

Consultation on simplifying non-geographic numbers

Dear Consultation Team,

Since your last consultation at the end of 2005 you have started issuing 03 range of numbers that are at the same price as your 01/02 calls on the customers telephone network, 0843 has also been issued.

Your booklet - Number translation services: A way forward

Issued 26 September 2005. I wish to go through the items on page 6 as I submit that not all the proposals have been concluded.

Under the following heading:-

What changes are we proposing?

I suggest, items 1 to 4 and 6 to 8 appear to have worked as indicated.

Item 5 **No change on 0844**. 0844 numbers have taken over from the 0870 range, albeit at a cheaper rate, without the customer knowing the cost of the call. You can see this in newspapers, magazines and on the TV, eg from an actual advert, 0844 417 1171 to order and customer services 0844 848 2030. PRS rules should apply to all 0843 and 0844 numbers. How is the customer to know if it is a 5ppm call or a 5p per call and will call connection charges apply? (See also Item 9)

Item 10, I refer for consideration, the prediction that Ofcom made has not happened.

I appreciate the following may not be part of the NGN consultation, nevertheless, I submit it has influence in the overall numbering and pricing.

In a letter I sent to Ofcom I asked these questions and others:-

070 Find me anywhere. I suggested this number should be treated in PRS framework as this service is in the order of 50ppm plus connection fee - no answer! I now submit this question "070 Find me anywhere" or consultation.

Cost to call 055 numbers. How do you find out the cost of a call?

The copy of the reply from Ofcom:-

055 numbers

Telephone numbers with the above digits are known as "Corporate Numbers" and I can confirm that Ofcom only issues these numbers to organisations the size of Santander. Ofcom does not set a price for calls to such numbers and they are set at the commercial judgement of the provider concerned

Will 05 numbers have mixed prices as 08 making it difficult for the customer to identify the cost of a call? How do customers find out the cost of a call even if it is not mixed prices? I now submit this question for consultation.

The call connection fee has changed from being included if the call is answered.

The Ofcom reply:-

Minimum call fee

The minimum call fee is in place to recover the cost of the initial connection of a call and its subsequent disconnection from the telephone network. These costs are incurred regardless of the length of the call. Due to competition in the telecoms sector, Ofcom believes all providers should be free to set their own charges. Although this is the situation, important safeguards remain in place for customers on low-incomes and who are receiving certain benefits. BT is required to have a social tariff scheme for these types of customers

Why add an 03 number to contact Ofcom and not an 080 number? I now submit this question for consultation.

The reply from Ofcom:-

The telephone numbers for contacting Ofcom

As you may know, many people now use a mobile phone as their preferred option for making telephone calls. In view of calls to 0800 numbers from a mobile being chargeable, Ofcom uses 020 and 0300 numbers as our points of contact. Calls to such numbers form part of the inclusive (free) call allowances that both mobile and landline providers offer their customers.

As a general observation on the above last two answers, Ofcom have made statements that indicate they try and look after the customers on Benefits and Low Income, if you are on Low Income you probably do not have a call package from your telephone provider, not all are with BT, but may still require to call Ofcom as they now oversee all the communication industries in one form or another and as Ofcom already had an 020 contact number, hence the the suggested 80 number.

I consider that the answers made to my last two questions above are contradictory.

In most cases it is not possible to call another number for the same company. If an 0843/4 is quoted, you have to pay the price that **hopefully** will be stated, and as these NGN numbers become more prevalent, because they are revenue sharing, how can this be called competition for the customer, as these numbers are not in any packages offered by the networks, but if and when, they do include some of these numbers, we may have more of a choice of telephone networks to use?

It was stated in the letter that the consultation closes on the 27 June 2012.

Yours faithfully. H.E.Payne.