

OBF Issue Number: 2638**Issue Title: Billing for ULEC-Originated Interconnection Traffic**

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Date Closed: INITIAL CLOSURE October 13, 2004; FINAL CLOSURE November 15, 2004.

Issue Statement/Business Need:

Despite past efforts by ATIS, the industry lacks a comprehensive national solution for identifying ULEC-originated traffic. Neither the proposed network solution ("LSPI") nor the national database solution ("NRLDDB") has been accepted by the industry as a single national solution.

A universal method of ULEC identification was still within the realm of possibility when the Billing Committee developed and published MECAB Issue 7. That document included a statement acknowledging the ongoing inability to identify ULECs without an effective resolution to OBF 1182; however, MECAB did not clearly spell out the alternative for this contingency.

"Until the industry has resolved OBF Billing Issue 1182, where all entities from originating to terminating point are identified, the ULECs may not be able to be identified." ~ MECAB Issue 7 (February 2000), Section 14.4

Without an explicit statement that LECs may continue to render bills to the USP (i.e., the LERG-Assignee for the originating NXX), Terminating LECs are being asked to accommodate various locally-defined arrangements for billing and information exchange with respect to ULEC-originated traffic. These "locally-defined" methods may include the provision of reports, non-standard records, or the non-standard use of a "standard" record.

The variety of current and proposed local approaches has introduced unnecessary complexity, inconsistencies, and auditing concerns to the carrier billing process. The negative impacts are felt by both facilities-based LECs, who bill from their own terminating recordings, and unbundled LECs, who depend on the USP for their billing records.

This situation calls for a review and clarification of the OBF/MECAB Guidelines with respect to ULEC-originated traffic.

Desired Result:

Designate a single guideline for identification of ULEC traffic in order to appropriately bill.

Where an existing contractual or regulatory obligation specifies billing the ULEC rather than the USP/LERG-Assignee, identify a means of discerning ULEC-Originated Traffic from USP-Originated Traffic using Terminating Office Recordings. If a signaling/recording solution is not feasible, develop guidelines for an auditable information exchange where contracts require suppression of ULEC-originated charges to the USP, or other special billing treatment of ULEC traffic.

BLG 2638 RESOLUTION –

The Billing Committee reaffirmed the existing language in MECAB Section 14 (Jointly Provided Service in an Unbundled Environment) that provides a default billing arrangement of charging the originating USP for ULEC-originated traffic. Where a contractual or regulatory obligation specifies billing the ULEC instead of the USP, the Billing Committee developed the following standard for record exchange:

1) When the USP of the originating line distributes an EMI billing record to interconnected LECs, the USP will identify the originating ULEC by populating the ULEC's OCN in the Originating OCN field.

2) When an interconnected LEC bills from its switch recording, the USP will produce and distribute a new "corrective" record. The new corrective record will be used by the recipient LEC to offset usage charges generated from its own switch recordings. The same corrective record may also be used to charge the identified ULEC.

The new record will conform with the following specifications:

- EMI Record ID (pos. 1-6) will be "110101", "110120", or "110131"
- Originating/Terminating ID (pos. 40) will be set to "2"
- Billable or Recorded Time (pos. 61-67) will contain Conversation Time.
- Indicator 29 (pos. 121) will be set to new value "6"
- NECA Company Code (pos. 138-141) will contain the OCN of the USP
- Originating OCN (pos. 167-170) will contain the OCN of the ULEC
- Terminating OCN (pos. 182-185) will contain the OCN of the Terminating LEC
- Send to OCN (pos. 187-190) will contain the OCN of the recipient LEC.
- All other fields will conform with EMI Guidelines pertaining to Category 11 Records.

To accommodate the new record, Section 4 of the EMI Guidelines was modified as follows:

- Add a value to "Indicator 29 – Other Billing Entity"

Value: '6'

Indicates: Unbundled Local Exchange Carrier (ULEC)

Definition: Indicates the message was originated by a ULEC and a non-default billing arrangement is in effect and applies to Category 11 Access Records. Inter-carrier compensation credit is due to the UNE Services Provider (USP) identified by the NECA Company Code field. Inter-carrier compensation is billable to the ULEC identified by the Originating OCN field.

- Update the definition of NECA Company Code

Existing Definition:

A four-position alphanumeric field which reflects the state level company code as displayed in the NECA 4 tariff. This field is to be used to identify the company that performed a specific function, such as special operator services or queries of Intelligent Network databases

Revised Definition:

A four-position alphanumeric field which reflects the state level company code as displayed in the NECA 4 tariff. This field is to be used to identify the company that performed a specific function, such as special operator services or queries of Intelligent Network databases.

For Category 11 Access Records this field is used in conjunction with Indicator 29 = '6' to identify the UNE Services Provider (USP).

This issue will be referred to the MECAB Subcommittee for incorporation into the MECAB Guidelines.