



## **STAFF REPORT**

**213 AND 323 AREA CODE  
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION MEETINGS  
HELD IN THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES,  
SOUTH GATE AND SOUTH PASADENA  
ON SEPTEMBER 8 – 10, 2015**



**Prepared by the Communications Division**

**October 5, 2015**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The Communications Division (CD) of the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) held six public participation meetings to inform the public and solicit input about the industry-proposed introduction of the 213 area code to the area now served by the 323. The meetings were held over three days on September 8, 9 and 10, 2015, in the City of Los Angeles (LA), South Gate and South Pasadena.

Topics discussed include: (1) History of the 213 and the 323 Area Codes; (2) Area code Relief Process; (3) Proposed Relief Plan for the 323 Area Code; (4) Effects of the Area Code Changes; and (5) Implementation Phases. Meeting attendees were encouraged to write their comments and concerns on the comment form provided as part of the handout package distributed by the CPUC prior to each meeting. Most attendees were concerned about losing their existing phone number or area code.

## **BACKGROUND**

The 213 and 323 area code public participation meetings are the result of the move to add another area code, the existing 213, to the area currently served by the 323. The relief method is a boundary-elimination overlay and was recommended by the telecommunications service providers. The boundary between the 213 and 323 area codes is eliminated, thereby blending the two area codes together. The 213 area code would serve the 323 area code region in addition to the existing 213 area code region. The 323 area code would likewise serve both the current 213 and the current 323 area code regions.

The 323 area code, which serves largely the City of LA, as well as a number of neighboring cities and unincorporated portions of LA County, has twelve rate centers. The 213 area code serves downtown City of LA and has three rate centers.

The North American Numbering Plan Administrator (NANPA) notified the industry of the relief planning process on February 19, 2015, 32 months in advance of the 323 forecasted exhaust date of 3rd quarter of 2017<sup>1</sup>.

On March 19, 2015, the NANPA hosted an area code pre-planning conference call with CPUC and telecommunications service provider representatives. NANPA discussed relief alternatives and explained that the unique configuration of the 323 rate centers around the 213 area code allows a boundary-elimination overlay.

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<sup>1</sup> The 323 was originally projected to exhaust by the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2018 at the time of the public meetings. However, the 323 exhaust date has moved up to the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of 2017 since then due to increased code demand.

On April 22, 2015, NANPA held a planning conference call to discuss the area code relief details. The CPUC and fourteen telecommunications service provider representatives were present. NANPA explained that the City of LA is not only in all of the 213 area code but also in eleven of the twelve rate centers of the 323 area code; therefore, a geographic split would split the City of LA and fail to meet the Alliance for Telecommunications Industry Solutions (ATIS) NPA Code Relief Planning and Notification Guidelines criteria<sup>2</sup>. The telecommunications service provider representatives discussed and arrived at consensus to recommend the boundary-elimination overlay method, as it is the most beneficial to customers in that the method allows all customers to keep their existing phone number and area code.

## METING SCHEDULE

The CPUC scheduled local jurisdiction and public participation meetings as shown in Table 1 below.

**Table 1 – Schedule and Locations of Public and Local Jurisdiction Meetings**

<b><u>Local Jurisdiction Meetings</u></b>	
SOUTH GATE 10:00 a.m., September 8, 2015 City Council Chambers 8650 California Avenue	LOS ANGELES 2:00 p.m., September 8, 2015 Junipero Serra State Bldg. Carmel Room, 1st Fl. 320 W. 4 <sup>th</sup> Street
<b><u>Public Meetings</u></b>	
LOS ANGELES 10:00 a.m., September 9, 2015 Junipero Serra State Bldg., Carmel Room, 1st Fl. 320 W. 4th Street	SOUTH PASADENA 2:00 p.m., September 9, 2015 City Council Chambers 1414 Mission Street
SOUTH PASADENA 7:00 p.m., September 9, 2015 South Pasadena Public Library, Community Room 1115 El Centro Street	LOS ANGELES 2:00 p.m., September 10, 2015 Memorial Branch Library 4625 W. Olympic Blvd.

## MEETING PUBLICITY

Meeting Notices were inserted in the telecommunications service providers' customer bills in the month of August, 2015 (Attachment A).

