

BEFORE THE FLORIDA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

In re: Proposed extension of permissive dialing
in the 850 and 813 area codes.

DOCKET NO. 20200236-TP
ORDER NO. PSC-2020-0479-PAA-TP
ISSUED: December 4, 2020

The following Commissioners participated in the disposition of this matter:

GARY F. CLARK, Chairman
ART GRAHAM
JULIE I. BROWN
DONALD J. POLMANN
ANDREW GILES FAY

NOTICE OF PROPOSED AGENCY ACTION
ORDER EXTENDING THE PERMISSIVE DIALING PERIODS
FOR THE 850 AND 813 AREA CODES

BY THE COMMISSION:

NOTICE is hereby given by the Florida Public Service Commission that the action discussed herein is preliminary in nature and will become final unless a person whose interests are substantially affected files a petition for a formal proceeding, pursuant to Rule 25-22.029, Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.).

Case Background

In June and October of 2019, we established two dockets to address area code relief proposals for the 850 and 813 area codes (Docket Nos. 20190135-TP and 20190196-TP, respectively). Both proposals were filed by the North American Numbering Plan Administrator (NANPA) on behalf of the telecommunications industry. The proposals requested that an All-Services Distributed Overlay (Overlay) be implemented for each of the affected areas due to anticipated demand for telephone numbers.

The NANPA proposals included the industry's standard thirteen-month implementation schedule, with a six-month permissive dialing period, for each of the area codes. The permissive dialing period is the time period in which customers can dial either seven or ten digits to complete a call. At the end of the permissive dialing period, mandatory ten-digit dialing is implemented, and customers that dial only seven digits will receive an audio message informing the customer to dial the number again using ten digits. The permissive dialing period is typically set for six months prior to the forecasted exhaust date for an area code. NANPA forecasted the exhaust for the 850 and 813 area codes as third quarter of 2021 and fourth quarter of 2022, respectively.

On November 6, 2019, we approved the 850 area code Overlay, and the corresponding implementation schedules, by Order No. PSC-2019-0471-FOF-TP (850 Order). On April 10, 2020, we approved the 813 area code Overlay, and the corresponding implementation schedules, by Order No. PSC-2020-0098-PAA-TP (813 Order).

Following issuance of the 850 and 813 Orders, NANPA and its telecommunications industry workgroup developed dates by which the industry would notify affected companies and customers of the forthcoming implementation dates, including the end date for permissive dialing (which is the same as the start date for mandatory ten-digit dialing). During this process, the industry workgroup co-chairs distributed several email notifications to directory publishers, coin operated payphone providers, alarm associations, 911 county coordinators, and Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs). The industry workgroup distributed three email notifications for the 850 Number Planning Area (NPA), and the first of four notifications for the 813 NPA is scheduled for distribution on December 17, 2020.

On October 21, 2020, we were contacted by two alarm companies, Smith Security System, Inc. and Panhandle Alarm & Telephone Company, Inc., both of which offer service in the 850 NPA. The companies expressed concern regarding their challenges to reprogram alarm equipment in the remaining time before the transition to mandatory ten-digit dialing, which is set to begin on February 20, 2021. The companies indicated that they are facing impediments in accessing their equipment as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

On November 5, 2020, the Alarm Association of Florida, Inc. (Alarm Association) advised that its members share similar concerns.¹ The Alarm Association is a statewide association that represents security, fire, and low-voltage customers. Approximately 30 of its contractor members are in the 850 NPA, and approximately 40 of its contractor members are in the 813 NPA. These members have thousands of customer accounts. The Alarm Association indicated that while some equipment can and has been remotely reprogrammed to dial ten digits, other forms of equipment, such as fire alarms, emergency elevator phones, and some medical alert monitors, must be reprogrammed on-site.

The Alarm Association advised that the reduced access to premises, especially residential, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, has greatly hindered scheduling reprogramming. The Alarm Association also indicated that the Florida Fire Code (Chapter 633, Florida Statutes) requires that an alarm system be tested after any programming changes to ensure proper system operation, and that this process, depending on the size and location of the system, can take days or in some cases a week or longer.

