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SERIES E: OVERALL NETWORK OPERATION,  
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Operation, numbering, routing and mobile service –  
International operation – General provisions concerning  
Administrations

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**International telephone credit cards for use  
in a non-automated environment**

Reedition of CCITT Recommendation E.116 published in  
the Blue Book, Fascicle II.2 (1988)

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## NOTES

1 CCITT Recommendation E.116 was published in Fascicle II.2 of the *Blue Book*. This file is an extract from the *Blue Book*. While the presentation and layout of the text might be slightly different from the *Blue Book* version, the contents of the file are identical to the *Blue Book* version and copyright conditions remain unchanged (see below).

2 In this Recommendation, the expression “Administration” is used for conciseness to indicate both a telecommunication administration and a recognized operating agency.

## Recommendation E.116

### INTERNATIONAL TELEPHONE CREDIT CARDS FOR USE IN A NON-AUTOMATED ENVIRONMENT

#### Preamble

This Recommendation concerns only credit card usage in a non-automated environment with the assistance of an operator. The automated international telephone credit card system is described in Recommendation E.118.

**1** Credit cards may be issued by Administrations to allow a credit card customer to make telephone calls in the international service at the appropriate charges for each call and have the charges billed to his account in the country which issued the credit card.

The international credit card system should normally be used for calls to the country of the card issuer unless it has been decided otherwise by bilateral agreement between Administrations.

**2** The use of credit cards may be allowed for station and personal calls (including data and conference calls).

Station calls paid with credit cards may be subject to a special flat-rate charge to be fixed by the billing Administration.

Personal calls paid with credit cards are subject to a special flat-rate charge to be fixed by the billing Administration.

**3** If the holder of a credit card is to derive the maximum benefit from it, he should not be required to show the card at a telephone office; he should be able to make his calls over the telephone, simply quoting the card number to the operator. The number on the card should provide sufficient guarantee of the card's validity.

**4** There would be certain advantages in standardizing the general format and numbering scheme together with usage procedures for credit cards used in the international service. This would facilitate the recognition of such cards in hotels, etc., and the handling of calls. It is a matter for national decision whether separate cards are issued for the national and the international telephone services, or whether one card will serve both purposes.

**5** Credit cards issued for use in the international service (whether or not they are used for the national service as well) should, as far as practicable, conform with the following specifications:

#### 5.1 *Size*

The credit card should be designed to be carried conveniently on one's person. Current ISO standards define the dimensions of financial transaction cards to be 85.60 mm × 53.98 mm (3.370 × 2.125 inches) and the CCITT considers that telephone credit cards issued by Administrations should have similar dimensions.

#### 5.2 *Information content*

The information on an international telephone credit card should clearly include:

- 1) the name of the issuing Administration and, where appropriate, the country of issue;
- 2) the card number (on a combined national/international card, the national number, if different, should be appropriately designated),

and optionally includes:

- 3) the card holder's name and signature;
- 4) the date of expiry;
- 5) instructions on how the card should be used. (Some Administrations may prefer to issue instructions separately.)

#### 5.3 *Numbering system*

The numbering of the card to be issued by Administrations shall be as described in Recommendation E.118, § 3.2.

#### 5.4 *Issuer identifier number assignment and registration procedure*

- a) The procedure for the assignment of specific issuer identifier numbers is described in Recommendation E.118, § 3.3.
- b) An illustrative registration form can be found in Figure 2/E.118.

#### 5.5 *Transition process*

Guidelines for Administrations to make the transition from the old to the new numbering scheme are contained in Annex A.

## ANNEX A

(to Recommendation E.116)

### **Transition process to the new account number structure**

#### A.1 *Background*

Generally, in today's environment, telephone credit card systems are implemented in a non-automated fashion with the customer typically presenting an international account number verbally to an operator.

Recommendation E.118, pertaining to an automated international telephone credit card system, requires a change in the structure of the account number.

It is not expected that all Administrations, or even a majority of them, will implement automated telephone credit card systems in the near future. Those Administrations planning to implement automated systems will need to continue to accept non-automated cards. Conversely, Administrations continuing to provide non-automated card service will need to accept the new automated card numbering structure.

Therefore, to facilitate both needs, a change in the account number structure for non-automated cards is necessary; the account number structure contained in Recommendation E.118 is usable in both automated and non-automated environments.

Because of the cost of issuing international telephone credit cards, Administrations will continue to use the current validity code until transitioning to the account number structure as defined in Recommendation E.118.

For background information, the old numbering system, as extracted from Recommendation E.116 from the VIIIth Plenary Assembly *Red Book*, is shown below:

#### **“Numbering system**

For international purposes the credit card will be composed of two parts:

- the first part will consist of a code to indicate the country of issue followed by a letter denoting the 5-year period of validity;
- the second part will consist of the credit card number assigned by the issuing Administration.

Administrations may incorporate a simple validation check within the credit card number which could be changed when new cards are issued.”

#### A.2 *The plan*

The following transition plan will accommodate a range of implementation schedules by Administrations: The use of the current validity code will be extended until December 31, 1993 to allow all Administrations to make the transition to the new account number structure without requiring an interim reissue of credit cards.

Pending appropriate service agreements, Administrations should be prepared to accept the new account number format as early as January 1, 1989.

The transition to the new account number structure shall be completed by 31 December 1993. During the transition period, Administrations should expect to accept credit cards containing account numbers conforming to both numbering schemes. At this time all Administrations will be expected to have reissued cards using the new account number structure. See Figure A-1/E.116.

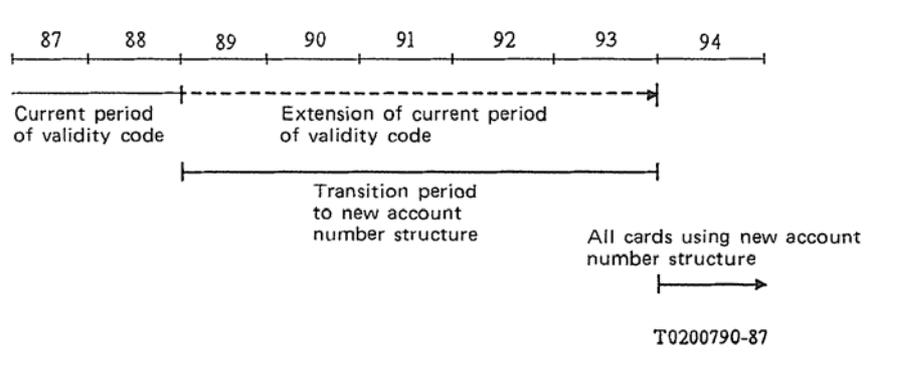


FIGURE A-1/E.116

**Transition plan for account number structure  
defined in Recommendation E.118**



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