

ITCS News

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Newsletter of the International Telephone Card Society

ITCS, Telecom Australia Payphone Services, PO Box 3964, Parramatta, NSW 2124

Editorial

This issue of ITCS News contains information from the Asian and Pacific regions. Countries featured include China, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, Singapore and Thailand. A world round-up, from Dr Steve Hiscocks, includes some interesting news of new card technology soon to be seen in Brazil.

ITCS members who have nominated to have their name placed on our public

mailing list will receive a copy of the list with the April 1992 issue of ITCS News.

Membership, of the ITCS, continues to grow. There are now members from 48 countries including Gibraltar, Israel, Monaco, Thailand and the West Indies (St. Lucia).

Finally, from everyone at Telecom Australia Payphone Services, we wish all of you a prosperous and successful 1992.

The Editor

January 1992

Note: All opinions expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the editor. Where possible, articles contributed by members are verified, however Telecom Australia accepts no responsibility for the accuracy of the information printed in ITCS News.

Please also note that Ms Sue Bailey is no longer with ITCS. All correspondence should be addressed to — The Editor, ITCS News.

First National Issue

November 18th, 1991 was the official launch date of a series of six cards featuring the humanitarian services of the Australian Red Cross Society. This series is the first to be produced for national sale around Australia.

The cards feature the winning designs from the inaugural Telecom Phonecard Design Award, which was sponsored by Telecom Australia and run in association with the Australian Red Cross Society and the Australian Graphic Design Association. The competition was open to tertiary level graphic design students in Australia. The award winning designer was Alicia Heriot, a final year tertiary design student at Swinburne Institute of Technology, Melbourne.

Special Event Issue — Telecom '91 Geneva

In October 1991, Telecom '91 — Geneva, an international telecommunications exhibition, was held in Geneva, Switzerland. Many telephone card issuers, including

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Telecom Australia, produced a special card for the event. The Australian card features the corporate colours and koala logo of the Australian stand at Geneva. The total print run was 11,000 cards. The card denomination is AUD5.00, and cards remaining from the exhibition are now available for purchase.

Australia Day 1992 Issue

From 1992 a Phonecard celebrating Australia Day (January 26th) will be produced. The first issue features a \$5 card with an abstract design reflecting the vivid blues and yellows of the Australian summer with the words "Australia Day 1992" in red.

Australian Clubs

Since the first cards were introduced in Australia in early 1990 many collectors have contacted one another to exchange information and cards. Through this process the first Australian club, the Australian Phonecard Collectors Club, was formed. This club continues to grow and now has many members both in Australia and overseas.

Another club is the Peninsula Phonecard Collectors Club which also has some dedicated members.

Below are the mail addresses for those wanting more information on these clubs:

Mrs G. Hymers
The Secretary
Australian Phonecard Collectors Club
64 Concord Drive
Reynella SA 5161 Australia
Mr Robert Hall
Peninsula Phonecard Collectors Club
P.O. Box 27
Woodville SA 5011 Australia

Some recently published material has shown Telecom Australia Phonecards overprinted with the name of an exhibition. Telecom Australia did not authorize the overprinting. It does not endorse such practices, nor does it wish to convey that it was associated with the organizers or printers in this matter.

No communication will be entered into regarding the purchase of these cards.

Thailand

(from information provided by Kusik Manodham — Bangkok)

The Telephone Organisation of Thailand has authorised 'Advanced Information Systems Co. Ltd.' to install 12,000 cardphone booths, throughout the Kingdom of Thailand, over a period of 10 years. This number is expected to be installed in just 3 years. The Landis and Gyr system was selected, and since April 1991 200 booths have been installed in public areas of Bangkok, such as banks, shopping malls, hospitals, the airport, etc.

The cards are produced in Switzerland. The

company will issue cards in four denominations — the 25 baht, 50 baht, 100 baht and 240 baht. The 50 baht and the 100 baht cards show a picture of the Grand Palace. The top part of the 50 baht card is blue and the 100 baht is red.

Apart from the above, there are few complimentary and test cards.

The official press release for the system was circulated in late October, and the company is now installing more units throughout

Bangkok. They are also hoping to install at least 50 booths in up-country cities, especially where tourists visit. By the end of 1991 a total of 1500 units is aimed to be installed. Some of these will be at Shell Service stations.

It is also expected that the printing of advertising cards will begin in the near future. The first advertising card is likely to be "Shell", and a quantity of 200,000 is expected to be on sale from Shell Service stations in Bangkok.



