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TELEPHONE NETWORK AND ISDN

**OPERATION, NUMBERING, ROUTING
AND MOBILE SERVICE**

**MEASURES TO REDUCE CUSTOMER
DIFFICULTIES IN THE INTERNATIONAL
TELEPHONE SERVICE**

ITU-T Recommendation E.122

(Extract from the *Blue Book*)

NOTES

1 ITU-T Recommendation E.122 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.

**MEASURES TO REDUCE CUSTOMER DIFFICULTIES
IN THE INTERNATIONAL TELEPHONE SERVICE**

1 General

A common problem in customer dialling in the international automatic telephone service is the erroneous dialling of the trunk prefix of the country of destination. In the international service, this trunk prefix must not be dialled. The following measures have been tried and have proven very effective; they are recommended to reduce this problem.

2 Recorded announcement

2.1 It is recommended that, at International Switching Centres (ISCs) where the trunk prefix can be detected, the call should be blocked and automatically routed to a recorded announcement which would instruct the customer to dial the call again without dialling the trunk prefix (see also Recommendation E.182, § A.2.8).

2.2 An example of such an announcement is: "Please do not dial a zero after the country code when calling this country. Please hang up and try your call again".

2.3 The call is blocked and the announcement given from either the outgoing ISC¹⁾ or the incoming ISC¹⁾. The announcement should be in the language of either the originating or terminating country. It is not known whether the language of the originating or of the terminating country is most acceptable to the customers²⁾.

2.4 When applying this method at an outgoing ISC, care must be exercised in selecting the countries to which this measure is applied, as the trunk prefix which is to be blocked might be a valid trunk code for some countries. The employment of this measure should be preceded by a review of the pertinent information including national numbering plans and tests, as well as operator access codes, and by an explanation to the other Administrations involved of the plan to block calls having an erroneous trunk prefix.

3 Customer instructions

3.1 To avoid premature abandonment of attempted calls, customers should be advised to wait longer than usual for a call to be established.

3.2 It is recommended that when Administrations prepare dialling instructions for their customers they emphasize that the trunk prefix should not be dialled in the international automatic telephone service.

This is necessary when the destination country conventionally writes its telephone numbers such that the trunk prefix appears with the trunk code (in parentheses). To compose a comprehensible and accurate statement can prove difficult: suitable forms are given below.

3.2.1 The first form is suitable for explanation. It could be accompanied by numerical examples of complete international telephone numbers:

1) The exact source of the announcements would be any suitable place, although it is preferable in traffic terms to use a source as close to the call origin as possible.

2) In using the language of the originating country at an incoming international switching centre, Administrations should beware of using an inappropriate language in cases where calls are routed through a transit country.

“The trunk prefix zero that precedes the national trunk code in several countries should be omitted after the country code in international dialling. For example, to call Amsterdam (020) from another country, you dial 20 after the country code for the Netherlands, which is 31. Some countries have a different trunk prefix that should be omitted in international dialling. For example, in Finland the trunk prefix is 9, while the trunk code for Helsinki is 0; to call Helsinki (90) from another country, you dial 0 after the country code for Finland, which is 358.”

“Other countries do not normally include their trunk prefix with the trunk code when writing telephone numbers: in such cases you should not omit the first digits in international calling.”

An example of the use of this statement is given in Recommendation E.126, Annex A.

3.2.2 The second form may be more suitable in some contexts:

“In many countries, a special prefix (often a zero) is normally printed in telephone numbers with the trunk code, because it must always be dialled for long-distance calls within that country. This prefix must *not* be dialled when making international calls to such countries. If your international call is not *successful*, you should check to see if the first digit of the (apparent) trunk code is a prefix that must not be dialled.”

3.3 It is believed that widespread use of the notation given in Recommendation E.123 for national and international telephone numbers would lead to a reduction in the incidence of erroneous dialling of the foreign national trunk prefix, and of other errors, in international dialling. Administrations should encourage the use of this notation.