



**SEEKING REFUNDS IN THE PHONE-PAID
SERVICES MARKET**

CONSUMER EXPECTATIONS AND EXPERIENCES

FINAL REPORT

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1. Executive Summary

1.1 Introduction

Consumer market research was required to assist the PSA in better understanding consumer expectations and experiences when seeking a refund in the phone-paid services market. The PSA was also interested in learning about consumer expectations and experiences of refunds when using other methods of payment, e.g., PayPal, credit card, debit card, bank transfer, etc.

The overall aim is to provide consumer insights that help the PSA to evaluate the effectiveness of current standards and, if needed, develop regulatory interventions that increase consumer confidence and trust in refunds in the phone-paid services market.

Futuresight adopted a qualitative approach to the research, supported by a larger-scale quantitative element. The qualitative element comprised a series of 52 in-depth telephone interviews among consumers with experience of phone and non-phone-paid services and seeking a refund. The quantitative element was conducted online amongst a larger sample of 653 phone-paid and non-phone users and refund seekers.

Nearly all refund seekers in the sample started the process of seeking a refund within the last two years. The great majority started it within the last six months. A good cross-section of phone-paid services and non-phone-paid payment methods was achieved.

1.2 Summary of key insights from the research

1.2.1 **There are marked differences between phone-paid and non-phone-paid users in terms of reasons for seeking a refund**

Across the sample, reasons for seeking a refund fall into three main categories: (i) an unknown and unexpected charge that is not believed to have been authorised or consented to, (ii) a known charge that is more than expected, or (iii) a known charge for goods or services that are not received or are deficient or defective in some way.

1.2.2 When a charge is known and expected, phone-paid users are broadly similar to their non-phone-paid counterparts

Phone-paid and non-phone-paid users share much in common when a charge is known and expected. Both audiences express similarly strong levels of confidence, high expectations, more know-how and certainty in the approach taken and greater success in obtaining a refund. This is particularly the case when the merchant is well-known and reputable.

1.2.3 When a charge is unknown and unexpected, phone-paid users have very different expectations, experiences and outcomes compared to their non-phone-paid counterparts

Around half of phone-paid users in the sample encountered an unknown and unexpected charge on their phone bill or PAYG credit. This sub-group of phone-paid users stands apart significantly in terms of motivations, confidence, expectations, know-how, certainty and success in obtaining a refund.

For many of these phone-paid users, the barriers to obtaining a refund are particularly high, meaning that considerable effort, determination and, in many instances, the adjudication of the PSA, is needed to succeed.

Around half of all phone-paid refund seekers eventually received a full refund. Around a fifth got no refund and gave up. This compares with 77% and 7% of non-phone-paid refund seekers, respectively.

1.2.4 Typically, expectations are lower and poorly developed among phone-paid users who have made a phone-paid purchase unknowingly

Between a third and a quarter of all phone-paid users thought claimed that they had fewer consumer rights compared to those for other payment methods. This is linked to limited or no familiarity at all with phone-paid as a payment method and considerable confusion regarding who is responsible for administering their refund. Around half of all phone-paid users considered that their telephone-service provider was responsible (without really understanding why). This compares with 13% of non-phone-paid users who, for the most part, had a better understanding of why their payment provider was responsible.

Expectations among phone-paid users who had purchased unknowingly were also lower for the timeframe required to obtain a refund. Typically, a longer timeframe was anticipated, given uncertainty as to how the charge was taken and expected difficulty in disproving that they had consented to it.

1.2.5 Phone-paid and non-phone-paid users for known purchases claim to feel more empowered and protected by comparison

In many cases, empowerment and protection is high in known contexts, because both phone-paid and non-phone paid users expect and believe that known merchants will respond proactively. They will do so because it is believed that high profile merchants have a reputation to protect and are motivated to retain customer loyalty. For non-phone-paid users in particular, confidence was particularly high given greater familiarity and experience with buyer protections, guarantees and charge-back mechanisms, plus a fall-back option to complain to their payment provider.

This contrasts strongly with phone-paid users in an unknown context, with many claiming to feel vulnerable, anxious, uncertain and, in some cases helpless, in their quest to seek a refund.

1.2.6 The process for seeking a refund for a phone-paid purchase that is unknowingly made is particularly complicated and difficult

Phone-paid users in unknown contexts had significantly greater difficulty in getting a refund than their non-phone-paid counterparts.

Unlike non-phone-paid, two main factors make the process for phone-paid more difficult. These are (i) multiple points of contact, with some phone-paid refund seekers going 'around in circles' between their telephone service provider and the merchant, and (ii) a perception of diffused responsibility, in instances where their telephone service provider does not consider themselves to be responsible and the merchant is hard to identify, unwilling to respond or unwilling to accept liability.

1.2.7 The telephone service provider is the first point of contact for nearly two-thirds of all phone-paid users

Contact with the telephone service provider in the first instance is often driven by lack of awareness of the merchant and, in some cases, difficulty in contacting the merchant, or a presumption that the telephone service provider was responsible for the charge. This was considerably more so than for non-phone-paid refund seekers.

Many phone-paid users, particularly in an unknown context, contact their telephone service provider initially to seek help and advice. This is driven strongly by a lack of understanding and familiarity with their telephone service provider as a payment provider. Some felt that their telephone service provider should do more to make the merchant easy to identify and reach.