Telecom Australia

Phonecards in China by Mr Xian Shao Hua

The first telephone cards in China were issued in 1985 in Shenzhen by the Shenda Telephone company Limited, a joint venture between Cable and Wireless and Shenzhen Telecommunications Development Company. Telephone cards are now issued in seven cities in China (Beijing, Shanghai, Dalian, Fuzhou, Guangzhou, Fushan and Shenzhen), each city having its own cards and cardphone system. Over 2 million cards have now been issued and it is difficult to collect a full set of Chinese cards. Phonecard collecting is not popular amongst the Chinese and the telephone companies do not offer discounts to collectors or dealers.

Shenzhen: the first set of three cards from Autelca were issued in 1985. Shenda Telephone Co Ltd has now changed from Autelca to GPT cards and a mint set of the green Autelca cards can now fetch up to US\$200.

The first GPT cards, a set of ten, were issued in 1989 with a face value of RMB600 and depicted views of Shenzhen. A second issue of the same set, with the date amended, was released in 1990. Also released in 1990 was a set of three cards showing Sculptures of Shenzhen and each of these cards has a face value of RMB25.

Beijing: the Beijing Telecommunication

Administration Bureau (BTAB) has so far issued four sets of cards supplied by Tamura Japan. The first issue, in June 1988, was a set of six cards to commemorate the use of magnetic public telephones in Beijing and these carry a 'motto' to that effect. The second set, issued in 1989, was a set of eight advertising cards carrying advertisements from two Japanese companies, ANA and NTT. In September 1989 the XI Asian Games were held in Beijing and a set of eight cards, with a face value of RMB780, was issued to commemorate the Games. Each card carried the logo of the Games and this set has the highest face value for a set of cards so far issued, with the most expensive card costing RMB200. Some of the cards in this set were sold out during the Games. BTAB also issued a set of four cards, face value RMB370, depicting the Beijing Communication Building and Satellite Station.

Guangzhou: phone cards were first issued in Guangzhou, the largest city in southern China, by the Guangzhou Telecommunication Bureau in August 1987. This set of three cards, with face value of RMB20, RMB50 and RMB100, was the first set of commemorative cards to be issued in China, and like the first Beijing issue, was to commemorate the introduction of

magnetic public telephones in Guangzhou and also carried a 'motto' to that effect. In 1988 the first set of advertising cards to be used in China was issued in Guangzhou. This set of three cards, with the same face values as the first 1987 issue, carried advertising for NEC computers and communication. STB has since issued a set of advertising cards for the He Bao Engineering Company Limited, the sole agent for Tamura, Japan. In 1990 a set of 3 cards depicting scenes of Guangzhou, supplied by Autelca, were issued.

Fushan: Fushan lies 15 minutes away from Guangzhou by train and the telephone system is operated by Fushan Post and Telecommunication Bureau. In July 1989 a set of two cards was issued, one being a commemorative card for use by internal staff only and the other a guide card on the use of magnetic card phones. This set was followed up by a set of three advertising cards for the local banks.

Shanghai: at the time of writing, no new cards have been issued in Shanghai. Details of Shanghai cards are given in 'The Stanley Gibbons catalogue of Telephone Cards — 2nd Edition' prepared by Dr S E R Hiscocks.

Dalian and Fuzhou: I have no information about cards issued in these two cities.

Shanghai Phonecards by Shang Wan Li

In China, telephone card collecting is just starting. Cards in Shanghai are difficult to collect because there are very few telephone card phones.

There are various types of cards that have been issued for use in Shanghai.

The earliest public issue of cards was in March 1988 for 3 months. Called "Telephone" card, there were about 1000 cards each of three denominations, Y25, Y60 and Y100.

Another set of public issue cards was released in June 1988 again with three

denominations and these were available for about one year.

Two other cards were issued. In 1989, a "Panda" card was issued for participants at a communications engineering meeting. The second card was a scenic card called "The Bund", with no face value. This card was given as a gift to people going abroad at that time. These cards are now very rare.

Some of the current cards are either in black/white or colour. There are two versions of the black/white cards. One version has

three full stops on the reverse side of the card while the other has none.

In October 1988, two sets of multi-coloured cards were issued: a "telecommunications" set and scenic set. The Y25 card of the scenic set has not been on sale for some time and the latest information is that the Y60 and Y100 of this set has been withdrawn from sale because of poor quality.

If you want to collect Shanghai cards, you will need to be quick.

Telephone Cards in Papua New Guinea

Papua New Guinea began a field trial of the Landis & Gyr optical system in 1988. Initially, only one design was produced: a blue background with the slogan "Someone wants to hear your voice today", and the logo of the Post and Telecommunications Corporation (PTC). The cards were of 20 units and could be purchased for 4 Kina. Twelve thousand cards were printed.