Accordingly, the Alarm Association requested a 90-day extension of the permissive dialing period for both the 850 and 813 NPAs (though it is more urgently needed in the 850 NPA, since the start of mandatory dialing is currently set for February 20, 2021, as indicated above). On November 9, 2020, the Florida Fire Marshals and Inspectors Association expressed

¹ See FPSC Document No. 11831-2020.

its support of the Alarm Association's request for a 90-day extension of the permissive dialing period, and echoed the concerns expressed by the Alarm Association.²

We have jurisdiction pursuant to Sections 364.16(7) and 120.80(13)(d), Florida Statutes, and Title 47 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Section 52.19.

Analysis and Decision

I. Extension of Permissive Dialing Period for the 850 Area Code

A. Summary of Concerns of Alarm Industry

Not all alarm equipment can be remotely reprogrammed to dial ten digits. Specifically, the majority of fire alarm systems and emergency elevator phones require on-site reprogramming. Furthermore, some legacy consumer medical devices also require on-site reprogramming. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the industry has faced challenges gaining access to thousands of buildings to perform such reprogramming, resulting in a potential public safety risk if the devices cannot be reprogrammed in time. In addition, Smith Security System, Inc. and Panhandle Alarm & Telephone Company, Inc. suggested that insufficient public notice regarding the transition to ten-digit dialing was a compounding factor in their reprogramming challenges.

Smith Security System, Inc., Panhandle Alarm & Telephone Company, Inc., the Alarm Association, and the Florida Fire Marshals and Inspectors Association have requested an extension of the permissive dialing period to provide additional time to reprogram alarms throughout the 850 area code. While Smith Security System, Inc. did not specify a requested time frame for an extension, Panhandle Alarm & Telephone Company, Inc. requested an extension of twelve months. The Alarm Association and the Florida Fire Marshals and Inspectors Association requested an extension of 90 days.

B. NANPA 850 Area Code Exhaust Forecast

In October 2020, NANPA issued its semi-annual exhaust analysis which continues to forecast exhaust of the 850 area code in the third quarter of 2021. As of October 30, 2020, there are 16 available Central Office (CO) codes for assignment. While each CO code has 10,000 consecutive telephone numbers, a code can only be assigned to one rate center.

There are a total of 64 rate centers in the 850 area code, of which 63 are optional pooling rate centers, and one is excluded from pooling. The Pooling Administrator has a total of 712 available blocks of 1,000 telephone numbers for assignment. There are available blocks in all rate centers with the exception of the MUNSON and SNEADS rate centers.

NANPA is forecasting demand for two CO codes in the next six months. Due to the limited number of CO codes in the 850 area code, NANPA notes that it may be necessary to

² See FPSC Document No. 11888-2020.

ration code assignments if the implementation of the new area code is delayed. Specifically, if the demand for CO codes exceeds the supply prior to final implementation of the new area code, “Jeopardy” could be declared by NANPA for an NPA. When Jeopardy is declared, Interim Jeopardy Procedures are put in place and become effective immediately. The Interim Jeopardy procedures state that pooling and non-pooled CO code applications must be submitted through a lottery process, and CO code allocations initially are set at three per month. NANPA is required to convene the industry no later than three weeks after the Jeopardy declaration in order to reach consensus on the final Jeopardy procedures.

C. Outreach Efforts in 850 Area Code

In order to educate and receive customer input, we held a customer workshop on September 6, 2019, in Tallahassee. During this workshop, our staff and representatives from NANPA gave presentations explaining the area code relief process, the relief options being considered, and the customer impact. We also allotted time for customers to ask questions or give comments. There were no customer comments during the workshop; however, we did receive one customer comment after the workshop in favor of the Overlay alternative.

NANPA and the industry workgroup developed customer education and notification dates after the 850 Order was approved. Part of this process included the distribution of three additional email notifications sent to directory publishers, coin operated payphone providers, alarm associations, 911 county coordinators and PSAPs. The emails were sent in April, July, and October for the 850 NPA. This process was used in prior Overlays that resulted in the transition to ten-digit dialing. Two contacts at the Alarm Association were included in these emails. Customer notifications for the general public were sent by all telecommunications companies in August, just prior to the beginning of the permissive dialing period beginning August 22, 2020. We also issued a news release on August 7, 2020.

D. Industry Workgroup Proposal for 850 Area Code

Our staff advised the industry workgroup for the 850 area code relief implementation of the concerns raised by the alarm industry. The industry workgroup proposed the following timelines for our consideration. As noted in the 850 Order, CO codes in the new 448 area code are available only when all assignable CO codes in the 850 area code are assigned.

