

From: Marek, John (AM) **Sent:** 07 March 2006 7:55 AM
To: Meleri Thomas
Subject: RE: OFCOM NEWS RELEASE: OFCOM REVIEW OF UK TELEPHONE NUMBERING PLAN

Looks OK apart from one point relating to the proposed 03 numbers. The caller won't know the geographic identity at all, I would prefer some identity to be included: perhaps 031... for Wales, 032...for Scotland etc. For those companies that do not wish to identify themselves, 035...to 039... could be used.
Please pass this suggestion on. Thanks,
John Marek AM.

From: Meleri Thomas

Sent: 23 February 2006 16:44
To: Unlisted-recipients
Subject: FW: OFCOM NEWS RELEASE: OFCOM REVIEW OF UK TELEPHONE NUMBERING PLAN

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

OFCOM REVIEW OF UK TELEPHONE NUMBERING PLAN

23 February 2006

Ofcom today published its review of the UK National Telephone Numbering Plan.

Telephone numbers underpin all telecoms services and play a key role in how UK households and businesses access and pay for £34 billion worth of services every year. Under the Communications Act 2003 Ofcom is responsible for managing the UK National Telephone Numbering Plan - an important national resource.

BACKGROUND

Ofcom allocates blocks of telephone numbers to communications providers upon request and at no cost; providers then in turn allocate these numbers to their customers. Geographic numbers - the numbers used for homes and businesses in every part of the UK - are normally allocated to providers in blocks of ten thousand for each telephone exchange covering a specific area. Ofcom is also required to allocate other kinds of numbers, such as mobile numbers or non-geographic numbers, when asked to do so by any provider.

Telephone numbers are a finite resource. As competition grows, an increasing number of providers require Ofcom to allocate new number blocks. Additionally, new technologies (such as Voice over Internet Protocol services) and changes in demographics over time (such as

population growth in London and South-East England) mean that Ofcom must ensure its approach to numbering is sufficiently flexible to adapt to future demand.

No changes to geographic telephone numbers are proposed as part of the numbering framework; instead Ofcom is proposing specific measures to reduce the need for such changes in the years ahead.

PROPOSALS

Ofcom's telephone numbering framework seeks to encourage greater innovation, support the creation of new services, increase consumer awareness and enhance consumer protection.

Ofcom's proposals cover six key areas:

1. Create a new country-wide number range - 03 - which would be charged to the consumer at the same rate as calling a geographic number. Organisations requiring a national presence would be able to use this range without charging consumers a premium for contacting them; and calls to 03 numbers could be included in any inclusive or low-cost call packages offered by landline or mobile phone companies;
2. Introduce a new consumer protection test to the allocation system which would deny numbers to providers who have previously abused consumer trust and might do so again through their involvement in telephone scams;
3. Introduce a new 06 number range for personalised number services. Over time this new number range would replace the current 070 personal numbers, and both the old and new numbers would have a price ceiling. Many consumers confuse 070 numbers with mobile numbers (which also begin with 07), leading to the potential for abuse and scams. The use of 06 numbers would remove confusion, strengthen consumer protection, and allow the 07 number range to be uniquely identified with mobile services;
4. Simplify the structure of the 08 range used for chargeable services. Ofcom plans to band new numbers by price and type of service to develop an association in the consumer's mind that the lower the digit that follows 08 the lower the price in that range. For example, calls to a number beginning 082 would be charged at a lower rate than those to a number beginning 089. These proposals complement work already underway to reform the current 084/087 numbering scheme, the conclusion of which will be published next month;
5. Simplify the structure of 09 premium rate service numbers in a similar way to 08, by making different groups of 09 numbers represent different prices and services. This will also enable consumers to bar specific types of 09 numbers;
6. Introduce a new allocation system to avoid changes to geographic numbers in the future. Ofcom wants to encourage providers to use the numbers available in blocks already allocated to them as efficiently as possible and is consulting on principles for a new administrative pricing system (at a nominal cost). It also proposes to allocate more numbers in smaller blocks of one thousand instead of ten thousand, to maximise supply.

A table illustrating Ofcom's proposals is published at:
<http://www.ofcom.org.uk/consult/condocs/numberingreview/numberingplan/>

The full consultation document is published at:
<http://www.ofcom.org.uk/consult/condocs/numberingreview/>

The closing date for responses to the consultation is 4 May 2006.

Ofcom Chief Executive Stephen Carter said: "Telephone numbers are at the heart of a well-functioning communications industry.

He added: "From 01 to 09 we are proposing a planning framework that provides clearer consumer information and is future-proofed for growth."

Ends.

NOTES FOR EDITORS AND CSEs

Ofcom is the independent regulator and competition authority for the UK communications industries, with responsibilities across television, radio, telecommunications and wireless communications services. For further details please visit www.ofcom.org.uk.

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Ofcom is the independent regulator and competition authority for the UK communications industries, with responsibilities across television, radio, telecommunications and wireless communications services.

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