

**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
UTILITIES COMMISSION  
RALEIGH**

**NEWS RELEASE**

For Release: April 25, 1997  
For further information contact: Mary Steel 919-733-0846  
Robert Bennink 919-733-0833  
Hugh Gerring 919-733-0882

**NORTH CAROLINA UTILITIES COMMISSION  
SEEKS PUBLIC INPUT ON AREA CODE CHANGES**

The North Carolina Utilities Commission (NCUC) issued an Order today seeking public comment on area code relief proposals. At issue is a plan proposed by BellSouth Telecommunications, Inc. (BellSouth), on behalf of itself and most of the local exchange companies and telephone membership corporations in the State. BellSouth is the Industry Central Office Code Administrator for North Carolina.

BellSouth and the other telephone companies as Joint Petitioners filed the proposal on April 11, 1997, which splits existing area codes and thereby creates three additional area codes. The Joint Petitioners cited the ever-increasing demand for new telephone numbers which results from new technologies, second lines, and the increased population.

An additional issue is whether local and expanded local calling which crosses area code boundaries should continue to be seven-digit calling or should be converted to ten-digit calling. Such calling, however, will remain classified as local and no rate increases are involved.

Some entities, notably cellular companies, called for the use of an overlay rather than a split. Under an overlay, new customers might receive an area code different from their neighbors, and all customers statewide would need to dial ten digits within their local calling areas.

Both area code relief options were considered at the NCUC's Staff Conference on April 21, 1997, where public advocates, industry representatives, members of the General Assembly, and some members of the public spoke. Many commenters were disturbed at the prospect of having new phone numbers or of having more than one area code in their community.

In an effort to be certain all citizens and public officials have an opportunity to be heard on the area code relief plans, the NCUC decided to require the publication of a public notice describing the proposals in the major newspapers of the State (attached) and to solicit the views of interested persons and parties. The NCUC has also scheduled a public hearing on May 19, 1997, in Commission Hearing Room 2115, Dobbs Building, Raleigh, North Carolina, beginning at 1:00 p.m. to further receive the views of the public.

**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
UTILITIES COMMISSION  
RALEIGH**

DOCKET NO. P-100, SUB 137

BEFORE THE NORTH CAROLINA UTILITIES COMMISSION

In the matter of		
Area Code Relief for North Carolina's	)	<b>NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING AND OPPORTUNITY TO FILE WRITTEN COMMENTS</b>
704/910/919 Numbering Plan Areas (NPAs)	)	

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN** that the North Carolina Utilities Commission (Commission) seeks written public comment and will conduct a public hearing on Monday, May 19, 1997, at 1:00 p.m in Commission Hearing Room 2115, Dobbs Building, 430 North Salisbury Street, Raleigh, North Carolina, for the purpose of receiving public comments in person regarding the addition of three new area codes in North Carolina.

On April 11, 1997, 22 telecommunications companies serving North Carolina (Joint Petitioners) presented to the Commission a joint petition for the addition of three new area codes for North Carolina. The petition stated that a relief plan for the current area codes of 704, 910 and 919 is needed in order to avoid running out of prefix codes, the first three digits of telephone numbers. As projected, all the prefix codes in each existing area code will exhaust during 1999.

Representatives of telecommunications companies doing business in North Carolina met in January and February of this year but were unable to reach unanimous agreement on a proposed plan. However, the 22 telecommunications companies, who represent 95% of the local access lines in the state, reached agreement on the proposal presented to the Commission. Under the national guidelines for the North American Numbering Plan, the Commission is responsible for approving a plan for the state.