850/448 NPA	Current Date	Revised Date
End of permissive dialing and start of mandatory 10-digit dialing	February 20, 2021	May 22, 2021
Earliest new 448 NPA central office code activation / in service date	March 20, 2021	June 22, 2021
Earliest date central office codes in the new 448 overlay area may be ordered through NANPA.	January 13, 2021	April 17, 2021

In order for telecommunications carriers to begin incorporating the changes listed above, NANPA must issue a planning letter regarding any changes we approve. NANPA’s “NPA Code

Relief Planning and Notifications Guidelines” states that it will post the planning letter within ten business days of the final written order. Thus, NANPA will not issue a planning letter without a final order from this Commission, unless it is specifically directed to do so.

E. Conclusion

In light of the barriers the alarm industry has faced in reprogramming alarm equipment due to COVID-19, we hereby approve the schedule proposed by the industry workgroup. We find that extending the end of the permissive dialing period from February 20, 2021, to May 22, 2021, strikes a reasonable balance between providing additional time to the alarm industry to update equipment and ensure public safety with the need to mitigate the risk of exhausting telephone numbers in the 850 NPA. Also, in order to facilitate this schedule, we direct NANPA to issue the planning letter within ten business days of the issuance of this Proposed Agency Action (PAA) Order.

II. Extension of Permissive Dialing Period for the 813 Area Code

A. Summary of Concerns of Alarm Industry

As noted in Section I, the majority of fire alarm systems and emergency elevator phones require on-site reprogramming of equipment from seven-digit dialing to ten-digit dialing. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Alarm Association has requested that we extend the permissive dialing period to provide for additional time for such reprogramming.

B. NANPA 813 Area Code Exhaust Forecast / 988 National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

When we considered area code relief for the 813 area code, NANPA had forecasted the exhaust by third quarter of 2021. In October 2020, NANPA issued its semi-annual exhaust analysis forecast, and updated the exhaust of the 813 area code to the fourth quarter of 2022. Thus, the expected exhaust for the 813 area code was pushed out more than a year. However, the area code exhaust is no longer the sole issue forcing the transition to ten-digit dialing in this area code.

In July 2020, the Federal Communications Commission adopted rules to establish 988 as the new nationwide three-digit phone number to connect those in crises with suicide prevention and mental health crisis counselors. The rules require all phone service providers to direct all 988 calls to the existing National Suicide Prevention Lifeline by July 16, 2022. To ensure that calls to 988 reach the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, all providers will be required to implement ten-digit dialing in areas that use both seven-digit dialing and use 988 as the first three numbers in seven-digit phone numbers.

Because 988 is an active prefix in the 813 area code, the 813 NPA will be required to transition to ten-digit dialing. The implementation schedule related to establishing the 988 National Suicide Prevention Lifeline requires the transition to ten-digit dialing before the new

exhaust date for the 813 area code.³ Thus, we have limited time to extend the permissive dialing period in the 813 area code, since permissive dialing cannot be extended to the forecasted exhaust (fourth quarter of 2022) due to the implementation of the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline.

C. Outreach Efforts for 813 Area Code

In an effort to educate and receive customer input, we held customer workshops on February 6, 2020, in Tampa, FL, and February 7, 2020, in St. Petersburg, FL. During these workshops, our staff and a representative from NANPA explained the area code relief process, the relief options being considered, and the customer impact. We also allotted time for customers to ask questions or give comments. While there were no customers at either workshop, we did receive one comment afterwards in favor of the Overlay option.

NANPA and the industry workgroup are working to develop customer education and notification dates. Part of this process includes the distribution of four additional email notifications sent to directory publishers, coin operated payphone providers, alarm associations, 911 county coordinators, and PSAPs for the 813 NPA. As previously indicated, this process was used in prior Overlays that resulted in the transition to ten-digit dialing. These emails are scheduled to be sent on December 17, 2020, March 5, 2021, June 16, 2021, and September 3, 2021. The first customer notification for the general public is scheduled to be sent by all telecommunications companies in March 2021, just prior to the beginning of the permissive dialing period on April 17, 2021.

D. Industry Workgroup Proposal for 813 Area Code

Our staff advised the industry workgroup for the 813 area code relief implementation of the concerns identified by the alarm industry. The industry workgroup proposed the following timelines for our consideration. As noted in the 813 Order, CO codes in the new 656 area code are available only when all assignable CO codes in the 813 area code are assigned.

