

Elizabeth Gannon
Floor 4 Competition Group
Ofcom
Riverside House
2A Southwark Bridge Road
London SE1 9HA

23 October 2009

Dear Ms Gannon,

Mobile number portability - Review of the porting process

I am writing in response to the above consultation both in my capacity as Co-Chair of the All Party Communications and as a long standing advocate of reform of the UK's Mobile Number Portability system.

As you may be aware I tabled an Early Day Motion (EDM 2390) which calls for the introduction of two-hour recipient-led porting, and I therefore urge Ofcom to adopt the Option A as outlined in the consultation, which proposes the introduction of recipient-led process with porting completed within two hours.

I am perplexed at why the UK remains the only European Country in which donor led mobile number porting exists. The donor led system forces consumers to 'negotiate' their right to transfer their number to another provider, with their existing provider. Whilst some consumers may benefit from the negotiation by securing a new more beneficial contract, the fact is that the current system is not consumer friendly. Why is it consumers can transfer their gas or electricity supply through a recipient led system but when they want to port their mobile number they have to seek permission from their existing mobile operator?

This issue has been under consideration for some time, and it is – as the EDM notes – a matter of some regret that due to a legal challenge, Ofcom's original proposals were stalled during 2008. Nevertheless Ofcom now has an opportunity to give UK consumers the same benefits as their European Counterparts, and I would therefore urge Ofcom to adopt option A and move to two hour recipient led porting as a matter of urgency.

Yours sincerely,

John Robertson MP