Non-phone-paid users' first port of call is much more often with the merchant, given that the purchase is known and expectations of a proactive response are high. Compared to phone-paid, the respective roles and responsibility of the payment provider and merchant are typically much better understood.

1.2.8 Referrals were considerably higher for phone-paid compared to non-phone-paid

Over two-thirds (68%) of telephone service providers declined to handle the refund, referring refund seekers instead to the Merchant, the PSA, or elsewhere. This compared with around a third (31%) of non-phone-paid payment providers.

Of the 32% of telephone service providers who handled the refund, around half took responsibility for the refund and the other offered the refund on behalf of the merchant, as a gesture of good will.

When in contact with the merchant, just under two-thirds (63%) of phone-paid refund seekers were either referred elsewhere, or responded in a way that led them to go elsewhere; either back to their telephone service provider or to the PSA. This compared with 93% of non-phone-paid refund seekers who were dealt with directly by the Merchant and not referred.

1.2.9 Case study evidence shows that refunds for unknown phone-paid subscription services are the most difficult to obtain and resolve

The major problem within the phone-paid space is lack of awareness that consent has been given combined with a failure to 'stop' a charge for a service that, ostensibly, they have subscribed to. Commonly, phone users delete free message texts that request a stop action, believing them to be spam or a scam. When combined with a lack of diligence in checking their itemised phone-bill, the charges go unnoticed. This leads eventually to 'bill shock' and considerable uncertainty as to what to do, how to disprove consent and who to approach to seek a refund.

The pattern is very different when a phone-paid purchase is made knowingly.

This is particularly so for well-known, high-profile merchants for services like charity donation, broadcaster voting and competitions, and major music streaming services. In this scenario, phone-paid participants report similar levels of ease, simplicity and certainty in seeking a refund as their non-phone-paid counterparts.

1.2.10 Overall levels of satisfaction, trust and loyalty were significantly higher for non-phone-paid compared to phone-paid

Satisfaction among phone-paid and non-phone-paid refund seekers in known contexts is by no means perfect, indicating that there are definite problems and difficulties in seeking refunds, particularly with unknown online retailers and resellers. This said, a significantly higher proportion of non-phone-paid (74%) than phone-paid (57%) refund seekers claim to be either fairly or very satisfied with the process and the outcome.

Experiences have a definite impact on trust and loyalty. Nearly half of all phone-paid users in the sample claim that phone-payment as a method of purchasing is less trustworthy than other payment methods. Nearly eight out of ten claimed that they would either never use phone payment in the future or would only do so when purchasing from well-known and reputable merchants online.

This contrasts strongly with non-phone-paid refund seekers, with 98% of them saying that they would use a non-phone-paid method in the future for either any kind of purchase or only for well-known, reputable merchants online.

1.2.11 Perceptions of the PSA's role and remit, along with satisfaction, were mixed

Phone-paid refund seekers have better formed views of the PSA than non-phone-paid users. These views are shaped primarily by how their telephone service provider describes the PSA during the process of seeking a refund. In this, there is confusion, with views of the PSA varying as a place to get a refund, to get advice or a dispute resolution service. These misperceptions could be seen to increase expectations that the PSA would act on their behalf and lead often to greater disappointment when no refund was awarded.

Correct perceptions of the PSA as a regulator are positive in principle but can act as a barrier to contact with the PSA, given its stated position, as a regulator, that it cannot handle individual cases.

Finally, satisfaction with the PSA varied depending on their success in getting a refund. Dissatisfaction can be exacerbated by some perceived shortfalls in communication.

2. Introduction

2.1 Background

The Phone-paid Services Authority's (PSA's) vision is a healthy and innovative market in which consumers can charge content, goods and services to their phone bill with confidence.

The PSA considers that regulatory interventions that increase consumer confidence and trust in phone-paid services are central to this. In turn, in large part, this is seen to require a deeper understanding of the consumer experience of using these services and post-purchase customer care and complaint handling.

In this instance, research was required to assist the PSA in better understanding consumer expectations and experiences when seeking a refund in the phone-paid services market. The PSA was also interested in learning about consumer expectations and experiences of refunds when using other methods of payment, e.g., PayPal, credit card, debit card, bank transfer, etc.

The overall aim was to provide consumer insights that help the PSA to evaluate the effectiveness of current standards and, if needed, develop regulatory interventions that increase consumer confidence and trust in refunds in the phone-paid services market.

2.2 Research objectives

The overarching objective of this research was to provide a detailed understanding of consumer expectations and experiences of refunds in the phone-paid services market and how this compares to similar expectations and experiences in other markets. Specifically, there was a need to examine:

- Why consumers seek a refund
- How they go about seeking a refund
- Whether (and how easily) a refund request is resolved
- If resolved, how the refund request is resolved and who in the value chain facilitates this
- Levels of satisfaction with the process
- How well satisfaction conforms with expectations
- If not resolved, how the refund request failed to meet their expectations
- More generally, what factors shape their expectations of refund processes.

A detailed description of how these objectives were met may be found in Appendix 6.2 and Appendix 6.3.

2.3 Method and sampling

Futuresight adopted a qualitative approach to the research, supported by a larger-scale quantitative element. The qualitative element comprised a series of 52 in-depth telephone interviews with phone-paid and non-phone-paid users and refund seekers. The quantitative element was conducted online amongst a larger sample of 662 phone-paid and non-phone users and refund seekers.

