



The '03' number allocation process

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Section 1

Introduction

- 1.1 Ofcom set out in July 2006 its plans to make available telephone numbers beginning with 03¹. At that point Ofcom consulted on an application form for 03 numbers and the way in which 03 numbers would be described in the Numbering Plan ('the Plan').
- 1.2 Ofcom has now published a statement ('the statement') that confirms the Plan description and application form for 03 numbers². Ofcom will shortly begin to allocate those numbers.
- 1.3 This document sets out how Ofcom will make 03 numbers available to communications providers ('CPs'). Various 03 sub-ranges will be available and the system will vary between different ranges.

Service description for 03 numbers

- 1.4 The statement explains the final Plan service description for 03 numbers, which will be called 'UK-wide' numbers. Potential applicants for 03 numbers may wish to note the following changes to our July 2006 proposals:
 - The definition of 'UK-wide number' now excludes the following elements:
 - '(iii) number translation to a Geographic Number is involved; and
 - (iv) the service is not a Mobile Service.'
 - The proposed sub-range for the use by public sector and other not-for-profit bodies has increased in capacity and, as a consequence, another sub-range will be used for other services (see below); and
 - The range of end users eligible for numbers in the public services and not-for-profit sub-range, as covered in Ofcom's guidance, now includes some further types of organisation. These are GPs' practices and urgent care providers; schools, universities and colleges; and Arms Length Management Organisations and other bodies working with local councils.
- 1.5 Also note that 03 numbers can be used as presentation CLI numbers.

Further information

- 1.6 If you have any questions about the processes set out in this document, you can contact Ofcom at numbering.applications@ofcom.org.uk or by calling our switchboard on 020 7981 3000 and asking for the Numbering Team.

¹ See <http://www.ofcom.org.uk/consult/condocs/numberingreview/statement/>

² See <http://www.ofcom.org.uk/consult/condocs/numbering03>

Section 2

Available 03 numbers

- 2.1 There will be a variety of numbers available for application, which should meet the needs of different service providers. The specific sub-ranges that will be open initially for applications are listed in Table 1.

Table 1 The first 03 sub-ranges to be available for allocation

Numbers	For use by
0300	Public services and other not-for-profit organisations ³
0303	Public services and other not-for-profit organisations
0306	Public services and other not-for-profit organisations
0330	any organisation or end user
0333	any organisation or end user
034X	specific users currently using the equivalent 084X numbers
037X	specific users currently using the equivalent 087X numbers

- 2.2 Numbers will be available from within two broad groups:
- The 'migration' sub-ranges which make available to specific CPs those numbers that are equivalent to the ones they have been allocated in existing 08 sub-ranges; and
 - The 030 and 033 sub-ranges, for which any CP can apply, initially involving a competitive process. Some of these can be used only by certain types of organisation.
- 2.3 All 03 numbers will be allocated in blocks of 10,000 ('10k') numbers, in line with Ofcom's intention to limit the demand for decode capacity.

³ Drawing on Ofcom guidance on eligibility, see <http://www.ofcom.org.uk/consult/condocs/numbering03/030guidance/>

- 2.4 Ofcom has decided to dedicate the whole of the 030 sub-range to public services and other not-for-profit organisations, following recent indications of significant demand for numbers by several large public bodies. Ofcom expects early take-up of 03 by some public sector bodies (thereby helping to market the new range).
- 2.5 To give each CP a better chance of getting a preferred block in the competitive selection process for 030 and 033, Ofcom is making two three-digit sub-ranges available within each of those sub-ranges.
- 2.6 The 0306 sub-range will also be available - on a first-come, first-served basis - at the earliest stage. This responds to a specific urgency issue for particular 03 numbers that was raised by a very large public body. Ofcom would not expect 0306 numbers to be in such obvious demand as other '030' sub-ranges being opened initially now. Any CP can apply for 0306 numbers as well as participating in the competitive process for other 030 numbers, if appropriate number demand can be demonstrated.
- 2.7 Ofcom is not enabling existing 08 numbers to be specifically migrated to their nearest equivalent 030 numbers, as this could limit utilisation of the attractive 030 sub-range. Other 03 numbers will be available for those who want to obtain very similar numbers to their current 08 ones (see below from paragraph 2.9).
- 2.8 The CP to whom 030 numbers are allocated will be responsible for ensuring that they are used in accordance with the service designation in the Plan. CPs are advised to use Ofcom's guidance to inform their decision about the customers that are eligible to use those numbers. Those CPs should make provisions to ensure that sub-allocatees apply the same standards of scrutiny. If in doubt, CPs should seek clarification from Ofcom as misuse of numbers may be a breach of General Condition 17. Ofcom is also currently considering a consumer protection test for numbering, which may be applied if 030 numbers are not used as intended.

