

511 Implementation Plan for The Province of Alberta

For submission to the CRTC

Project Contact:

511 Project Information Contact
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1.0 Introduction

Alberta Transportation is implementing a 511 traveller information service in the Province of Alberta. There is a need for a clear and consistent 511 Implementation Plan to be implemented by the 511 Service Provider¹ and all Telecommunication Service Providers (TSPs) operating in the province in order to ensure that all the network changes required for the new 511 Code are implemented in advance of the public launch date.

The 511 Implementation Plan provides key milestones and completion dates for Telecommunications Service Providers for use in developing their individual Network Implementation Plans.

The 511 Implementation Plan addresses:

- service description,
- desired geographic service area,
- call routing arrangements,
- calling volume estimates,
- evidence of approvals as necessary based on the Canadian Radio-television Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) Decision allocating 511 Service Code,
- schedule for provisioning the 511 abbreviated dialling capability in all TSPs' networks, the establishment of 511 Service Provider's information and operational support systems,
- recommended test plan approach prior to public launch of the 511 Code,
- and a consumer awareness program to be implemented by the Province of Alberta.

2.0 Background

511 is a dedicated telephone number reserved in North America for a public service function (similar to 311 for municipal information and 911 for emergency services); specifically traveller and weather information. This public service is widely known and used across many North American jurisdictions.

511 services are accessed by the public via telephone and cellular devices, and have been deployed by jurisdictions in both the United States and Canada. In Canadian jurisdictions, the service typically provides two streams of information: road and weather. Most 511 services offer an accompanying web-based service.

In 2006, the Canadian Radio-television Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) allocated the number 511 for the purpose of traveller information services. The CRTC decision 2006-44 (dated 28 July 2006) may be accessed for reference (<http://www.crtc.gc.ca/eng/archive/2006/dt2006-44.htm>).

3.0 Service Description

This project will see 511 calls routed to a 1-8xxx within Alberta.

This initiative results from CRTC Decision 2006-44. The three-digit number will facilitate public access to information regarding road conditions and weather reports. The assignment of this access number in Alberta will provide callers with real time highway conditions and weather in Alberta.

The new service would allow callers from any location in Alberta to receive this information. It is important to note that each province has the authority to determine the overall design of traveller information within the province. A caller can call 511 from a wire line or wireless phone. All Telephone Service Providers (TSP) and resellers will be obligated to provide the service free of charge. Callers will be expected to bear costs from payphones and wireless networks. The 511 access number will be available for all Alberta residential and business landline and wireless customers.

Problems were identified with routing 511 calls from VoIP customers. The CRTC considers that call routing to 511 service providers from these services should be negotiated between the various parties.

Communications Summary as per CRTC Decision 2006-44:

“(Similarly), the Commission considers it necessary and in the public interest for weather and traveler information service providers to promote awareness of their 511 services for the same purposes. Accordingly, the Commission directs all 511 service providers to undertake comprehensive and effective public awareness campaigns. The Commission also directs the 511 weather and travel service providers to track details of their public awareness campaigns. This information should be available upon request by the Commission.” “The Commission directs the 511 weather and travel service providers to track roll-out information, such as locations where the service is available, which service is available, and the usage (number of calls). The Commission also directs that these details be tracked separately for weather and traveler information. This information should be available upon request by the Commission in order to evaluate service deployment. This information could eventually be used as the basis for deciding whether to launch a reclamation process in the future as the Commission may deem appropriate.”

“The Commission considers that implementing 511 services requires technical modifications to TSP's networks that are similar to those required to implement 311 service or 811 service, for which a six-month notice was found to be appropriate. Accordingly, the Commission directs each 511 service provider to provide a minimum of six months' notice to the TSPs operating within that province or territory. A copy of the six-month notice should also be filed with the Commission for information purposes.”

4.0 Proposed 511 Service Area

The 511 service area will encompass the entire Province of Alberta.



5.0 Call Routing Arrangements

The terminating points for this service is:

BlackSun Inc.
Innovation Place Research Park
The Concourse Building
116 Research Drive, 2nd Floor
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

Telenium Inc.
298 Garry Street
Winnipeg, MB
R3C 1H3

The toll-free number for the termination of traffic will be as follows:

1-866-661-6543

The above number presently exists and the number will distribute access to the same IVR system. The above numbers will continue to exist (in perpetuity) following the launch of the 511 service.

In the case of roaming cellular phones operating in border areas, each TSP is responsible for routing their cellular tower (for a 511 call) to the proper number. If a border tower outside of Alberta picks up the call and has a 511 service, the customer would be directed to that border town's 511 service (i.e. in Yukon).

The only way to ensure that the customer will connect to the Alberta 511 service is for the customer to direct dial the (1-8xx) number.

6.0 Call Volume Estimates

The 511 service is open to all residents of the Province and those travelling within it. As with existing systems, the call volumes will fluctuate to a great degree depending on factors such as seasonality, storm and other climatic events, etc.

The variability of the call volume activity for the existing 2011 Highway Information service is summarized in **Table 1**.

Table 1 – Example of Call

Volume Variability of Existing System

Period	No. of calls
January 2011	22,889
February 2011	9005
March 2011	7900
April 2011	5036
May 2011	2147

The estimated call volumes are expected to increase as based on the experience of other jurisdiction's implementation of the 511 service. In part this will be attributable to the increased public awareness of the service through the advertising and branding.

7.0 Public Awareness Campaign

A public communications strategy is under development by the Province of Alberta. This strategy will include an information dissemination element as well as establish branding for the public service.