In both stages of the research, four key target audiences were represented in both the phone-paid and non-phone-paid markets. These were as follows

Figure 1: Overall sample definition and size

Target	Definition	Stage 1: In-depth interviews	Stage 2: Online survey
Phone-paid services:	1. Refund seekers who have taken their case to the PSA	22	32
	2. Refund seekers who have not taken their case to the PSA	9	107
	3. Users who are unhappy but have not sought a refund	5	104
Non-phone-paid services:	4. Refund seekers who have used a non-phone-paid method when purchasing online	16	419
	Totals:	52	662

Nearly all consumers in the sample encountered a need to seek a refund within the last two years. The great majority encountered it within the last six months. A good cross-section of phone-paid services and non-phone-paid payment methods was achieved. See Sections 5.1 and 5.2 for a detailed breakdown.

2.4 Terms used in this report and their definitions

When reading this report, a number of key definitions should be kept in mind, as follows:

Payment provider: The body responsible for taking payment for goods and services on behalf of the merchant or marketplace / shopping site. For phone-paid, this is the participants' telephone service provider. For non-phone-paid, this was a credit card or debit card provider, bank, or an online service like PayPal.

Phone-paid: a payment service provided by telephone service providers that enables the purchase of goods and services via a phone-bill or PAYG credit.

Non-phone-paid: a generic 'catch-all' term to describe other payment services that are offered by banks, credit card companies and online payment operators like PayPal.

Phone-paid users and refund seekers: Participants in the sample who are unhappy in some way with a charge on their phone bill or pay-as-you go credit having knowingly or unknowingly purchased a product or service online. These participants, in combination, have (i) sought a refund having contacted the PSA, (ii) sought a refund without contact with the PSA (iii) decided not to seek a refund.

Non-phone-paid users and refund seekers: Participants in the sample who have been unhappy in some way with a charge, having knowingly or unknowingly purchased a product or service online using a non-phone-paid service, i.e., a debit card, credit card, bank transfer, or an online payment service like PayPal.

Merchant: The provider or reseller of the goods or services paid for by either a phone-paid or non-phone paid service method.

Marketplace / shopping site: A retail site online, like Amazon or eBay, that hosts and administers a selection of merchants on a single platform. In the report, we use the term 'merchant' generically to include marketplace / shopping site providers when there is sufficient commonality. When there isn't, we draw out and describe the differences between merchants and marketplace / shopping site providers.

Known purchases: When a purchase is made knowingly, using either phone-paid or non-phone-paid method.

Unknown purchases: When a purchase is made or claimed to be made unknowingly.

Known merchants: Retailers, marketplaces, shopping sites and resellers online that have a high profile and are well known and recognised in the mainstream.

Unknown merchants: Retailers and resellers online that have no profile and are unknown / unheard of by most or all consumers in the mainstream.

3. Main findings

3.1 Phone-paid and non-phone paid user characteristics and motivations

3.1.1 Introduction

In this section, we describe the main characteristics of phone-paid and non-phone paid users and refund seekers in terms of their attitudes, motivations, confidence and barriers to seeking a refund. We start by looking at the reasons for seeking a refund in the first place.

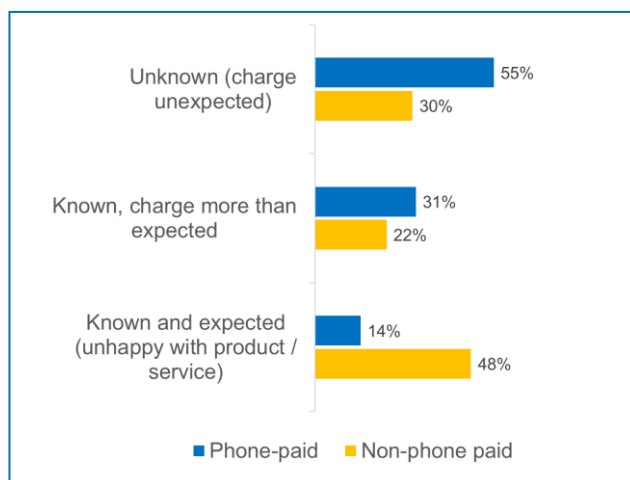
3.1.2 Reasons for seeking a refund

Broadly speaking, reasons for seeking a refund, fall into three main categories:

1. An unknown and unexpected charge that they do not believe they have authorised or consented to
2. A known charge that is more than expected
3. A known charge that is expected for goods or services that are undelivered, deficient or defective in some way, e.g., damaged in transit, the wrong size, not as originally described, not received, etc.

As Figure 2, below shows, there are marked differences between phone-paid and non-phone paid participants in terms of these reasons.

Figure 2: Reasons for seeking a refund



Bases: Total: 662; Phone-paid users: 243; Non-phone-paid users: 419

As Figure 2 indicates, the proportion of unknown charges is significantly higher for phone-paid than it is for non-phone-paid. Over half of the phone-paid sample claim that they have discovered a charge on their phone-bill (or PAYG credit) that they knew nothing about and could not explain. This compares with 30% for non-phone-paid.