Applying for 034X and 037X numbers

- 2.9 Ofcom is promoting easy migration from some 08 numbers by accepting applications for 034 and 037 blocks whose matching 08 blocks have been allocated. The specific numbers within these 034 and 037 blocks will have to be kept available for use by the same end user that is using the matching 08 number. Ofcom has included a requirement in Part B of the Plan (see Annex 3) that effectively means that the only instances where 034/037 numbers may be adopted or otherwise used by CPs is when a customer is migrating from a matching 084/087 number. This means that a CP acquiring a 034 or 037 block will not be permitted to use, sub-allocate or port any numbers whose 08 equivalents are controlled by other CPs.
- 2.10 Ofcom wishes to keep the migration path open for future users of 084 and 087 numbers. Therefore, for the time being there will be no time limit on when end users can migrate to the equivalent 034 and 037 numbers. Also, 034 and 037 blocks will only be allocated if the equivalent 08 block has also been allocated.
- 2.11 Ofcom recognises that portability and sub-allocation means that services from 08 blocks may be provided by multiple CPs. To promote the interests of the majority of stakeholders, Ofcom considers that the best approach to be that the CP providing services on most numbers in a 084 or 087 block has first priority to be allocated the equivalent 034 or 037 block. This will often be the original allocatee of the 08 block. This approach is more efficient as it limits the degree of porting (or sub-allocation). Applications for these blocks by other CPs providing services on the equivalent 08 numbers can be accepted if accompanied by written confirmation from the allocatee

that it does not wish to apply for the relevant 03 block. Ofcom is also open to other CPs being allocated a 034 or 037 block if the original 08 allocatee does not intend to apply for that 03 block within 6 months of it being open for allocation.

- 2.12 Where 084 and 087 numbers are issued in blocks of 1,000 numbers, multiple CPs may have numbers within the equivalent 03 block. Any of those CPs can apply for such a 034 or 037 block, but the holder of that 03 block must make the equivalent 08 numbers available to the other relevant CPs upon request.
- 2.13 CPs who are awarded blocks in these migration 034 and 037 sub-ranges are responsible for ensuring that numbers are reserved for end users in the way specified above, and for ensuring that sub-allocatees apply the same standards. Failure to reserve these numbers may represent a breach of General Condition 17, and also may lead to action under a consumer protection test for numbering which Ofcom is currently considering.

Section 3

Timetable

3.1 Ofcom will make available different 03 numbers as set out in Table 2.

Table 2 Timetable for 03 number allocation

Date (& time)	03 sub-ranges	Process
13 Feb 2007	All	Allocations guidance issued
Between 6 March (0900) & 9 March (2359) 2007	03 00 XXX 03 03 XXX 03 30 XXX 03 33 XXX	Applications must be received by Ofcom between these dates in order to be considered in the initial competitive selection process for these numbers Each applicant can apply for one 10k block beginning '030' <u>and</u> one 10k block beginning '033'
6 March 2007 (0900)	03 06 XXX	Applications can be made from this date on a first-come, first-served basis to those applicants who can demonstrate specific demand for numbers beyond the volume of numbers for which they may also be applying within the competitive selection process for the '0300'/'0303' sub-ranges. Ofcom to allocate these numbers under standard processes within its 3 week statutory timeframe
Between 12 March & 23 March	03 00 XXX 03 03 XXX 03 30 XXX 03 33 XXX	Ofcom to run a competitive selection process (see Section 4 & Annex 1)
Between 23 Mar & 30 Mar 2007	03 00 XXX 03 03 XXX 03 30 XXX 03 33 XXX	Ofcom to issue letters to allocate blocks or notify of non-award of blocks following outcome of competitive selection process. Applicants to be notified within 3 weeks of application, according to statutory process
2 April 2007 (0900)	03 4X XXX 03 7X XXX	Applications can be made from this date by CPs that are providing services to customers using the equivalent numbers in the 08 range. For example, the CP supporting a service to 0870 5678910 can apply for the block containing 0370 5678910.
11 April 2007 (0900)	03 00 XXX 03 03 XXX 03 30 XXX 03 33 XXX	Applications possible from this date under standard first-come, first-served process to those who can demonstrate a need for capacity. No priority will be given to applicants who did not secure one of these blocks in the competitive process.

