CALLING NUMBER DISPLAY (CALLER ID)
FACT SHEET

What is Calling Number Display?

Calling Number Display (CND) – sometimes also referred to as Caller ID – is the technical feature that enables you to see the telephone number (number) of people who are calling you, and for people whom you call to see your number. It only works on CND-compatible devices (i.e. a device with a screen capable of displaying a number or text). Whether you actually see the number of the person who is calling you – or whether they see your number when you are calling them – depends on whether the number of the caller is being blocked or displayed.

NOTE: unless otherwise mentioned, this fact sheet deals with CND for fixed line/land line voice services.

What is meant by blocking or displaying my number?

Blocking means preventing the number of the person who makes a call (caller) from being displayed when the caller makes a voice call. Depending on the CND compatible device being used when the calling number is blocked, the device may show different messages e.g. Anonymous, Blocked, Private, Unknown, Withheld, etc.

Conversely, displaying simply means that the number of the caller will be shown on the display of the device of the person who is being called, if that device is CND-compatible.

Is there a default setting for blocking or displaying my number?

You should check with your telecoms provider if there is a default setting for your service or device.

If your service is set to display your number, then the person whom you are calling will be able to see your number before answering your call, or, if they missed your call, they can see your number by using their device's missed call log or features such as 'Call Return', provided their device is CND-compatible.

Mobile services usually leave control of blocking or displaying up to you through the device settings menu. This means that you do not have to contact your telecoms provider to block or display your number. You can change this yourself in the settings menu of your device. Please refer to the user guide of your device for details.

Can I change whether my number is blocked or displayed?

You can block your number being displayed, or display your number when it is normally blocked, either on a permanent basis or on a call-by-call basis. Note the following:

- You must contact your telecoms provider to request a permanent block. Equally, you must contact your telecoms provider to request a permanent display option to be placed on your service if the default of your service is that your number is blocked.

- Some telecoms providers will also give you the option of a feature that may be referred to as an Unlisted Entry or Silent Line or Silent Number. This feature stops your number from being available in telephone directories or through directory assistance and may also include a permanent block on your number. You should check with your telecoms provider for the availability of this feature and the effect it has on your number being displayed.

  Note also that there may be additional monthly charges for the use of the Unlisted Entry/Silent Line/Silent Number feature. You should contact your telecoms provider to confirm if this is the case.

For mobile services the default is usually that your number is not listed in telephone directories and directory assistance, unless listing is specifically requested.

- You can choose to block or display your number on a call-by-call basis. If your number is permanently displayed, you can choose to block your number on a per call basis by dialling **1831** before the number you are calling. Your number will then be blocked for that call. If you make another call after that, your number will be displayed again, unless you have again dialled **1831** before making that second call.

    If your number is permanently blocked, you can choose to display your number on a per call basis by dialling **1832** before the number you are calling. The same as above applies, i.e. you will need to pre-dial this code before each call you make if you want to display your number.

- Mobile services usually leave control of blocking or displaying up to you through the device settings menu. This means that you do not have to contact your telecoms provider to block or display your number. You can change this yourself in the settings menu of your device. Please refer to the user guide of your device for details.

What about the number of the people who are calling me?

You will not be able to choose whether or not you see the number of the person who is calling you. This means, if your device is CND-compatible and the person who is calling you does not block their number, then you will see the number of the person calling you. If the person calling you is blocking their number, then you will not be able to see the number of the person who is calling you even if your device is CND-compatible.

In short, you can only ever control your own number being blocked or displayed. You cannot control if the number of the person calling you is blocked or displayed and you cannot access another person's records via your telecoms provider.

What if I receive life threatening or unwelcome calls?

The telecommunications industry and Government recognise that telecommunications services are sometimes misused to make unwelcome and/or life-threatening calls.

By law, your telecoms provider is not allowed to provide you with the number or other details of a person who has called you. However, they can provide you with advice on how to deal with unwelcome calls.

If you receive a life-threatening call relating to you or another person, you should immediately contact the Police by calling **Triple Zero (000)**. The Police can request caller details from telecoms providers to help them investigate the incident.

You can also seek additional guidance on this subject by referring to the Communications Alliance Industry Guidance Note *IGN:010 Customer Process – Handling of Life-Threatening and Unwelcome Communications*. Please refer to the information below on how to access this document.

Can I choose to block my number for SMS, MMS and voice call apps, e.g. Skype and WhatsApp?

For technical reasons, your number will always be displayed and cannot be blocked when sending SMS, MMS or when using data services, e.g. data services that allow communications between two parties using an application such as Skype or WhatsApp.