Typically, with phone-paid, a charge (or series of charges) was discovered 'out of the blue' in one of three main ways: (i) when checking their phone bill, or ii) spotting that the amount normally paid per month was higher on their bank statement, or (iii) finding that their Pay-As-You-Go credit had suddenly ran out. This tended to create a negative mindset in terms of confusion, uncertainty, anxiety and a lack of confidence in knowing what to do or how best to handle it. This was not least because very few knew or understood that their telephone service provider was a payment provider.

For non-phone-paid, 70% of participants claimed to know what the charge was for and sought a refund because the charge was either higher than expected or the product or service purchase was undelivered, deficient or defective in some way. Many of the remaining 30%, who discovered an unknown charge, were initially uncertain but claimed to be calmer and more determined given a better understanding of what do to, how to resolve it, what their rights were, and a higher belief in their likely success in getting it resolved.

Overall, whether the charge was known or unknown had an impact on confidence, certainty and determination to seek a refund. We cover this in the next section.

3.1.3 Confidence and determination to seek a refund

Broadly speaking, confidence in getting a refund was lower for phone-paid than for non-phone-paid purchases. As we describe in Sections 3.3 and 3.4 (covering participants' experiences of the refund process), a much higher proportion of **unknown** charges for phone-paid was a major contributing factor. In essence, not knowing what the charge was, and not knowing who the charge had been made by, meant a higher degree of confusion and uncertainty about what to do, how to go about seeking a refund and determining who was liable.

By the same token, both phone-paid and non-phone-paid participants claimed to have higher levels of confidence for **known** charges, where it was clear what the charge was for and where the charge had come from.

Unlike phone-paid, non-phone paid participants also had higher levels of confidence for **unknown** charges. Again, as we describe in Sections 3.3 and 3.4 this relates mainly to more certainty and confidence created by marketplace / shopping site and payment providers themselves.

Differing levels of confidence in these known and unknown scenarios had an impact on motivations and levels of determination to seek a refund. Figures 3 and 4 below show similarities and differences between phone-paid and non-phone paid and indications of the relationship between confidence and determination.

Figure 3: Confidence: At the outset, how confident are you (or were you) in getting a refund?

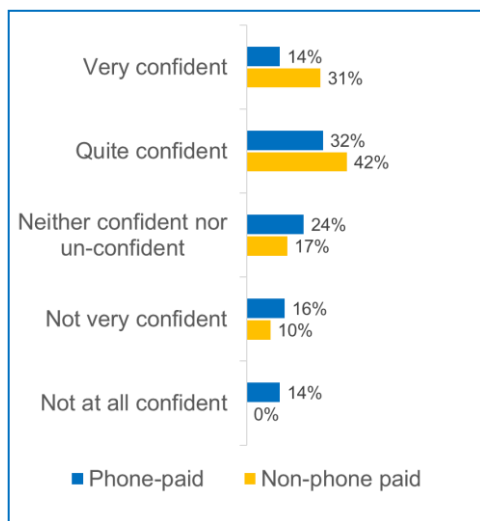
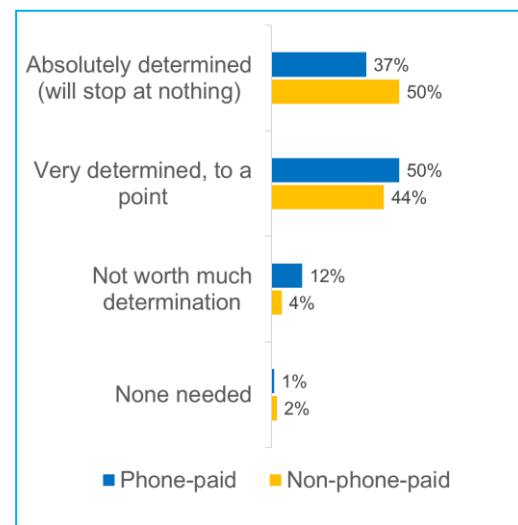


Figure 4: Determination: How determined or otherwise are you (or were you) to succeed in getting a refund?



Bases: Total: 558; Phone-paid refund seekers: 139; All Non-phone-paid refund seekers: 419

In simple terms, Figure 3 shows that non-phone-paid users were more confident. 73% claimed to be either quite confident or very confident that they would receive a refund. This compares with 46% of phone-paid participants.

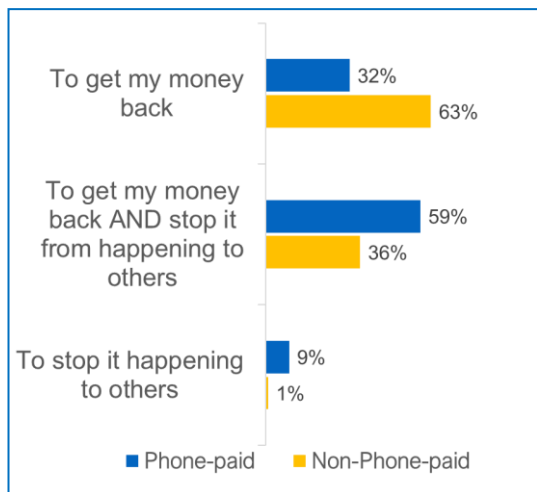
The impact this had on determination in Figure 4 is more complex. Levels of determination between phone-paid and non-phone-paid seem to be broadly similar, with the majority of all participants claiming to be absolutely or very determined¹. However, deeper investigation suggests that the underlying reasons for determination are different. In essence, many non-phone-paid participants claimed to be strongly determined because of greater confidence and certainty in getting a refund. By contrast, many phone-paid participants claimed to be strongly determined because of the perceived 'injustice' of being charged without their knowledge or consent.