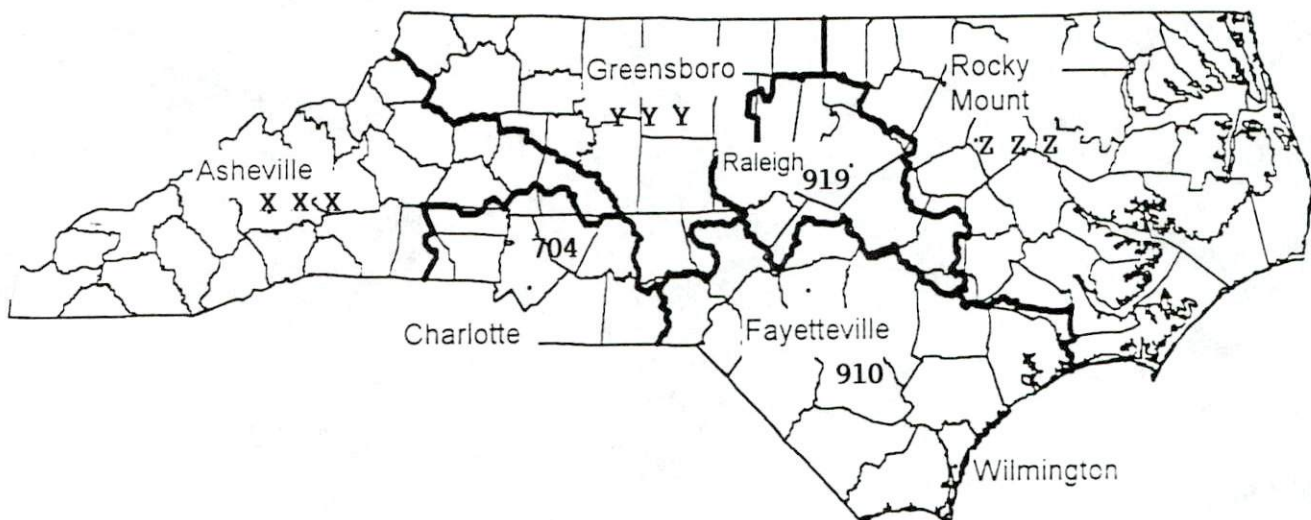
Proposed numbers for the new area codes have not been announced.

The Joint Petitioners' plan recommends geographically splitting each area code into two areas and primarily uses existing LATA boundaries in defining the areas for the new codes, the same procedure used in 1993 to create the 910 area code.

The proposed plan, as illustrated on the following map, would:

- Retain the 704 area code for the Charlotte exchange and 42 surrounding exchanges;
- Retain the 910 area code for the Wilmington and Fayetteville LATAs (with the exception of the exchanges of Bennett, Coleridge and High Falls and those portions of Carteret, Johnston and Chatham counties currently in 919) ;

- Retain the 919 area code for the Raleigh LATA , the exchanges in Johnston and Chatham counties and the Mebane exchange, all currently in the 919 area code;
- Assign a new area code to the Rocky Mount LATA and the area in Carteret county currently served by 919;
- Assign a new area code to the Greensboro LATA (with the exception of Mebane, which remains in 919) and the exchanges of Bennett, Coleridge, High Falls, New Hope, Union Grove, Harmony, Ijames, Cooleemee and Mocksville; and
- Assign a new area code to the Asheville LATA and the remaining exchanges in the Charlotte LATA, except for the exchanges of New Hope, Union Grove, Harmony, Ijames, Cooleemee and Mocksville.



The Joint Petitioners' proposal would not change local calling scopes and would not cause any rate increase. Calls which are currently local or expanded local would not become long distance under the proposal, although 10-digit dialing may be required in local or expanded local areas that cross area codes.

An alternative concept, called an overlay, which is under consideration by the Commission, would add a second area code to the geographic areas currently served by the three existing codes. Under this alternative, no customers would be required to change area codes. However, all calls would have to be dialed using ten digits, including local and expanded local calls which are dialed today using seven digits.

Persons desiring to send written statements to the Commission should submit their statements supporting or opposing either the geographic split or the overlay alternatives prior to the hearing on May 19, 1997, and should include any information that those persons wish to be considered by the Commission in this matter. Interventions or statements should be addressed to the Chief Clerk, North Carolina Utilities Commission,

Post Office Box 29510, Raleigh, North Carolina 27626-0510. Statements may also be faxed to 919-733-7300.

The Public Staff of the Utilities Commission through the Executive Director is required by statute to represent the using and consuming public in proceedings before the Commission. Statements to the Executive Director should be addressed to:

Robert P. Gruber  
Executive Director - Public Staff  
Post Office Box 29520  
Raleigh, North Carolina 27626-0520  
Fax: 919-733-9565

The Attorney General is also authorized by statute to represent the using and consuming public in proceedings before the Commission. Statements to the Attorney General should be addressed to:

The Honorable Michael F. Easley  
Attorney General - State of North Carolina  
Post Office Box 629  
Raleigh, North Carolina 27602-0629  
Fax: 919-733-7300

ISSUED BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION.

This the 25<sup>th</sup> day of April, 1997.

NORTHCAROLINAUTILITIESCOMMISSION

  
Geneva S. Thigpen, Chief Clerk

# NORTH CAROLINA INDUSTRY NPA SPLIT PROPOSALS



- Area "A" = Charlotte Exchange and Surrounding Communities
- Area "B" = Asheville LATA and remainder of Charlotte LATA
- Area "C" = Greensboro LATA
- Area "D" = Wilmington and Fayetteville LATAs
- Area "E" = Raleigh LATA and portion of Fayetteville LATA
- Area "F" = Rocky Mount LATA