INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATION UNION

CCITT

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THE INTERNATIONAL
TELEGRAPH AND TELEPHONE
CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

TELEPHONE NETWORK AND ISDN

OPERATION, NUMBERING, ROUTING AND MOBILE SERVICE

OPERATOR-ASSISTED TELEPHONE SERVICE

Recommendation E.140

Geneva, 1992

FOREWORD

The CCITT (the International Telegraph and Telephone Consultative Committee) is a permanent organ of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU). CCITT is responsible for studying technical, operating and tariff questions and issuing Recommendations on them with a view to standardizing telecommunications on a worldwide basis.

The Plenary Assembly of CCITT which meets every four years, establishes the topics for study and approves Recommendations prepared by its Study Groups. The approval of Recommendations by the members of CCITT between Plenary Assemblies is covered by the procedure laid down in CCITT Resolution No. 2 (Melbourne, 1988).

Recommendation E.140 was revised by Study Group I and was approved under the Resolution No. 2 procedure on the 4th of August 1992.

CCITT NOTE

In this Recommendation, the expression "Administration" is used for conciseness to indicate both a telecommunication administration and a recognized private operating agency.

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Recommendation E.140

OPERATOR-ASSISTED TELEPHONE SERVICE

(revised 1992)

1 Scope

1.1 The general principles relating to the operation of the international public telephone service are laid down in Recommendation E.105 [1]. As noted in § 2 of that Recommendation, the telephone service may be operated automatically, semi-automatically and manually. Service should be made available to users on a fully automatic basis wherever practicable. However the type of operation depends on the user's preferences, the users' needs and on the available telecommunication infrastructure. For example, certain relations depend on manually operated radiotelephone circuits[1)] .

1.2 In view of the continuing need met by operator-assisted telephone service, this Recommendation lays down the principles that should be observed in its operation. It also includes provisions regarding their implementation by Administrations. However the detailed rules for the application of these principles by operators may be found in the "Instructions for operators on the operator assisted international telephone service" (Recommendation E.141 [2]). See also Recommendation E.200 [3] for provisions specific to mobile radiotelephone services.

1.3 The principles concerning charging and accounting in the telephone service may be found in the D-Series Recommendations.

2 Types of operation and classes of call

2.1 The definition and description of automatic, semi-automatic and manual operation may be found in Recommendation E.105 [1].

2.2 The classes of call accepted in the international public telephone service are listed in Recommendation E.105 [1].

2.3 Normally it is only practicable to accord different priorities to the various classes of call with manual or semi-automatic operation, where the order in which calls shall be connected is given in the "Instructions for operators on the operator-assisted international telephone service" (Recommendation E.141 [2]).

3 Facilities offered to users

3.1 The following facilities[1)] may be accepted in the international telephone service:

a) without specific agreement between Administrations:
   - requests for information;

b) with agreement between the Administrations concerned:
   - station calls;
   - personal calls;
   - collect calls;
   - charge card/credit card calls;
   - conference calls;
   - data calls;

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1) In relations established on radio links the Administrations concerned may agree to accept subscription calls as a facility, i.e. calls normally exchanged regularly between the same stations, at the same time agreed upon in advance, for the same duration and which have been booked for a specified period. By agreement between the Administrations concerned, reduced charges may be made for subscription calls.

– fax (facsimile) calls;

– home country direct calls;

– others (by agreement).

3.2 The above facilities are not all, or are not necessarily, restricted to operator-assisted service. Some of them (e.g. fax calls) correspond to higher level services that normally use automatic connections in the public switched telephone network (PSTN) as the data transport mechanism. Other Recommendations may apply at the higher levels for these services (e.g. Recommendations F.160 [4] and F.180 [5] for telefax services).

3.3 A station call is a call to a specified telephone number.

3.4 A personal call is a call between the number of a caller who may give his name (or the number of an extension) and some specific person (or extension); the person required must be adequately described (by name, position, address, etc.).

If the Administration of destination offers such a possibility a messenger may be sent if the person desired could not be obtained at a telephone station and, in particular, if he is not a telephone subscriber.

4 Call request

4.1 *Demand operating and advance preparation*

4.1.1 Every effort should be made (by ensuring that there are sufficient circuits, equipment and staff) to comply with call requests immediately (demand operating) on international circuits.

4.1.2 Where a call cannot be set up quickly, the caller may specify, subject to the request's validity (see § 4.2) and until such time as the caller has been told that the call is on the point of being established:

a) that the call should not be set up until after a stated time; or

b) that the call should not be set up during a given period; or

c) that the request should be cancelled at a particular time.

4.2 *Validity of call requests*

4.2.1 Requests for calls shall remain valid until 0800 (official or legal time at the exchange of origin) of the day indicated below if not cancelled by the caller or refused by the addressee, when all the exchanges concerned are permanently open, and at the daily closing time when they are not permanently open:

i) for station calls, the day following the day on which the request was made;

ii) for personal and conference calls, the second day following the day on which the request was made.

4.2.2 This period, however, may be prolonged by not more than eight hours:

i) when traffic routing difficulties have prevented the setting-up of the call;

ii) when justified by time differences between the two corresponding exchanges.

