

NOTES ON OBVERSE

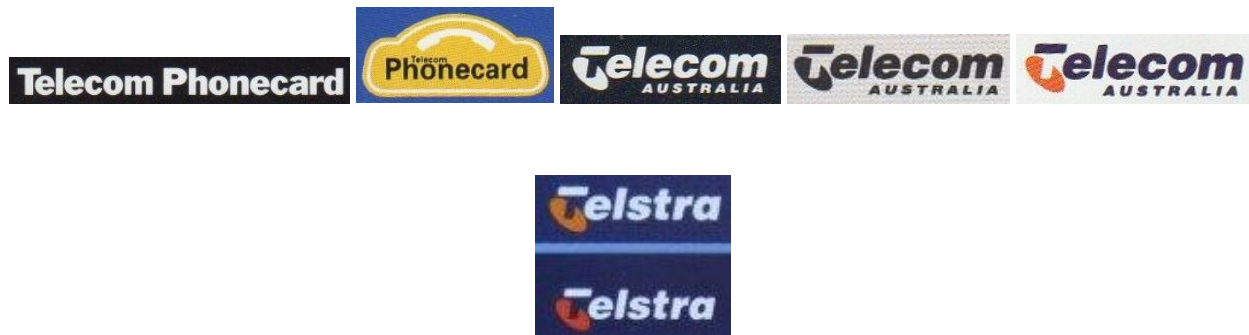
THE LOGO

The matter of a simple little logo – just three words: ‘Telecom’ (or ‘Telstra’), ‘Australia’ and ‘Phonecard’ would seem to be straightforward. However, Telstra made it somewhat complicated.

The ‘Telecom Phonecard’ adorns prefixes 0-195, 203-205, 211-213(Generic), 218(Christmas) - 220, 222 (Generic) – 245, 248-258, 260-286, 297, 300-301. It can be found in various colour combinations and sizes.

Then there is the Handset logo for prefixes 196-202, 206-210, 213(Advertising)-218(Advertising), 221-222(Advertising), 246-247.

Next Telstra moved to the “new” ‘Telecom Australia Phonecard’ logo, and things started to get really interesting.



THE DOT

The “new” logo had the T of Telecom (and later Telstra) standing in an oval dot. But the dot kept changing colours, as follows:

White for prefixes 291-296, 298-299, 307-319, 343-352, 363

Black for prefixes 302-304, 364-366, 369-370

Either red or orange for prefixes 287-288, 306, 320-342, 353-362, 367-368, 371-383, 388-412, 419-434, 437-516, 521-552, 557-562, 564-703, 708-735, 737-760, 762-819, 822-862, 865-878, 882-939, 941-948, 951-974, 979-997, 1008-1126, 1129-1132, 1134, 1136-1149, 1151-1192, 1194-1279, 1282-1303, 1305-1335, 1338-1423, 1427-1443, 1448-1476, 1479-1494, 1496-1518, 1521, 1523-1555, 1557-1558.

THE WORD 'AUSTRALIA'

Printed below 'Telecom', it originally began under the first 'e' and ended under the 'm'. But at least two different fonts were used. Compare the Microscopy set with the Christmas 1994 set. This can also be done all the way up to and including prefix 846. The microscopic spaced lettering (e.g. the Xmas set) comes and goes, seemingly without reason.



Then Telstra changed it around by putting in a newer logo at prefix 847 (already trialled with Custom Card 756), in which 'AUSTRALIA' started at the 'c' of 'Telecom' and ended at the 'm'. This continued in prefixes 847-862, 865-872 and 875.

THE WORD 'TELSTRA'

This was introduced at prefix 884, at this stage 'AUSTRALIA' was banished from the logo. A logo with a smallish font 'Telstra' and a larger font for 'Phonecard' was used for prefixes 884-1078, 1080-1081, 1091, 1093-1095, 1115-1116, 1125, 1129, 1156-1163.



'Telstra' appeared in even smaller letters on prefix 908.

'Telstra', in its 'normal' smaller form, began an interplay with the oval dot: there is a red dot on prefixes 992-6; (and back at 707); while an orange dot is found on prefixes 913, 1080.

Then came the last major change. 'Telstra' gets a larger font while 'Phonecard' is demoted to a smaller font for prefixes 1079 to 1555 (there are occasional exceptions in this). There are also very minor variations among the Timezone cards, the Diana cards (1548-1550) and the Teddy Bear card (1497).

And right from the very beginning of this, anyone-fastidious enough can find changes in fonts at random: look carefully at the 'e', and also at the 's' in 'Telstra' where the different fonts are most noticeable.

THE WORD 'PHONECARD'

There are only four cards in the entire collection of Australian Anritsu cards that show "TM" after the word "Phonecard" on the obverse of the card.

At the time, Telecom was in the process of trying to trade-mark the word "Phonecard", but failed, as it was deemed to be a common word, so it was never used again.

The four cards that have it are the KMart series, 302-304, and the Castlemaine XXXX, 306.



OTHER ODDITIES

Only two face cards were produced with both the 'Telecom Australia' and the 'Telstra' logos; the \$5 and \$10 Victoria Prisons cards.

But the \$20 Bookmuncher went one better. Its three printings (738, 939 and 996) all had different logos. This raises the question: if the 'newer' appropriate logos were used for these cards, why not for the reprinted \$5 Bookmuncher (930) and \$5 Invisible Heritage (1166)?

I'm sure you've realized by now that this is all adding weight to my theory that Telstra's design and production of its phonecards was poorly organized, inefficient, and certainly not stringently supervised. There may have been a profit motive to it, but the collector was rarely considered, even though there was a Collector Service. Anyway; if you don't believe that now, wait till you see my next offering, Notes On Reverses.

Kevin Harris