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CCITT

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CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

M.1550

(10/92)

MAINTENANCE: DESIGNATIONS AND INFORMATION EXCHANGE

ESCALATION PROCEDURE

Recommendation M.1550

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 M.1550 was revised by Study Group IV and was approved under the Resolution No. 2 procedure on the 5th of October 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 M.1550

ESCALATION PROCEDURE

(Published, Melbourne, 1988 as M.711; revised and renumbered in 1992)

Abstract

This Recommendation defines a procedure for referring matters to an organizational entity of greater expertise or authority. The Recommendation identifies the general occasions when it will be used, escalation criteria, agreements, communication paths, and defines an escalation point.

Keywords

– capacity,

– circuit,

– escalation,

– fault,

– maintenance,

– path,

– procedure,

– restoration.

1 General

An escalation procedure is the process of referring a matter to an organizational entity with a greater degree of expertise or authority.

Normally cooperation between maintenance elements in different Administrations, described in Recommendations M.2130 [1], § 5 and M.710 [2], § 2.3.2 will result in the satisfactory identification and correction of faults. There may be circumstances, however, where the fault escalation procedure needs to be used. Generally this will occur when certain criteria are reached (see § 3).

The stage at which an Administration will invoke the escalation procedure will be in accordance with pre-established bilateral or multilateral agreements which take into account severity of the fault, importance of the service affected, etc. When these agreements exist the escalation procedure is mandatory. In the absence of such agreements, invoking the escalation procedure is a matter for discretion and will depend on such factors as severity of the effect of a fault on the service. When occurrences cannot be resolved by the staff at maintenance points, the primary activity is for discussion between the supervisors (or managers) of the maintenance points in each Administration in order to agree on a satisfactory solution. These are the first escalation points (first escalation level) for problems which cannot be resolved through normal cooperative actions.

Persistent maintenance problems that cannot be resolved at the first escalation point will then be escalated to the second escalation point nominated by an Administration, which will normally (see § 5) be the technical service described in M.75 [3].

2 Communication

Administrations are encouraged to establish communication paths within their organizations to enable the timely flow of information. Also, where major service failures are concerned, Administrations are encouraged to establish communications to the appropriate level in their organizations for effective decision making for service priorities and advising customers of service difficulties.

Escalation communications between Administrations should normally occur horizontally (see Figure 1/M.1550) between peer levels, e.g. escalation communications should only occur between the same escalation levels. However, in exceptional circumstances communication can occur between Administrations at different escalation levels.

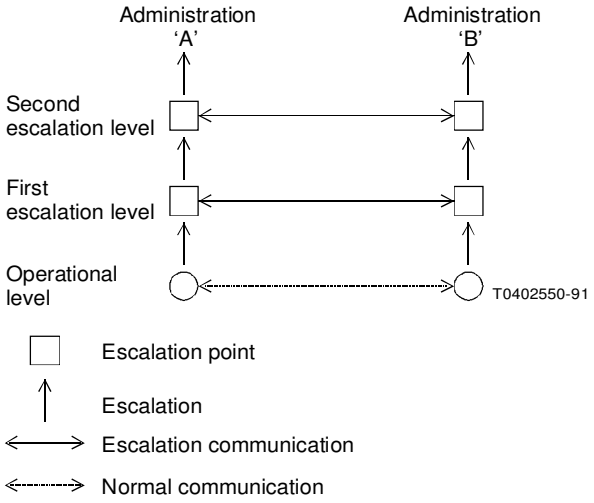

FIGURE 1/M.1550

Escalation communication paths

3 Criteria

Administrations should establish the criteria under which the escalation procedure should be invoked. Such instances are for example

- indications of a network malfunction persist despite repeated fault investigations;
- the same fault recurs within short intervals;
- a fault is not cleared or is not likely to be cleared within a reasonable period of time;
- loss of 20% of PSTN traffic circuits between Administrations;
- loss of 10% of traffic on a route (Recommendation E.541 [4]);
- loss of 30% of transmission capacity between two centres;
- loss of a critical transmission path (requires mutual agreement on critical designation);
- major service failures (e.g. loss of a submarine cable system, satellite path, line system, radio system or switching node, etc.);
- natural disasters which have a major effect on service carrying capabilities, e.g. earthquakes, floods, storms, forest fires, destruction of a telecommunication centre, etc.

The above percentages are given as examples only and will be subject to the configuration of each Administration's network and service objectives.

4 Agreements

Administrations are encouraged to discuss bilaterally and agree necessary escalation procedures for the mutual delivery of acceptable service performance.

5 Definition of escalation point

An **escalation point** is an element within the general maintenance organization for telecommunication services which is established to assist in the resolution of network and service problems that cannot be resolved through the normal use of cooperative interworking procedures and facilities.

The organization unit or person with the escalation point responsibility shall be empowered with the necessary authority and have the necessary resources and expertise available to discharge the function within the overall escalation procedure.

The role of an escalation point is to receive escalated problems from lower echelons (maintenance points or persons) and through necessary actions strive for the resolution of the problem. This may necessitate

- discussions with counterparts within the Administration and with counterparts in other Administrations;
- additional human resources being made available;
- assistance in prioritization of existing activities or actions;
- initiating special investigations.

The escalation point shall have a named organization unit or person as the contact, and be provided with appropriate communication facilities. The normal hours of operation, and contact points out of normal hours should be stated. This information shall be embodied within contact point information (see Recommendation M.1510 [5]).

Where more than one escalation point exists providing differing levels of escalation assistance, the escalation points shall not be assigned to the same person or persons.

References

[1] CCITT Recommendation M.2130 *Operational procedures in locating and clearing transmission faults.*

[2] CCITT Recommendation M.710 *General maintenance organization for the international automatic and semi-automatic telephone service.*

[3] CCITT Recommendation M.75 *Technical service.*

[4] CCITT Recommendation E.541 *Overall grade of service for international connection.*

[5] CCITT Recommendation M.1510 *Exchange of contact point information for the maintenance of international services and the international network.*