Only a small number of phones (six) were used in the field trial. Because of the difficult terrain in Papua New Guinea the payphones are operated by radio, not cable.

A further 44 phones were delivered in March 1991. These phones were tested in Port Moresby and were used to provide a payphone service for competitors and officials participating in the 9th South Pacific Games.

Phones have also been installed for mining

ventures in various locations and in Lae as well as Port Moresby. Many of the mines are too remote to consider installing coinphones.

After the initial trial card, three cards were produced to commemorate the South Pacific Games in 1991 which were sponsored by PTC. These three cards were of K1, K2 and K10 denominations. The cards were green and white and showed the logo of the South Pacific Games.

In September '91, a new design, featuring Port Moresby's "Ela Beach", was produced. The K2, K5 and K20 cards show a photograph of the beach at night.

Future issues planned for 1992 include a commemorative card to celebrate PTC's 10th anniversary and the sponsorship by PTC of the PNG pavilion at Expo 92 in Seville, Spain.

Below is a complete listing of all PNG cards issued to date:

Date	Units	Description	Print run	Kina
7/88	20	Trial card — blue	12 000	K 4
5/91	5	South Pacific Games	60 000	K 1
5/91	10	South Pacific Games	20 000	K 2
5/91	50	South Pacific Games	20 000	K 10
9/91	10	Ela Beach by night	20 000	K 2
9/91	25	Ela Beach by night	15 000	K 5
9/91	100	Ela Beach by night	5 000	K 20

Cards expected to be released in 1992 are:

1/92	5	Your company message could be here	24 000	K 1
1/92	10	Bilas Bread — Buttercup Bakery	10 000	K 2
3/92	25	Haus PTC - 10th Birthday	24 000	K 5
3/92	50	Haus PTC - 10th Birthday	12 000	K 10
4/92	100	Haus PTC - 10th Birthday	4 000	K 20

Private issues are likely to commence in early 1992.



Telecom Australia

Malaysian Telephone Cards

Steven Tan

PO Box 12016, 50764 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Note: Prices quoted are in Malaysian dollars.

Telephone cards in Malaysia were first introduced in March, 1990 by two separate telecommunications companies: Syarikat Telekom Malaysia Bhd (STMB) and Uniphone Sdn Bhd (USB). These cards were manufactured by GPT.

The first series of telephone cards issued by STMB are generally termed complimentary cards. They were given out as gifts to promote the introduction of the Kadfon (Cardphone) in Malaysia and could not be purchased. These complimentary cards had face values of \$3 (Clock Tower), \$5 (Fishing boat) and \$10 (Mosque). The words 'Complimentary' and 'Kadfon' were printed at the bottom of the cards. The background of the reverse of each complimentary card was black with silver wording.

The first regular issue of telephone cards, by STMB, had face values of \$3, \$5, \$10, \$20 and \$50. The \$5 and \$10 cards had the same designs as two of the complimentary cards. The \$3 design was of Malay Martial

Art. The \$20 and \$50 cards showed a Malacca Street Scene and the P.F. Building respectively. The word 'Complimentary' was replaced by the face value of the card.

The second and the third standard issues of telephone cards were of similar designs to the first regular issue. These issues had face values ranging from \$5 to \$50 and \$3 to \$50 respectively. However, both issues had a different logo from the first issue. In addition to the change in logo, the words 'Telekom Malaysia' replaced 'Syarikat Telekom Malaysia Bhd' on the reverse of both issues of cards.

The latest card issued by STMB is an advertising card designed by International Stamp and Coin Sdn Bhd. This card celebrates the company's 31st Anniversary and shows a Strait Settlement stamp and a British Trade Dollar coin. The face value is \$3.

Uniphone Sdn (USB) has released four series of official telephone cards, beginning in March, 1990. The first issue showed telephones manufactured by the Sapura

corporation. Face values ranged from \$2 to \$50. The design on the reverse of the cards was similar to STMB's except the words 'Uniphone Kad' and the face value were printed at the bottom of the card.

The second USB series were issued during the 'Visit Malaysia Year' in 1990. The designs of the cards feature Malaysian scenes and tropical fish. Face values of the cards range from \$2 to \$50. Two sentences in Malay which could be translated as 'Cards cannot be returned' and 'Uniphone card direct line . . .' were added to the reverse.

The third series of USB telephone cards feature 'Bird' designs with face values of \$5, \$10, \$20 and \$50.

The last standard issue was a 'cartoon' series depicting Malaysian lifestyles. The face value of each of the four cards in the series is \$10.

