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Mr

Forename:

Stephen

Surname:

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Representing:

Self

Organisation (if applicable):

What do you want Ofcom to keep confidential?:

Keep part of the response confidential

If you want part of your response kept confidential, which parts?:

Email contact address

Ofcom may publish a response summary:

Yes

I confirm that I have read the declaration:

Yes

Ofcom should only publish this response after the consultation has ended:

You may publish my response on receipt

Question 1.1: What are the implications of market change for mobile and wireless services?:

Question 1.2: How are citizens and consumers affected by developments in the mobile sector?:

Question 1.3: What are the purposes of mobile regulation, and where should its focus lie?:

Question 1.4: What is the scope for deregulation, competition and innovation in the mobile sector?:

Question 3.1: What do you think are the features of a well-functioning mobile market? What evidence do you see that those features are present in the UK market?:

Question 3.2: What measures are most appropriate to assess whether the mobile sector is performing well for citizens and consumers?:

Question 3.3: How will market dynamics change as a result of trends such as availability of new spectrum, mobile broadband and new ways of delivering voice services?:

When new spectrums open up, allow unrestricted access for all companies wishing to utilise the services. As with all mediums with an upper limit, the usage can be controlled by effective charges. By giving exclusive contracts to individual companies, such as the 3G network in the past, results in excessive charges as a monopoly position has been gained.

Take the home telephone market. The market is open for anyone to operate your telephone calls from your BT landline. As a result, costs of calls to the landline market are substantially lower today than they were 15 years ago. For some people, this is now even free. This should be equalled in the mobile market. Allow any company to operate from the masts throughout the country, allow the carriers to take their small cut for maintenance/operation and let more companies dictate the call costs. More competition = lower prices = better deal for consumers. At the moment, it feels like the mobile market is only with four big names. The landline market has hundreds of companies vying for your custom.

Question 4.1: What is your experience, as an individual consumer or an organisation that uses mobile services?:

Question 4.2: How should regulators and policy-makers respond to signs of rising consumer concern? :

Introduce harsh penalties when caught doing something wrong. No pandering about, just fine them. Where there's a fine of £1,000 for each customer overcharged for, say, international roaming, and an investigation reveals 1 million people have been unacceptably overcharged, that equals 1 billion in fines. Companies are not going to risk that, and will be more likely to "follow the law".

Question 4.3: What are the important factors to consider in striking a balance between protecting mobile consumers and enabling markets to work flexibly? Have we got this balance right in today's mobile market?:

Question 5.1: How does the use of mobile services affect our participation as citizens in society?:

Question 5.2: What factors should we take into account in thinking about access and inclusion issues in mobile markets?:

Question 5.3: What factors should we take into account in thinking about new services, and how those services may affect issues like protection of children, privacy and security?:

Question 5.4: Have you been affected by issues about coverage or 'not spots'? How has it affected you?:

Question 7.1: What do you see as the most influential trends and features of mobile and wireless markets in future?:

Question 7.2: What new policy and regulatory challenges could the trends identified in this section bring? Which policy and regulatory challenges could they address?:

Question 8.1: Should Ofcom do more to promote competition in mobile and wireless markets?:

A big problem with the mobile market is the wide disparity between prices to call different networks. If I dial any number starting with 07, I often have no clue whatsoever how much it is going to cost, trusting the various networks to "get it right".

It would be far better if the price paid from one network to another was fixed regardless of network choices. Why should a call from, say BT to O2 be any different from BT to Virgin, or a call from Virgin Mobile to O2 be any different than a call from Virgin Mobile to Orange? These disparities introduce an unfair element of competition - people's choice to phone is often influenced by these "back door price" schemes which do not appear to have any logical reasoning to customers.

Question 8.2: Ofcom's strategy in telecommunications is to promote competition at the deepest level of infrastructure that is effective and sustainable. How might this strategy be applied, given future developments in the mobile sector? Under what circumstances, if ever, would it make sense to consider access regulation for mobile platforms?:

Question 8.3: What role can competition play in ensuring that future development of the mobile internet provides an open and flexible environment for a wide range of services? Should Ofcom explore open access requirements to ensure opportunities for innovation? What role might 'net neutrality' play in the mobile sector?:

Question 8.4: What role might competition play in addressing questions about transparency of prices, services and contractual conditions offered to consumers of mobile and wireless services? What role should regulation play in addressing these questions?:

Question 8.5: What is the best way to promote content standards and ensure privacy protection for increasingly complex content and transaction services? How will privacy issues fare in a world where services are more personal and more complex?:

Have a database, like the mail marketing database, where people can put their details into a database as "not to receive *** material", where *** can be under-18 content, mobile service 'spam', and any of the other types of unwanted emails. Should a number appear on this list, any company sending out texts to the number should be fined say £100. Allow an easy to report mechanism (forward your message to ***** and we'll do the rest) which checks for your number being logged in the database, and the text message received. If it violates, then the sender is penalised. Anyone wanting to opt in to something would need to log into a .org.uk website, put their number in, select the options, then confirm by free text message that they have authority to change options from that number.

Question 8.6: Will the mobile termination rate regime need to evolve or change more fundamentally? What is the best approach to adopt?:

People should be able to join and leave at leisure. Of course, if someone gets something like a free mobile phone, they would need to return it (or pay for it), but 18 month contracts are a joke and throttle many parents and users getting a bad service. Having phones "paid for" locked to one network is also damaging to consumers, particularly if they feel they've "paid for" the phone, to get penalised just because they get bad customer care and want to move to someone else.

Allow users to cancel a contract if the service is not up to spec. If you sign up to 18 months service, you don't expect caps to be introduced a couple of months in. I had this with 3 a couple of years ago. I signed up to a 12 month contract believing I would be able to use the internet with no caps. Within 2 months, a new "cap" was introduced, and a few months later this cap was made worse. However, I couldn't cancel my contract. They had a "we can change anything we want, you can't do anything about it" clause which feels very unfair to the consumer.

Question 8.7: If competition does not reduce international roaming charges sufficiently, how should regulators respond, if at all?:

Prices should be capped in line with other forms of communications and not be dictated to by direction. For example, using a mobile to call from France to the UK should cost the same as calling from the UK to the same mobile in France. Having the prices "different" depending on which direction seems to suggest that companies are making undue profit from conveniences rather than actual call costs.

Question 8.8: How might universal service and universal access need to adapt in a world where we increasingly rely on mobile services? What role might mobile play in universal access delivery in future?:

Question 8.9: Can markets and commercial agreements address issues such as ?not spots? and emergency access?If not, what role might be played by a regulator to address these issues?:

Question 8.10: How might access for particular groups (such as the elderly and disabled users) need to evolve in future? What role can competition play in addressing these questions?:

Question 8.11: Do you have any comments regarding our proposed way forward and the objectives of the next phase of this Assessment?:

Additional comments: