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Dear David,

One Touch Switch (OTS) implementation

I would like to note our thanks for the significant progress that has been made by the OTA in bringing industry together to begin planning for the implementation of OTS following the publication of our Statement and Consultation in September. We appreciate the efforts of all telecoms providers and industry groups who have constructively participated in these planning discussions to date, given the need to deliver OTS by April 2023.

Three months on from the publication of our statement, I thought it would be useful for Ofcom to communicate our expectations for the implementation period, recognising that it is for industry to deliver OTS.

Firstly, we have asked the OTA to kick start the work and bring industry participants together, until such a time as there is an established, formal governance process able to lead the implementation and take forward decisions. We have also asked the OTA to work with industry on the more detailed aspects of the design work and to coordinate with any established groups, such as the number porting steering group, or the nascent business working group, where that is needed.

Secondly, there are a large number of interested stakeholders, of varying sizes, with different levels of expertise and resources, and with different business models. We recognise that in order to achieve the delivery of OTS by April 2023, it is helpful for those telecoms providers with particular skills and resources to work together in smaller groups. In this regard, we are encouraged by the formation of the OTS Steering Group, as an interim governance body with decision-making authority as a means of making progress. There may be other instances in which focussed sub-groups of providers will be able to drive forward technical and organisational matters on behalf of industry as a whole, subject to my third point below.

Thirdly, I would like to emphasise that there is a need for timely action and decisive leadership, although it will also be important for all involved to consider the views of stakeholders as much as possible during this process. Our expectation remains that implementation be transparent and consultative and that the outcome is an OTS process developed on a fair, reasonable and non-discriminatory basis and compliant with both the General Conditions and established competition

law principles. This means that adequate opportunity must continue to be given for stakeholders to be consulted on significant decisions and raise comments and concerns. In particular:

- Appropriately detailed minutes of meetings of the OTS Steering Group and significant technical and governance discussions should be made available as soon as possible to all interested stakeholders.
- Consideration needs to be given to the most appropriate way to circulate minutes and other documentation in a way which is accessible to the industry as a whole. This will require industry associations and/or large wholesalers to ensure their members and relevant customers are informed.
- Reasonable notice should be given of the subject of upcoming industry discussions to allow adequate time for those reviewing proposals to consider their response. This will need to be balanced against the challenging timetable and therefore incumbent on all industry interested parties to be agile and respond quickly and effectively.
- As I mentioned in my letter of 22 November 2021, any telecoms provider who has something to contribute on a constructive basis should not be excluded from participation.

Thank you also for your invitation to Ofcom to attend meetings of the OTS steering group. Ofcom has now attended the meeting on 20 December as an observer. We are open to attending further meetings and will continue to support the work of the OTA and industry stakeholders where needed.

Yours sincerely,

Cristina Luna-Esteban