be commensurate with the political agenda for the introduction of number portability as indicated in Section 2 above.