4.2.3 In relations operated by radio circuits working on a part-time basis only, requests for calls may, by agreement between the Administrations concerned, remain valid as long as they have not been complied with, or refused by the addressee, or cancelled by the caller.

5 Routing of calls

5.1 In each international telephone relation, the Administrations concerned arrange by common agreement the primary route(s) and, if possible, one or more secondary routes taking into account such factors as hours of service, volume of traffic, accounting rates between Administrations, etc.

5.2 The primary route, which may follow more than one itinerary, is that which should normally be used for routing telephone traffic in a given relation.

5.3 The secondary routes are used, in particular, when there is congestion on the primary route or when transmission on this route is not of sufficiently good quality or when the call is outside the normal hours of service on the route. In advance preparation operating, if a call, after being prepared over a secondary route because the primary route was not available, cannot be put through at the first attempt, it should be completed on the secondary route. The call may, however, be transferred to the primary route, in case of necessity, when that route is no longer congested.

5.4 The collection charge for a call in a given relation is the same, whether the primary or a secondary route is used (see the International Tecommunication Regulations, Article 6.1.2 [6]).

5.5 Wherever possible routing via transit countries should be by automatic switching or, whenever the traffic justifies it, direct circuits, either permanently or temporarily assigned. Attention should be paid to the difficulties inherent in the use of manual operation in an intermediate exchange. Where such manual transit cannot be avoided, the operational guidelines in former Recommendation E.147 [7] may be applied.

6 Chargeable duration

6.1 In principle, the outgoing operator or exchange is responsible for fixing the chargeable duration of the call; however, in advance preparation operating, and by agreement between the Administrations concerned, this chargeable duration may be fixed by the operator in the controlling international transit exchange.

6.2 For collect or charge card/credit card calls, the operator at the incoming exchange, by agreement between the Administrations concerned, may be responsible for fixing the chargeable duration.

7 Time to answer by operators

7.1 Quick answering by operators to calls made over international circuits is essential for a rapid and satisfactory telephone service and for the efficient use of international circuits. To this end a sufficient number of operators should be provided, and they should cooperate with one another.

7.2 In both the manual and semi-automatic operations for incoming operators, assistance operators and delay operators, the average answering time should not exceed five seconds for 80% of calls.

7.3 In semi-automatic operation, the time-to-answer by assistance operators should be shorter than the time-to-answer by incoming operators. To this end, operators playing the double role of assistance and incoming operators should give priority to answering assistance calls.

8 Instructions for operators

8.1 In the international operator-assisted telephone service the rapid and reliable setting-up of calls demands perfect coordination of the operations effected by the operators involved, which requires that they observe the same operating rules. To this end Administrations should:

- make every effort to see that the “Instructions for operators on the operator-assisted International Telephone Service” are diligently applied;

– attach the greatest importance to the professional training of staff operating international operator positions and their supervisors (see Recommendation E.119 [8]).

8.2 The provisions in those Instructions concerning the charging of calls relate solely to the “collection charges” (made to users), as that term is defined in Recommendation D.150 [9].

8.3 For the definition of “Instructions” see the International Telecommunication Regulations, Article 2 [6]. See Recommendation C.3 [10] for the general principles concerning Instructions, including arrangements for their periodic amendment and the date of entry into effect of new or amended Instructions.

9 Training of staff operating international positions

9.1 The professional training of operating and supervising staff is of the greatest importance in ensuring the efficient use of circuits in the international service; to this end, it is extremely desirable to improve supervisors' and operators' knowledge of the language of other countries and to enable them to become informed about the customs of the subscribers, the organization of the service and the manipulation of equipment at the other end of the circuit.

9.2 It is therefore recommended:

a) that, during the training of these operators, they should be provided with some information about methods and operating procedures used in the countries with which they might be connected;

b) that there should be frequent exchanges of supervisors and operators between the telephone exchanges of different countries.

References

[1] CCITT Recommendation *International telephone service*, Rec. E.105, ITU, Geneva, 1992.

[2] CCITT Recommendation *Instructions for the international telephone service*, Blue Book, Rec. E.141, ITU, Geneva, 1988.

[3] CCITT Recommendation *Operational provisions for the maritime mobile service*, Blue Book, Rec. E.200, ITU, Geneva, 1988.

[4] CCITT Recommendation *General operational provisions for the international public facsimile services*, Blue Book, Rec. F.160, ITU, Geneva, 1988.

[5] CCITT Recommendation *General operational provisions for the international public facsimile service between subscribers' stations (telefax)*, Blue Book, Rec. F.180, ITU, Geneva, 1988.

[6] *International Telecommunication Regulations*, Melbourne, 1988.

[7] CCITT Recommendation *Manually operated international transit traffic*, Blue Book, Rec. E.147, ITU, Geneva, 1988.

[8] CCITT Recommendation *Instruction of staff operating international positions*, Blue Book, Rec. E.119, ITU, Geneva, 1988.

[9] CCITT Recommendation *New system for accounting in international telephony*, Rec. D.150, ITU, Geneva, 1992.

[10] CCITT Recommendation *Instructions for International Telecommunication Services*, Blue Book, Rec. C.3, ITU, Geneva, 1988.