813/656 NPA	Current Date	Revised Date
Start of permissive 10-digit dialing	April 17, 2021	No Change
End of permissive dialing and start of mandatory 10-digit dialing	October 16, 2021	January 22, 2022
Earliest new 656 NPA central office code activation / in service date	November 16, 2021	February 22, 2022
Earliest date central office codes in the new 656 overlay area may be ordered through NANPA.	September 11, 2021	December 18, 2021

In order for telecommunications carriers to begin incorporating the changes listed above, NANPA must issue a planning letter regarding any changes we approve. NANPA's "NPA Code Relief Planning and Notifications Guidelines" states that it will post the planning letter within ten

³ By comparison, the forecasted exhaust date is the controlling factor for the 850 NPA, rather than the 988 implementation schedule.

business days of the final written order. Thus, NANPA will not issue a planning letter without a final order from this Commission, unless it is specifically directed to do so.

E. Conclusion

In light of the barriers the alarm industry has faced in reprogramming alarm equipment due to COVID-19, we hereby approve the schedule proposed by the industry workgroup. While the forecasted exhaust date for 813 has been extended, the implementation of the national suicide prevention number limits the amount of time permissive dialing can be extended. We find that extending the end of the permissive dialing period from October 16, 2021, to January 22, 2022, strikes a reasonable balance between providing additional time to the alarm industry to update equipment, ensuring public safety, mitigating the risk of exhausting telephone numbers in the 813 NPA, and the implementation of the national suicide prevention number. Also, in order to facilitate this schedule, we direct NANPA to issue the planning letter within ten business days of the issuance of this PAA Order.

Based on the foregoing, it is

ORDERED by the Florida Public Service Commission that the permissive dialing period for the 850 area code, as set forth in Order No. PSC-2019-0471-FOF-TP, shall be extended from February 20, 2021, to May 22, 2021, and the industry workgroup proposal for the 850 area code is hereby approved. It is further

ORDERED that the permissive dialing period for the 813 area code, as set forth in Order No. PSC-2020-0098-PAA-TP, shall be extended from October 16, 2021, to January 22, 2022, and the industry workgroup proposal for the 813 area code is hereby approved. It is further

ORDERED that the North American Numbering Plan Administrator shall issue the planning letter for both the 850 and 813 area codes within ten business days of the issuance of this Proposed Agency Action Order. It is further

ORDERED that the provisions of this Order, issued as proposed agency action, shall become final and effective upon the issuance of a Consummating Order unless an appropriate petition, in the form provided by Rule 28-106.201, Florida Administrative Code, is received by the Commission Clerk, 2540 Shumard Oak Boulevard, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0850, by the close of business on the date set forth in the "Notice of Further Proceedings" attached hereto. It is further

ORDERED that in the event this Order becomes final, this docket shall be closed.

By ORDER of the Florida Public Service Commission this 4th day of December, 2020.



ADAM J. TEITZMAN
Commission Clerk
Florida Public Service Commission
2540 Shumard Oak Boulevard
Tallahassee, Florida 32399
(850) 413-6770
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Copies furnished: A copy of this document is provided to the parties of record at the time of issuance and, if applicable, interested persons.

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NOTICE OF FURTHER PROCEEDINGS OR JUDICIAL REVIEW

The Florida Public Service Commission is required by Section 120.569(1), Florida Statutes, to notify parties of any administrative hearing that is available under Section 120.57, Florida Statutes, as well as the procedures and time limits that apply. This notice should not be construed to mean all requests for an administrative hearing will be granted or result in the relief sought.

Mediation may be available on a case-by-case basis. If mediation is conducted, it does not affect a substantially interested person's right to a hearing.

The action proposed herein is preliminary in nature. Any person whose substantial interests are affected by the action proposed by this order may file a petition for a formal proceeding, in the form provided by Rule 28-106.201, Florida Administrative Code. This petition must be received by the Office of Commission Clerk, 2540 Shumard Oak Boulevard, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0850, by the close of business on December 28, 2020.

In the absence of such a petition, this order shall become final and effective upon the issuance of a Consummating Order.

Any objection or protest filed in this/these docket(s) before the issuance date of this order is considered abandoned unless it satisfies the foregoing conditions and is renewed within the specified protest period.