For calls using the Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP) technology and Over the Top (OTT) services such as WhatsApp, Facetime etc., the properties of the type of service being used will be quite different and determine how the number is presented. You should discuss with your telecoms provider the CND features of any specific VOIP or OTT service(s) you may be using.

Are there any charges associated with blocking or displaying my number?

Blocking or displaying your number may be available free of charge as a standard part of your service. In other cases, it may be an additional service you can request from your telecoms provider. Some telecoms providers may also charge a monthly service fee for providing this service.

If you have particular needs relating to CND (e.g. privacy issues, are receiving unwelcome communications, business requirements), you should check with your telecoms provider (and also other telecoms providers) as to what options are available to you.

You will also need to ensure that you have a CND-compatible device.

What are the advantages and disadvantages of CND?

The advantage of having a CND-compatible device is that you will be able to identify the caller via the device display, unless the caller has chosen to block their number.

With services and providers who offer CND, you have the ability to control who can see your number and who cannot see it when you make a call, by blocking or displaying your number on either a call-by-call or permanent basis.

However, you should be aware that there can be privacy implications associated with CND. Your choice to display or block your number will affect who sees your number and how they can use that information. Both displaying and blocking have their respective advantages and disadvantages, and many of those will depend on your personal circumstances.

For example, displaying your number to some companies allows them to use your telephone number to link to other data to provide you a service, e.g. linking the information to an existing customer file to enhance customer services (any such use may be subject to the *Privacy Act 1988*,). This could be very helpful to you, or – depending on your circumstances and the entity you are calling – you may not want this to happen.

For example, displaying your number may be of benefit to you as the companies or Government agencies that you call may be able to route your number to the nearest branch or office when you have called a 1800 or 1300 number, and this may reduce the number of times you will be transferred or it allows to provide a more efficient service, e.g. your pizza home delivery order will be routed straight to your local store.

Blocking your number may prevent friends or family from returning your missed call as your number will not display, but it will equally prevent people from being able to identify you when you wish to remain anonymous or do not wish to provide your number.

Circumstances when your number will always be displayed

You should be aware that there are some circumstances when your number will always be displayed, even if you are permanently blocking your number, have chosen to block your number on a call-by-call basis or have an Unlisted Entry/Silent Line/Silent Number.

Your number will always be provided when calls are made to Emergency Service numbers from your phone service, i.e. when dialling **000**, **112** or using a mobile device **emergency call button**.

Also, when you make a call, the telecommunications carrier networks involved in connecting your call to the person you are calling need to know your number to ensure your call reaches the right person. Therefore, your number is always known to all carrier networks involved in delivering your call. However, once your call reaches its final destination, i.e. the person you want to call, the network delivering the call will prevent your number from being displayed if you have chosen to block your number.

For technical reasons, your number will always be displayed and cannot be blocked when sending SMS or MMS and when using data services, e.g. data services that allow communications between two parties using an application such as Skype or WhatsApp.

Are there any differences in CND when using a fixed line/land line telephone or mobile telephone service?

You will normally find that most mobile devices are CND-compatible. In addition, mobile services usually leave control of blocking or displaying up to you through the device settings menu. This means that you do not have to contact your telecoms provider to block or display your number. You can change this yourself in the settings menu of your device. Please refer to the user guide of your device for details.

You will also be able to pre-dial the **1831** (display) and **1832** (block) codes on a call-by-call basis from your mobile device.

Land line services require you to pre-dial **1831** (display) and **1832** (block) for a call-by-call display/blocking of your number or to contact your provider for permanent blocking/displaying. Your land line device needs to be CND-compatible to see a person's number when they call you.

Further information

The Communications Alliance G522:2016 *Calling Number Display* Industry Guideline can be downloaded from
http://www.commsalliance.com.au/Documents/all/guidelines/g522.

This factsheet can be downloaded from
http://www.commsalliance.com.au/Documents/Fact-sheets-and-brochures

The Communications Alliance Industry Guidance Note IGN:010 *Customer Process – Handling of Life-Threatening and Unwelcome Communications* can be downloaded from
http://www.commsalliance.com.au/Documents/all/Industry-Guidance-Notes/ign010

Communications Alliance

Communications Alliance was formed to provide a unified voice for the Australian communications industry and to lead it into the next generation of converging networks, technologies and services.

The prime mission of Communications Alliance is to promote the growth of the Australian communications industry and the protection of consumer interests by fostering the highest standards of business ethics and behaviour through industry self-governance.

Communications Alliance believes it is in the best interests of all participants, customers and government that the industry takes responsibility for devising practical, self-imposed solutions that are developed by co-operative processes.

In doing so, Communications Alliance seeks to facilitate open, effective and ethical competition between providers of telecommunications services while ensuring efficient, safe operation of networks, the provision of innovative services and the enhancement of consumer outcomes.