USB has also issued private commercial advertising cards for companies including: Apple Computer, Petronas, Komtel, Fujitsu and Edwin Jeans.

Errors and Varieties on Singapore Cards

Gilbert Tan

38 Hua Guan Avenue, Singapore 2158, Republic of Singapore

Phonecards were first used in Singapore in 1985. These were made in Japan by Anritsu. They were of a plain red and black on white design depicting the logo of Singapore Telecom and the denomination. A machine impressed control number and serial number appeared at the lower position of the obverse. There were no varieties known for this series except that similar cards were released in 1987 with a notch at the lower end of the right border. While the \$2, \$5, \$10, \$20 and \$50 denominations exist for the 1985 release, the 1987 one is missing the \$2 value.

With the exit of Anritsu phonecards and the introduction of GPT phonecards in January 1989, more attractive designs began to appear. With a completely different cardphone, and the increase in complexity of design and serial numbering, errors and varieties have begun to appear.

The control code on the GPT Singapore Phonecards is machine-printed in black on the upper central portion on the reverse of the phonecard. This control code consists of:

1. The card information code and
2. The serial number (which is unique to each individual card).

The card information code for Singapore cards starts with the issue number or print number as it is sometimes called. This is followed by 'S' for Singapore and another 2 letters representing the advertiser. If the advertiser is Singapore Telecom, the 2 letters

are 'IG'. Finally the card number of that issue is shown by the last letter. For example:

2SYPB 000235

This is the 2nd print run of the card for the advertiser Yellow Pages and is the 2nd design (card) of that issue. The 'S' represents Singapore and the number '000235' shows that it is the 235th card printed of that issue.

Errors and varieties known to me are:

1. \$10 Raffles Statue (multi-colour) with the card number 'C' instead of 'D'. This error occurred at approximately serial number 47500 of the 7th series of Singapore scenes. The card number 'C' actually represents the Changi Airport design. (7SIGC047505).
2. \$10 Merlion (multi-colour) with the Singapore Telecom code 'GI' instead of 'IG'. This error occurred approximately between serial numbers 75000 and 102000 of the 9th issue of Singapore scenes. (9SGIA095032).
3. \$2 Sharp (yellow and red) with the issue number 'I' instead of '1'. This error occurred at approximately serial number '65700' of the first issue of Sharp advertising cards. (ISSHA065780).
4. \$2 NEC (multi-colour) with the reverse of the \$10 NEC and vice-versa. These cards were erroneously printed and were recalled for destruction. Few have survived.

5. A card with a Malaysian design and the reverse of a Singapore design and vice-versa are known to exist but the origin is dubious.

6. \$20 Malacca (5MSTC Series information code) with Singapore \$10 reverse. This is the fifth series of Telecom Malaysia phonecards of which a new \$3 card and the original values of \$5, \$10, \$20 and \$50 were made again.

There is also another Singapore phonecard error. It is the \$2 IDD card (dial 162) of September 1990 with the reverse of a \$50 card (2SIDA series information code).

7. \$10 Fibre Optics 2 (multi-colour) with a 'square-ish' 'O' in the issue number '10'. This variety exists from serial numbers '149101' to '160500'. (10SIGB149135).
8. \$50 P.F.B. Building (3MSTB series information code) with Singapore \$10 reverse. This is the third series of Telecom Malaysia phonecards of which only the \$20 and \$50 values were printed.

Varieties exist concerning the designs on the front of the cards but the number of variations are too large to be included in this article. This article refers only to variations or errors on the reverse of the card.

I would be glad to exchange ideas and cards with other collectors who may correspond with me at the above address.



Telecom Australia

New Zealand News

Alan Kilpatrick

*Alan Kilpatrick is a well-known New Zealand dealer in telephone cards.
His postal address is: PO Box 588, Dunedin, New Zealand.*

A set of four cards, depicting animals, was released on October 7, 1991.
The values and designs are as follows:

\$5 Zebra
\$5 Polar Bear
\$10 Pan troglodyte Chimpanzee
\$20 Meerkat

It is quite obvious, to anyone who knows a little of New Zealand's natural history, that these animals are not natives of this country. One could be forgiven for asking the question: why have these animals appeared

on telephone cards from Telecom New Zealand? The answer is that these, and other animals, feature in a very popular series of television advertisements currently being run by Telecom NZ. The ads promote the use of toll calls to keep in touch with friends and family.

The ads featuring the meerkat (depicted on the \$20 card) show some of the endearing group social behaviour exhibited by these animals. The meerkats have proved to be such a hit with the New Zealand public that Telecom have sponsored a group of them to

the Wellington Zoo. As a direct result of this, the Zoo has seen a significant increase in patronage.