¹ The difference between phone-paid and non-phone-paid in terms of absolute determination is actually statistically significant, i.e., non-phone-paid participants were significantly more strongly determined than their phone-paid counterparts.

3.1.4 Underlying motivations

Differences were evident across the sample, and between phone-paid and non-phone-paid participants, in terms of underlying motivations to seek a refund. Figure 5, below, shows the overall pattern.

Figure 5: Motivations: When seeking your refund, what is MOST important to you?



Base: Total: 558; All phone-paid (139) and Non-phone-paid (419) refund seekers

In the above, it can be seen that a very strong proportion (68%) of phone-paid users were driven by ‘principle’, i.e., to seek a refund in order to stop it from happening to others, given a belief that the charge was ‘wrong’ in some sense. This compared with 40% of non-phone-paid users.

Within this 68% (including many of the 37% in Figure 4, who were absolutely determined), were phone-paid refund seekers who eventually reported their issue to the PSA. This was partly because of great difficulty in getting a refund, and partly because it was hoped that the PSA would act to prevent the merchant from making a charge of this kind again. This sub-group of phone-paid PSA complainants had much in common in terms of attitude and motivation. They were, for the most part, driven by ‘principle’, given a strong sense of indignation, sometimes intense anger, that money ‘had been taken from their account’ without their consent. Convinced of their innocence, many were driven to seek a refund on the basis of principle, even when relatively very small amounts of money were involved, claiming that they would ‘stop at nothing’ to get their money back. This was often ‘for the greater good’ and in order to stop it from happening to others.



For others, in the phone-paid sample who did not take their case to the PSA, confidence and determination was typically lower and there was less conviction in terms of principle. Many also claimed to be time-poor and considered that the amount lost was not enough to merit the perceived effort required to locate the source and seek a refund.

The most determined of **non**-phone-paid participants were, by contrast, driven more strongly by the desire to get their money back, given greater certainty that they would succeed.

"I expected it to be a hassle, but I knew I would get the refund so it was worth it"

"I was certain I'd get my money back. I expected them to act"

3.1.5 Barriers to seeking a refund in the phone-paid market

Low confidence was particularly evident among phone-paid users who did not seek a refund. Figures 6 and 7 below show that around half of participants who decided not to seek were either not very confident or not at all confident about getting a refund.

Phone-paid users who did not seek a refund:

Figure 6: Confidence: At the outset, how confident are you (or were you) in getting a refund?

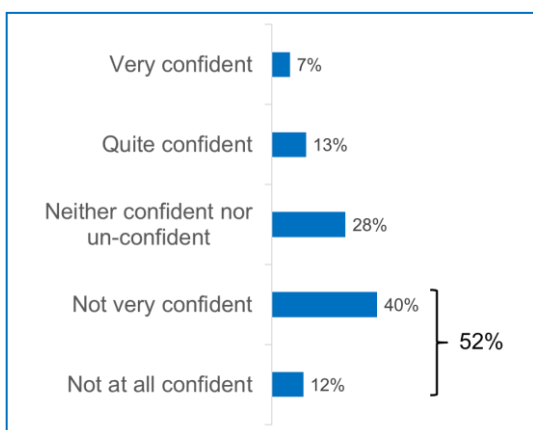
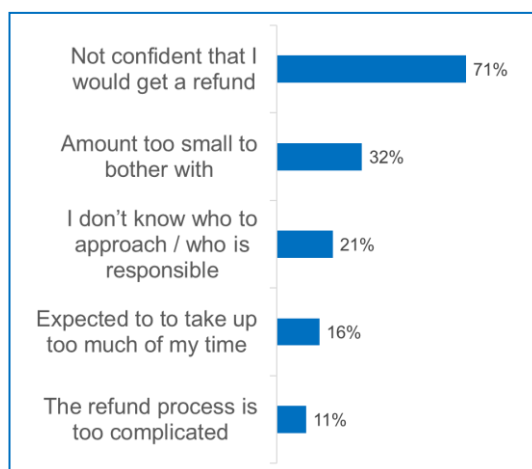


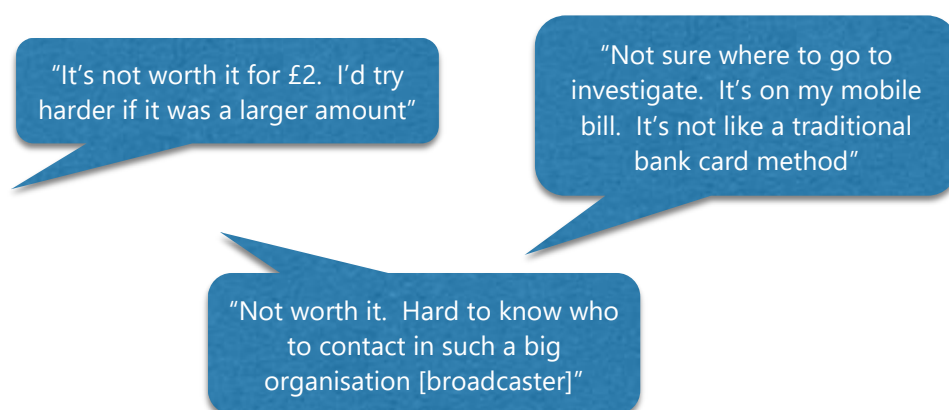
Figure 7: Barriers: Why did you choose not to seek a refund?



