

VI. NUMBERING PLAN

In 2002 CRC continued the administration of the National Numbering Plan in compliance with the European recommendations and the legal framework remained unchanged. With adoption of the CRC new rules of operation it was taken into account the importance and volume of the activities related to numbering which necessitated the creation of the Department of National Numbering Plan and Network Access at the Technical Regulation and Electronic Signature Directorate.

The table below presents the occupied numbering space and the occupation in percents as at the end of year 2002.

Table 15

| OPERATOR | OCCUPIED NATIONAL (IMPORTANT) NUMBERS | | NUMBER OF SUBSCRIBERS | | OCCUPATION IN % | |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------------|------------|-----------------------|-----------|-----------------|-------|
| | 2001 | 2002 | 2001 | 2002 | 2001 | 2002 |
| BTC | 23 103 700 | 23 578 590 | 2 785 896 | 2 868 229 | 12,05 | 12,16 |
| MobilTel | 2 000 000 | 3 000 000 | 1 185 412 | 1 853 000 | 59,27 | 61,7 |
| RTC | 1 000 000 | 1 000 000 | 172 274 | 141 943 | 17,22 | 14,2 |
| Cosmo Bulgaria Mobile | 1 000 000 | 1 000 000 | 139 600 | 602 605 | 13,96 | 60,2 |
| Others | 300 000 | | 10 000 | | 3,3 | |

The data reveal that the relative occupation of both GSM operators keeps on increasing and the growth for Cosmo Bulgaria Mobile is very significant, as compared to 2001.

For the other operators the occupation is much below the recommended percentage from 20% to 40%.

At the end of the past year as a result of the request made by MobilTel to the regulatory authority for granting a third prefix code for access to the network and after a detailed examination of the submitted information, the company was given an access code "89". Due to the fast growth rate of the subscribers of Cosmo Bulgaria Mobile as well, CRC faced the problem of providing an adequate numbering space for the needs of mobile operators. The very limited capabilities of providing new two-digit access codes (NDC) necessitated the preparation of different options to solve this problem, including a possible change in the numbering structure.

The digitalization of the BTC network led to releasing new number groups in big cities. This enabled new operators providing voice services to use numbering capacity for after liberalization of the market. The optimization of the network in some smaller towns resulted in additional release of numbering capacities.

The trend towards a gradual diminishment of the occupation of numbering space by RTC remained the same in 2002.

The other operators using primary allocated capacity were paging operators mainly. The continued decrease of their subscribers lead to more and more impractical use of the numbering capacity provided.

As a result of the submitted application for licensing of telecommunications activities with utilization of data transfer networks, there were also received in 2002 some applications for allocation of short numbers for dial-up access to the Internet. Internet Bulgaria and Telecom Partners Network were allocated national access codes – "134 400" and "133 1" respectively. Taking into account the way whereby an access is established to this kind of services, namely through the use of subscriber capacity for ISDN points in the BTC exchanges, the company is expected to have technical troubles when servicing these numbers.

The work of the Standing Coordination Body at the Communications Regulation Commission dealing with the National Numbering Plan continued in this year. The major problems related to value-added services and the numbering used for their provision were discussed at a meeting. Those discussions were of great importance because of the significant number of services provided by the operators, which use numbers noncompliant with NNP. CRC expressed its position on the transition of VAS within the range of "900" but the problem is still pending.

With regards to the forthcoming expiry of the monopoly of BTC the preparation for management of numbering and addressing resources under the conditions of full market liberalization was launched in the past year.

Certain researches were made in connection with the development of the new legal framework, which is expected to start working in 2003. Special attention was paid to questions such as carrier selection, numbers for provision of services by alternative operators, administration of addresses and names, etc.