

LNP Problem/Issue Identification and Description Form

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(NOTE: Submitting Company(s) is to complete this section of the form along with Sections 1, 2 and 3.)

1. Problem/Issue Statement: (Brief statement outlining the problem/issue.)

Originally submitted as per below, seeking consensus to amend the scope of this PIM to address overall challenges related to claims of an unauthorized port in order to develop one cohesive PIM and resulting Best Practice (“BP”).

Currently there are a variety of PIMs and BPs covering such things as, (including but not limited to) “Inadvertent Ports”, “Disputed Ports”, “Fraudulent Vanity Number Ports”, “Unauthorized Ports”, etc. All of which are in part or whole addressed in a variety of PIMs and/or BPs, (including but not limited to, PIM 53, BP 42, and BP 58) which have been developed over a broad time frame. Some of these areas, definitions, practices, etc., overlap, have opportunities for refinement especially in light of newer technologies and systems, and/or are scattered across the various resources. Because of this there is a need to bring together all the information related to this overall topic/issue in order to replace the existing various PIMs/BP with one all inclusive updated cohesive PIM/BP.

Original Submission:

In the event of a claim of a disputed port, for any reason, there are:

1. No existing clear guidelines around how providers will work together to research and resolve the claim of a disputed port.
2. Based on the outcome of the research, there is an opportunity for clearer broad recommendations around the circumstances under which a number will be released back to the then losing provider (or “OSP”).

For the purposes of this PIM, the term “disputed” shall mean any port which for whatever reason resulted in the OSP receiving a report from their customer and/or end user and/or another service provider that the port-out was in error; this is regardless if the OSP provided FOC or otherwise was not aware of an issue with the port prior to its completion.

In the end, although the losing carrier may not necessarily agree with the veracity of a given port, they should feel confident they verified to the fullest extent possible and can defend the position of the winning provider (or “NSP”) to their claiming customer and/or end user.

It should be noted that while pre-FOC validations afford a level of prevention, there are multiple factors which negate the full utility (including, but not limited, to an increasing amount of identity theft, and CSR validation which provides an avenue chance for an individual to learn the account information required to port).

Many providers may not view these instances as immediately impacting to their customers’ continuity of service at present. However, the FCC’s movement toward opening numbering authority to non-CLEC/LEC entities creates a forward-looking reality of an increase in LNP participants that could quickly make the disputed port landscape more complicated if a best practice does not already exist.

2. Problem/Issue Description: (Provide detailed description of problem/issue.)

A. Examples & Impacts of Problem/Issue:

Example: A port completes and the OSP is contacted by their customer and/or end user (going forward, end user) that the port was not authorized (for whatever reason), that OSP (after completing their own research and verification to the best of their ability) will need to reach out to the NSP to verify and compare certain information such as LOA and bill copy. Without a clear and agreed upon set of guidelines around contacts & escalation paths, reasonable response time expectations, types of cooperative information sharing (to the best of their ability, even with redactions), etc., then it can often take numerous contacts and requests over a significant amount of time to make research progress, thus impacting the claiming end user, their business relationship with their provider; sometimes compromising the ability to resolve if the number in question has since ported to yet a third provider, etc. For further example: the NSP states the OSP gave FOC and therefore they will not deem it disputed and therefore the inquiry will not be considered.

B. Frequency of Occurrence: Although some providers might have statistics on frequency, it is unknown at an overall industry level, but when it occurs each is impactful in both carrier time/cost and customer satisfaction.

C. NPAC Regions Impacted:

Canada___ Mid Atlantic ___ Midwest___ Northeast___ Southeast___ Southwest___ Western___
West Coast___ ALL_X_

D. Rationale why existing process is deficient:

Existing process heavily addresses pre-FOC protocols, but little surrounding post-port corrective actions. There are only very broad suggestions that providers should work together to resolve disputed port claims; there aren't any clear and agreed upon types of actions carriers could take to work together to research and resolve.

In prior periods of industry evolution, there were more clear relationships between a provider and their end user which made end user verification inherently easier, and the act of submitting a port much more specific and intentional:

- Physical connectivity at an address as empirical proof of end user
- Paper LOAs with actual signatures
- Face to face or phone to phone transactions naturally supporting more validation and less propensity for both error and intentional acts
- Less "crowded" carrier landscape – a smaller list of carriers actually porting phone numbers

As porting becomes increasingly more complex with varying service types and more automation is introduced into the environment, such as click thru LOAs for end users and automated FOCs and other systematic releases of numbers, combined with some new technologies inadvertently both making ports flow more easily (including in cases of simple human error such as an end user entering the wrong number in a provider's user interface) and introducing more fraud potential (criminal elements adopting technologies which support anonymity), and as carriers diversify their own work groups, it is becoming increasingly more difficult for providers to even determine how to approach a resolution, let alone know who to contact and what kinds of information can be examined and/or exchanged. The introduction of open numbering authority by the FCC will introduce more participants to the LNP community, which can reasonably be expected to exacerbate any existing deficiencies with disputed porting.