Section 4

The initial competitive selection process

- 4.1 The first 0300, 0303, 0330 and 0333 numbers will be allocated by a competitive selection process. This is detailed further in Annex 1.
- 4.2 Each CP will be eligible for one 10k block from 0300 and 0303 numbers combined, and one 10k block from 0330 and 0333 numbers combined.
- 4.3 To avoid discrimination between CPs, specific number blocks cannot be reserved for particular CPs or allocated to facilitate their use by particular SPs.
- 4.4 Applications for these 10k blocks must be made with the following documents:
 - Form 'S3' (as published today on Ofcom's website⁴); and
 - A 'serious letter of intent' to confirm plans to use these 03 numbers. This document (which can be in any format) will expand on details that may be submitted for Section 6 ('Service and Market') of Form S3.
- 4.5 The serious letter of intent is needed because Ofcom expects 030 and 033 numbers to be popular and is opening them to encourage early adoption. Ofcom is not attempting to set a high bar to applying for 03 numbers but is seeking some confidence that these numbers will be in use early. All CPs providing a valid serious letter of intent will be included in the selection process. Ofcom expects these numbers to be made available for use at the earliest opportunity rather than kept unused for speculative purposes, and reminds CPs that it can withdraw numbers that are not managed efficiently and effectively.
- 4.6 The serious letter of intent can give various types of information as evidence of how soon and to what extent these 03 numbers are expected to be used, such as:
 - details of their SPs (profiles, or preferably names) who have expressed an interest in using 03 numbers;
 - copies of letters from SPs confirming their wish to secure 03 numbers;
 - details of existing SPs using 08 numbers;
 - details of existing SPs that should be eligible to use 030 numbers;
 - the types of SP they would target with 03 numbers upon allocation.
- 4.7 Ofcom will only accept the first application that it receives from a CP for each 03 sub-range. CPs cannot amend their applications after submission. Ofcom will acknowledge applications on receipt, and may contact CPs for further information for an application, including the contents of letters of intent. A failure to respond to Ofcom's requests for this information may result in a CP's application not being considered.
- 4.8 CPs must submit separate S3 forms for the different sub-ranges:

⁴ See http://www.ofcom.org.uk/telecoms/ioi/numbers/applying_num/

- One Form S3 to cover their preferences on 0300 and 0303 numbers combined. CPs can distribute their preferences between any available blocks in these two sub-ranges. For example, 0300 blocks may be the first, third and fourth preferences and 0303 blocks the second and fifth preferences; and
 - One Form S3 for their preferences on 0330 and 0333 numbers combined. CPs can, likewise, distribute their preferences between any available blocks in these two sub-ranges.
- 4.9 Up to five preferences can be listed on Form S3, at Section 5. First preferences should be entered in the '1st block' line, second preferences in the '2nd block' line, etc.
- 4.10 Ofcom will record CPs' preferences and then use a random selection process as described in Appendix 1 to allocate blocks. Ofcom expects to use a bingo machine to allocate blocks that are wanted by multiple providers.
- 4.11 The selection process for 030 and the selection process for 033 blocks will operate independently. Those not getting their preferred blocks, or any blocks, for one of those sub-ranges will therefore have no higher priority to secure a block in the other one.
- 4.12 Ofcom is considering making the selection process available for applicants to attend. CPs interested in this option should contact Ofcom's Numbering Allocations team. If Ofcom runs such an event it will be notified to applicants. If no such event is held, Ofcom will secure independent scrutiny of the selection process, including potentially recording it.
- 4.13 Details of allocated number blocks will be shown on Ofcom's website⁵ after all applicants have been notified of the results of the competitive process. Other 03 codes, whether 'Protected' or 'Free', will also be shown on the website.

⁵ See http://www.ofcom.org.uk/telecoms/ioi/numbers/numbers_administered/

Section 5

Other points to bear in mind

- 5.1 All other 03 number blocks will be awarded on a first-come, first-served basis in accordance with the timetable in Table 2. Applications for all other number blocks, including the 0306 blocks available at an early stage, must be made on a separate Form S3 to those used for the competitive process.
- 5.2 Whilst Form S3 states (at Section 5) that applications should not be submitted more than 6 months prior to in-service date, this should not be considered to apply to a CP's early applications for 03 blocks or to any applications in the 084 and 087 sub-ranges. This is because Ofcom does not wish to artificially constrain the early take-up of 03 numbers.
- 5.3 There are no 03 parallel running rules, as migration is a matter of SPs' choice. Ofcom is currently setting no time limit on CPs maintaining dual 03 and 08 numbers. Pre-announcements to direct callers to 03 numbers are also up to SPs.
- 5.4 The interconnection arrangements for 03 numbers are not yet confirmed. Ofcom encourages CPs to resolve these arrangements at the earliest opportunity.
- 5.5 Applicants may wish to avoid applying for specific blocks which could lead to calls being misdialled rather than delivered to their SPs. Such misdialling could occur due to clashes with current geographic codes, where customers intending to dial a 03 number dial a '1' after the '0'. Whether or not to avoid these blocks is a matter of choice for CPs. See the list of allocated geographic number blocks on Ofcom's website⁶.

⁶ see http://www.ofcom.org.uk/telecoms/ioi/numbers/numbers_administered/#geog1

Annex 1

Detailed competitive selection process