Base: All phone-paid users who did not seek a refund: 104

As indicated in Figure 7 above, these less confident phone-paid users lacked confidence because of perceptions and an expectation of difficulty in relation to the amount lost, i.e., that the amount lost was ‘too small to bother with’, and did not merit what was feared to be a complicated and time-consuming process.

Even in known contexts, i.e., where the merchant was easily identifiable, some felt daunted by the prospect of finding the right person to speak to, particularly in larger merchant organisations, e.g., broadcasters.



3.2 Expectations – the refund process and expected outcomes

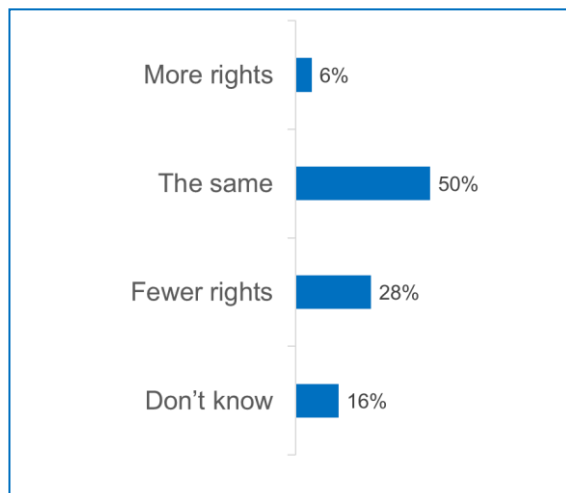
3.2.1 Introduction

In this section, we set out participants' expectations regarding the refund process itself and outcomes. In this, we explore expectations in terms of rights and entitlement, the role and responsibility of payment providers, timeframes for the refund process to be resolved and preferred methods of refunding. We start with phone-paid users' perceptions of their rights compared to other methods of payment.

3.2.2 Perceptions of consumer rights

As can be seen in Figure 8, overleaf, between a quarter and a third of all phone-paid users in the sample thought that they had fewer rights, compared to those for other payment methods.

Figure 8: Consumer rights: Are your consumer rights, when seeking refunds for phone-paid, the same or different to other payment methods?



Base: All phone-paid refund seekers: 139

In our qualitative research, it is clear that this perception of fewer rights is linked to lack of familiarity with phone-paid as a payment provider. This was particularly the case among a subset of phone-paid users in the sample who had discovered a charge (or series of charges) on their phone bill or PAYG credit that they did not believe that they had consented to. As we go on to describe in Section 3.3, this 'discovery' tended to confound expectations in terms of what to do, who to contact and how best to obtain a refund. Specifically, it changed expectations with regard to the ease, simplicity and certainty of obtaining a refund.

"I wasn't sure about how to go about it. It's not like a card payment on Amazon, where you're 100% sure you will get a refund"

"No idea who it was, or what to do, other than to check with [telephone service provider] to see what they could suggest"

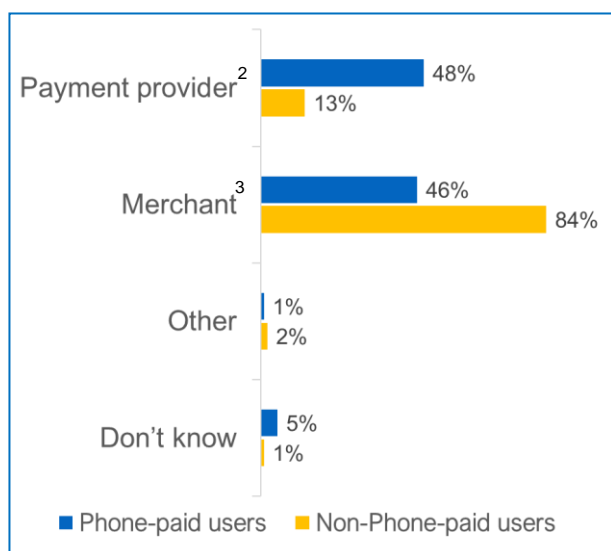
This was often in major contrast to expectations when a charge on their phone-bill was known and intended. When known, expectations were similar to those held by non-phone-paid participants when a charge for a known purchase was seen on their bank or credit card statement. In these 'known' contexts, higher expectations were evident regarding the 'rules' and regulations for making these charges and challenging their legitimacy.

Stronger expectations in this led, in many cases, to a stronger feeling of certainty and control, and the belief that the response from the merchant (or, ultimately, from their payment provider) would be responsive and proactive.

3.2.3 Perceived role and responsibility for administering their refund

Prior to questions about the experience itself, we asked participants to tell us who they felt should be responsible for administering their refund. Figure 9, below, shows significant differences between phone-paid and non-phone-paid participants in terms of expectation.

Figure 9: Responsibilities: Who should be responsible for administering your refund?