It is anticipated that the public awareness campaign would be launched immediately following the launch, likely initiated with a Ministerial announcement / event, with the intent to apprise the public of the service in advance of the onset of winter driving conditions.

The public awareness campaign, undertaken by the Service Provider, will entail the following:

- Ministerial announcement / event;
- Government news release;
- Information displayed on websites (Government and Department), and via social media (Alberta Transportation Facebook and Twitter);
- Interviews for media inquiries once information is picked up via typical media outlet channels (i.e. information provided by Operational Services);
- Possible use of existing Departmental advisory radio services and variable messaging signs (portable);
- Selected print advertising in province;
- Phone number changed on Shaw Environment Canada channel to 511;
- Email distributed to Alberta Transportation notification list (through Alberta Transportation Operations Centre) and have 511 displayed on all outbound notices; and
- 511 signage erected selectively / strategically across province (at discretion of Alberta Transportation - Traffic Engineering).

In addition, following the public launch, the 511 brand will be considered for placement on future Alberta Transportation materials (i.e. brochures, highway maps, etc.) and elsewhere to further information dissemination.

8.0 Government Relations

The Service Provider, Telenium Inc, will be responsible to ensure that the appropriate governmental authorities in the province are informed of the implementation of the 511 Code. In addition, the Service Provider will be responsible for meeting the regulatory requirements for use of this designated number as stipulated by the CRTC.

9.0 511 Service Provider Expectations of Telecommunications Service Providers

Alberta Transportation is requesting that Telecommunication Service Providers:

- Convert / Route the 511 call to the designated number(s) 1-8xx.

To facilitate the above requests, Alberta Transportation is seeking participation of all TSP's operating in the Province of Alberta to work towards the successful implementation of this public service in a timely fashion and your participation on the 511 Implementation Planning. The service provider for the existing IVR highway condition information service is AMA. The TSP's known to be operating in the Province of Alberta which have been apprised of this initiative to date are listed in

All TSPs operating in the Province of Alberta are required to implement the network changes necessary to route 511 calls to the above noted terminating point. See **Table 2** for a current list of TSP's.

10.0 Test Plan

Due to the existence of the current road and weather information system, and the relatively straightforward request being made of TSPs (i.e. Route 511 calls to existing numbers) a detailed test plan is not provided by the Service Provider.

It will be incumbent upon the individual TSP's to create and oversee their own test plans according to their internal business and operating requirements.

Table 2 – Known Telecommunication Service Providers Operating in Alberta

Telephone Service Providers

Yak Reseller
Distributel CLEC
Telus CLEC/Reseller/WSP
Iristel CLEC
Prov TelCLEC
Globility CLEC
Primus Reseller
Equant Canada Reseller
SaskTel
Bell CLEC
Rogers CLEC
TELUS
Fido
Koodo
Virgin
Shaw CLEC
Primus
Wind
Chtr wireless
Solo mobile
PC Mobile (President's Choice)
Petro Canada
Microcell
NorthWesTel
Vonage.ca
Mobicity
Solo
Videotron
Public mobile
Latitude
Miake
Speak out
Sears connect
RSL Com Canada Inc 1-877-477-5266
inPhonex
Callcentric

11.0 Implementation Schedule

The proposed activities of the 511 Implementation and the timeline to full implementation of the 511 service in Alberta are presented in **Table 3**.

Table 3 – Proposed Activities to 511 Implementation

- Initial conference call
- TSPs review draft implementation plan
- TSPs comment on plan
- Amend implementation plan
- Liaises with TSPs re: plan (as required)
- Second conference call
- Implementation activities
- Proposed soft launch
- Initiates Public Awareness Campaign
- Proposed public launch

Date: 21 June 2012

Dear Sir or Madame,

In January 2005 the Intelligent Transportation Systems Society of Canada (ITS Canada) filed an application with the CRTC proposing the assignment of the 511 access code for the purpose of delivering nationwide public weather and traveller information services. In July of 2006 the CRTC approved ITS Canada's application.

This letter is to notify your company of the upcoming implementation plans for the introduction of a 511 service which provides access to real-time highway and weather conditions in the province. Alberta Transportation is formally notifying your company of its intentions to launch basic 511 service effective December 31, 2012.

The requirement for this notification is laid out in clause 94 of the "Telecom Decision CRTC 2006-44", dated July 28, 2006. This decision can be viewed at:

<http://www.crtc.gc.ca/eng/archive/2006/dt2006-44.htm>

Notification and Implementation Guideline:

<http://www.crtc.gc.ca/public/cisc/cn/CNODGL0015A.doc>.

All telephone service providers in Alberta are being notified that on or about December 31, 2012, Alberta Ministry of Transportation will require all calls to 511 be directed to 1-866-661-6543. We respectfully request that your company make the required technical modifications to facilitate our 511 service.

There will be a conference call regarding 511 on July 25, 2012 to discuss any issues around the 511 rollout. You will be notified prior to the meeting regarding access information. Please RSVP attendance for the conference call to 511ab@telenium.ca.

The information provided to 511 callers will come from the Alberta Advanced Traveller Information System (ATIS), which is an interactive voice response system with road information. The system is updated by our field staff through a web based interface which converts the input data to voice. During the winter season the conditions are updated daily and when there is a significant change in the conditions. In the summer, construction jobs such as paving and bridge repair are listed on the system.

Feel free to contact us with any questions. Please confirm receipt of this notification.

Regards,
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