The final issue for 1991 will be the Christmas set due for release on 2nd December. The cards were designed by Auckland graphic designer Ellen Gigenback. Again this issue will comprise four cards as follows:

\$5 Santa Claus
\$5 Christmas Present
\$10 Christmas Tree
\$20 Angel

News from Around the World

Dr Steve Hiscocks

Telecom '91 — Geneva:

I attended this four-yearly jamboree of the telecommunications industry and found it most rewarding. I also found it a happy hunting ground for cards. Several PTT's and manufacturers had issued special cards for Telecom '91 and I will be reporting on these in detail elsewhere but most of them are rare and it behoves collectors to find them if they can.

Those I found included the two versions of the Australian card mentioned below, a fine Landis and Gyr Swiss card of Mount Fuji by NTT of Japan, a Tamura Japanese card commemorating the occasion, a fine Schlumberger smart card, another L&G Swiss card issued by L&G commemorating 25,000,000 cards sold worldwide, an L&G card for Belgium, a smart card of unknown parentage but probably German from Sweden, two Italian magstripe cards by an Italian firm, ASST, specialising in temporary systems for special events, two cards by Ascom (Autelca) and yet another striking L&G card from the Netherlands.

GPT demonstrated a number of interesting cards including its new smart cards which were recently field-tested near Liverpool in the UK. There was also a striking set of Mercury cards in a leather wallet raffled at the end of each presentation. There was a completely blank Gemplus card — blank because the printing could not be completed in time — and a totally new type of card from Brazil which works through induction on thin-film coils within the card. These last should be appearing in Brazil next April.

Moving on to other information that has come my way.

Australia:

Telecom Australia produced a special card for Telecom '91. Less well known is the very similar card used as a complimentary by

Anritsu, the Japanese manufacturers of the Australian card. Anritsu obtained permission to print on a further 1000 of the Australian Telecom '91 cards but with their own name added above that of Telecom Australia at the bottom and the word 'SPECIMEN' printed below, next to the notch.

The word specimen has different connotations when used by the Japanese; it means demonstration card rather than dummy card. In fact this card was encoded for the Japanese system rather than the Australian system but I will be listing it under Australia in the next catalogue.

Guinea Bissau:

The mystery deepens. Not only has no one offered any explanation of the card that I wrote about last time but new cards by Landis and Gyr are about to appear in the same colours and bearing the same logo although of rather different design. There are 120 and 240 unit values.

Iceland:

Reports in the French press that smart cards have taken over from Landis and Gyr turn out to be somewhat exaggerated. Iceland continues with L&G and the first special card appeared on October 1st, while the second is due December 1st . . . The smart card referred to is sold by a private company and mainly used for ship-to-shore systems on fishing boats.

Indonesia:

I recently visited this fascinating country and found that collecting is beginning to take off there; in fact I found only four cards near telephones which means that one has to get up very early to be there before the local collectors! I met a leading collector and was indeed envious of his fine collection. There have now been just over 200 different cards issued, 46 of them private cards and the rest illustrated public issue cards. One hopes that, with the expansion of the hobby there, the

fine cards of Indonesia will soon become much more accessible to collectors outside.

Poland:

The set of four Urmet cards, which I reported in the last issue turns out to be a set of six. I find that the two lower values which feature church spires against a night sky exist both with and without the yellow coat of arms and lettering.

Russia:

The L&G cards which did appear briefly for public use in Moscow have, I understand, been withdrawn. I am told that this is because telephone calls are so heavily subsidised that the calls on a card cost less than the manufacturing costs of the cards. There is, however, action on another front. A 'hard currency' system similar to the Comstar system in Moscow is being set up in Leningrad (or is it now St. Petersburg?) with the help of PTT of Finland.

Sierra Leone:

A single 50 unit card has been issued. It is by Urmet and looks very much like the Egyptian cards.

USA:

Two Landis and Gyr cards have been prepared for the Nynex field trials at the Staten Island Ferry Terminals in New York although, at the time of writing, they have not been launched due to a fire at one of the terminals. There is a \$1 complimentary card showing the telephone and a short section of the New York skyline and a \$5.25 card (costing only \$5) showing the famous skyline with a ferry-boat in the foreground. Both have instructions on the reverse. Interestingly they call themselves 'Change Card — coin replacement cards!' It is understood that other values may be introduced later.

Vietnam:

Sorry — I got it wrong! The two values are 30,000 and 300,000 Dongs. (30,000 Dongs equates to around US\$2.70).



Telecom Australia