Bases: Total: 662; Phone-paid users: 243; Non-phone-paid users: 419

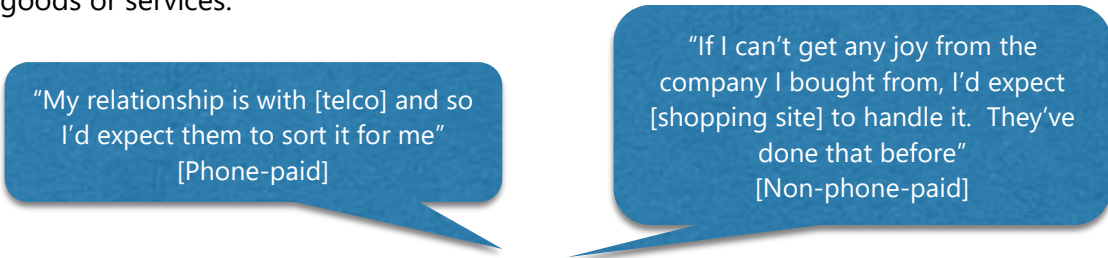
In summary, the figures above show that around half of all phone-paid users initially considered that their telephone service provider was responsible for refund administration. This compares with 13% of all non-phone-paid participants. More in-depth investigation suggests that telephone service providers were expected to take responsibility in cases where the merchant was unknown.

² For phone-paid, the payment provider was described to participants as their telephone service provider.

³ For non-phone participants, the term 'merchant' was described as either the retailer online that provided the product or service they purchased, or the marketplace / shopping site (like Amazon or eBay) that they purchased through. Of the 84% above, this broke down as 47% for the online retailer and 37% for the marketplace / shopping site.

This was either because the charge (or series of charges) was felt to have been taken without their consent, or that the merchant was not identifiable on their phone bill. Some expected their telephone service provider to take responsibility, thinking initially that the charge was some kind of technical error with their phone bill / account.

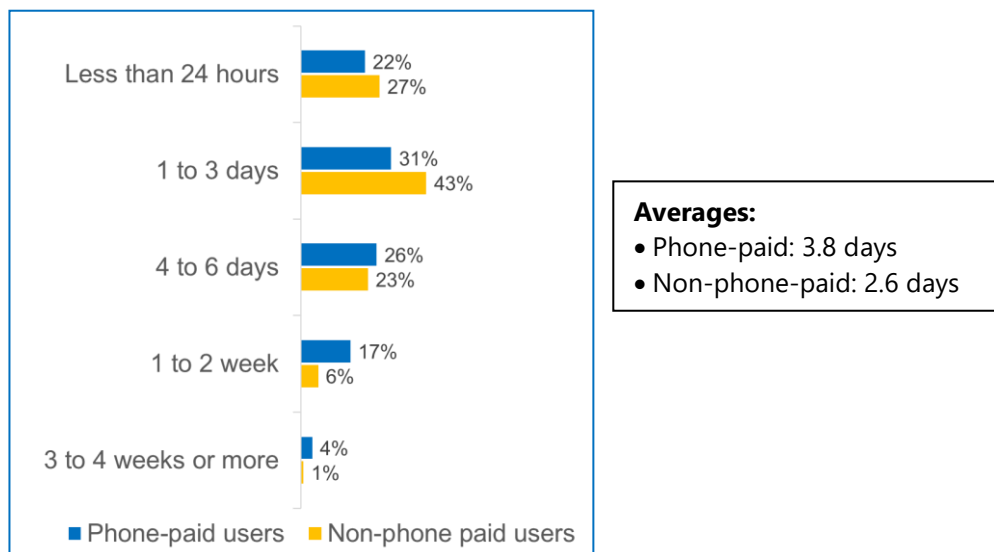
Non-Phone-paid participants expressed a much stronger expectation that the merchant was responsible, given (typically) great knowledge of the purchase and the source. In addition, many, having purchased through a marketplace or shopping site, felt more certain about responsibilities given awareness (and prior experience) that the market-place or shopping site would act on their behalf. This was also the case in situations where non-phone-paid participants expected to have difficulty identifying or contacting the merchant that provided the goods or services.



3.2.4 Expected timeframes for the refund process to be resolved

In addition to responsibility, we asked participants to state what they expected in terms of the timeframe for a refund to be processed, once agreed. Figure 10, below, shows the overall pattern.

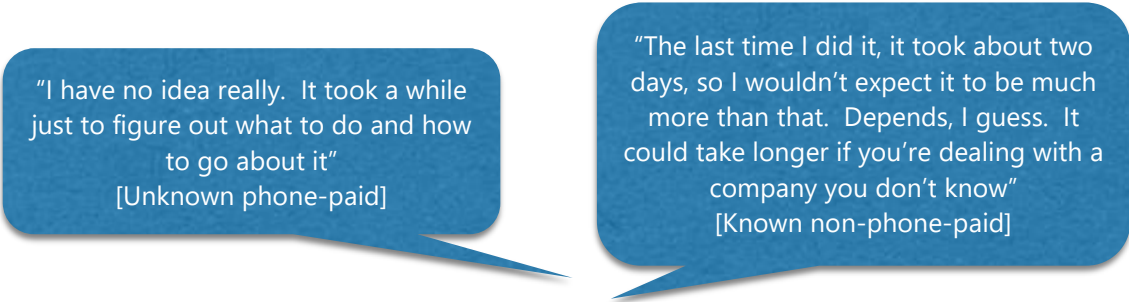
Figure 10: Expected timeframe: What is a reasonable time for a refund to be processed (once agreed)?