On August 10, 2015, the CPUC sent individual letters of invitation (Attachment B), along with the meeting notice, to 269 local jurisdiction entities, including the local, state and federal elected and appointed officials, the chambers of commerce and the California Highway Patrol offices in the 213 and the 323 areas (Attachment C).

<sup>2</sup> ATIS NPA Code Relief Planning and Notification Guidelines, September 5, 2014, Section 6.1.

On September 2, 2015, the CPUC issued a news release announcing the public meetings with a brief discussion of the issues to be discussed at the meetings (Attachment D).

From August 26, 2015 through each of the meeting dates on September 8, 9 and 10, 2015, a meeting notice was posted on the CPUC’s daily calendar under “Other Commission Meetings” and “Public Meetings and Workshop Notices” sections.

## MEETINGS

The meetings were conducted and moderated by CD staff, with assistance from the CPUC’s Public Advisors’ Office. Helen Mickiewicz from the CPUC’s Legal Division was present at the September 8, 2015 local jurisdiction meetings. At all six meetings, Joseph Cocke, NANPA senior relief planner, explained the process used to arrive at the boundary-elimination overlay recommendation, along with maps of the overlay area. The oral discussion (Attachment E) was accompanied by a PowerPoint presentation (Attachment F). All attendees were given a handout package (Attachment G) consisting of the agenda, two maps of the overlay area, glossary of area code and numbering terminologies, explanation of the NANPA planning process, a set of “Frequently Asked Questions”, and a comment form.

### Meeting Attendance

Table 2 shows the meeting attendance. Staff from the CPUC’s Public Advisors’ Office assisted attendees to identify themselves on sign-in sheets (Attachment H) upon arrival at the meetings.

**Table 2 –Meeting Attendance**

<b>Date and Time</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Service Provider Representatives</b>	<b>Local Jurisdiction Officials</b>	<b>Public Members</b>	<b>Media</b>	<b>Number of Speakers*</b>	<b>Total Number of Attendees</b>
9/8/2015, 10 AM	South Gate City Council Chambers	6	5	3	1	0	15
9/8/2015, 2 PM	Downtown LA	5	3	0	2	2	10
9/9/2015, 10 AM	Downtown LA	6	0	8	0	0	14
9/9/2015, 2 PM	South Pasadena City Council Chambers	4	1	3	0	1	8
9/9/2015, 7 PM	South Pasadena Library	3	2	4	0	2	9
9/10/2015, 2 PM	LA Memorial Branch Library	3	0	6	1	2	10

\* Speakers are attendees who signed up beforehand to express comments. There were also attendees who asked questions during the “Question & Answer” sessions.

Attending each meeting were representatives of Sprint, T-Mobile, AT&T and Verizon, who answered questions from the public. The representative of California Cable and Telecommunications Association was also present on September 9, 2015.

### **Summary of Comments and Questions**

At the end of the staff discussion, the floor was opened for questions and comments. Attendees spoke at the meetings and provided written comments (Attachment I) about their concerns. Most were concerned about losing their existing phone numbers. Below are the main questions and concerns from participants.

- 1) Overall, people who currently have 323 area code phone numbers were concerned about their area code being changed to the 213. CPUC and NANPA staff assured the audience that all customers will keep their existing phone numbers. Only those requesting new or additional phone lines will be assigned the 213 area code.
- 2) Specifically, a number of attendees' current 323 phone numbers used to have the 213 area code. Their then 213 area code was changed to 323 when the 323 was created from the split of the 213 in June 1998. These attendees were concerned that their current 323 area code would be reverted back to the 213. Staff again explained that all customers will keep their current phone numbers, including their area code.
- 3) One, in particular, asked why we choose to add the 213 instead of a new area code to the 323 region. She expressed that the 213 was running out of numbers 17 years ago in 1998, thus splitting the 213 and creating the 323. Now 323 numbers are close to depletion and area code relief is necessary again. The proposed boundary-elimination overlay of 213 over the 323 area code will have a projected life of only 15 years. Therefore, 15 years later, the same process will repeat. The attendee questioned why a brand new area code is not being introduced for a projected life of longer than 15 years. NANPA staff explained that the proposed method is the most beneficial to customers in that it allows all customers to keep their existing phone number and area code. Additionally, the proposed method will save a new area code, which is in line with the FCC's number conservation policy.

### **NEXT STEP**

This report will be provided to NANPA to incorporate in the application that it will file with the CPUC by the end of 2015 for the 213 and 323 boundary elimination overlay.