In the event an inquiry from the OSP is not addressed thoroughly or even entertained by the NSP, currently the only path for a OSP and/or their end user is a variety of formal complaints to the FCC, PUCs, etc., and, various consumer protection/advocacy organizations (attorney generals, BBB, traditional and social media, etc.). This results in operational costs and reputational impacts to both providers.

E. Identify action taken in other committees / forums: **Unknown**

F. Any other descriptive items:

Need to ensure clarity of the definition of "disputed"; and categories of "disputed" and/or "unauthorized" versus "mistaken". The process must be respectful of each

providers' legal considerations; must be customer focused and always meet the spirit and intent of the porting rules balanced with a reasonable method for providers to gain a level of comfort and satisfaction that a given situation has been examined to the best of their ability to manage their customer appropriately.

3. Suggested Resolution:

- Revisit definitions of various types of disputed ports and consider broadening the definition and scenarios of what constitutes “disputed” and “unauthorized” – i.e. at no time should there be a “slam” allegation; this is meant to be a cooperative cross carrier effort to examine port requests and exchange some information so that each/both can feel satisfied that the situation has been clearly examined and each/both can manage their customer accordingly.
- Define potential specific actions NSP will undertake to verify the authenticity of the disputed port (review and provide LOA, review/request bill copy from their customer/end user, etc.)
- Define a list of specific information which providers MAY potentially be able to exchange and who provides what; such as copy of LOA, exact name on an LOA, copy of recent end user bill, etc., (recognizing that some providers may have legal or other reasons to redact or only provide oral verification of some information) – but the essence is for the NSP to provide the information to the OSP since it is the OSP who has the original information and hence avoid the situation of the OSP providing it first and the NSP simply agreeing (i.e. similar to the pitfalls present in the current CSR practice).
- An agreed upon time frame for NSP response – i.e. acknowledge inquiry within XX hours, provide agreed upon information such as name on or copy of LOA within XX hours
- An agreed upon time frame for losing provider to respond to whatever comes out of NSP's response – the OSP who started the inquiry needs to be responsive and engaged, and promptly advise the NSP if there is any reversal of the inquiry so as not to waste the time and efforts of the NSP.
- Resolution/outcome method to close out the inquiry, i.e. OSP agrees/understands position of NSP such that they can manage their customer appropriately (even if they still don't agree with the port), or, both providers work together to determine best path to return the number back to the OSP.
- Agreed upon point of stalemate (when should the complaining party file request for resolution through FCC/PUC?)
- Are there time bounded considerations to claiming a port is disputed (i.e. must be within XX days of port – current best practice is unbounded)
- For all of the above, consider various customer types and create criteria which may be applicable to such various customer types and how they will be handled. For example, in the event the port in question involves a wholesale/resale arrangement what timing considerations apply for both providers, agreement

that any LOA being used for verification must be from the end user, reseller relationships do not negate the need for bill copy or other verification methods.

- Providers to establish initial and escalation contact information, maintained by the providers themselves and possibly posted on the LNPA WG website.
- Considerations for special and sensitive cases (an out of service hospital number as a result of a mistaken port).

Example:

- A port is disputed and OSP contacts NSP and provides NSP's usual porting contacts with the name and other relevant information of the end user disputing the port.
- NSP should respond to OSP within eight (8) business hours with information from the LOA (and if applicable the bill copy) related to the name and other relevant information of the end user who initiated the NSP port.
- If information does not match, NSP will release the number back to the OSP
- If information matches, NSP will attempt to contact the end user to verify; OSP will provide bill copy and other supporting documentation to NSP if OSP is still attempting to regain the number in question.
- If NSP does not hear back from their end user within twenty four (24) business hours the number will be released back to the OSP.
- If NSP can verify, the OSP will advise their end user of such verification.
- In the event there is any further dispute or concern with a disputed port, the two providers involved shall work together and escalate to resolve accordingly.

LNPA WG: (only)

Item Number: **PIM XXXXXX**

Issue Resolution Referred to: _____

Why Issue Referred: _____