Bases: Total: 662; Phone-paid users: 243; Non-phone-paid users: 419

Broadly, phone-paid users were more strongly inclined to expect a longer timeframe than their non-phone-paid counterparts. The approximate averages were 3.8 days for phone-paid and 2.6 days for non-phone-paid. Also, the range across the phone-paid sample was wider, with a greater number of phone-paid participants expecting the refund to take up to 3 or 4 weeks, or more.

Deeper investigation suggests that expectations of a more protracted period of time for 'unknown' phone-paid were the result of low confidence and less certainty about rights and entitlements, together with expected difficulties with the refund seeking process itself. In addition, timeframes for 'unknown' phone-paid tended to be 'guessed', given little or no prior experience or familiarity with seeking refunds in the phone-paid space.



"I have no idea really. It took a while just to figure out what to do and how to go about it"
[Unknown phone-paid]

"The last time I did it, it took about two days, so I wouldn't expect it to be much more than that. Depends, I guess. It could take longer if you're dealing with a company you don't know"
[Known non-phone-paid]

For 'known' phone-paid, i.e., when participants were aware of having made a purchase with a known and identifiable merchant, expectations tended to be more closely in line with their non-phone-paid counterparts.

3.2.5 Expected methods of refunding

Prior to questions about their actual experience, participants were also asked about their expectations regarding receipt of their refund. We asked for this in principle and then prompted them with a range of possible alternatives, as shown in Figures 11 and 12 overleaf.

Figure 11: General preference: In principle, which of the following best applies to you in terms of how you receive a refund?

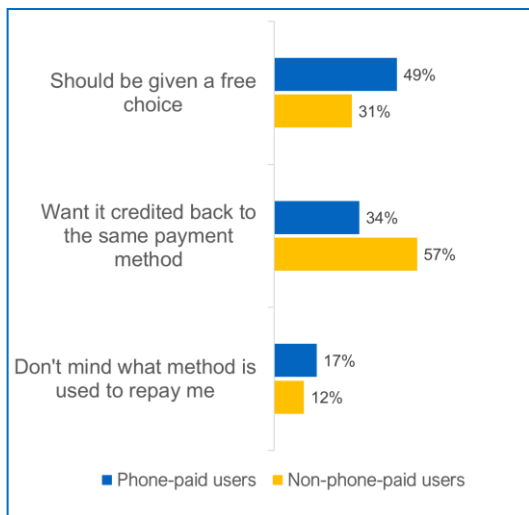
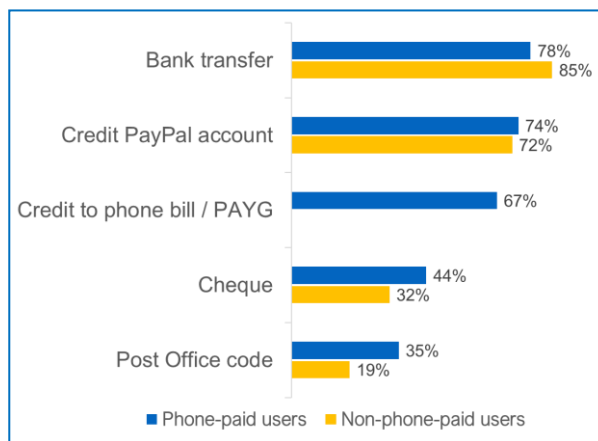


Figure 12: Specific methods preferred: How happy or unhappy would you be to receive your refund in each of the following ways?



Note: %'s are for 'Very happy + 'Fairly happy'

Bases: Total: 662; Phone-paid users: 243; Non-phone-paid users: 419

As can be seen in Figure 11, above, around half of phone-paid users in the study stated a preference for a free choice of repayment method. This compared with just under a third of non-phone-paid users.

Figure 12 shows that, for both phone-paid and non-phone-paid users, the most preferred method of repayment, when asked, was a bank transfer, closely followed by a back charge to their PayPal account. This said, nearly 7 out of 10 phone-paid users claimed to be happy to receive a refund via their phone bill or credit to their PAYG account.

At a prompted level, repayment via cheque and particularly a redemption code, exchangeable for cash at a Post-office, was least preferred.

Deeper investigation indicated that expectations and preferences tended to be a function of convenience and trust. Among phone-paid participants in particular, a preference was stated for a bank transfer because it meant that they would receive the money more quickly. Repayment via a credit to their phone bill could mean having to wait up to a month before receiving the money (given monthly billing). Alternatively, some phone-paid participants wanted the refund to go back to their phone bill because this precluded the need to have to provide any account information to the merchant.

This was given concerns that the account information may be used to take money from them, rather than return it.

"Straight into my bank account. That's what I want"

"I'd rather it was put back into my phone account. I don't want to have to share any details with them. They took my money and so can't be trusted"

A similar concern with lack of trust was evident for redemption at a Post Office. To get the code, many phone-paid refund seekers were concerned that they would need to provide personal details to the merchant which could then be mis-used in some way. More generally, when the transaction was unknown, a common worry was that any kind of contact could lead to a perceived additional scam of some kind.

3.2.6 Summary of the main differences and similarities between phone-paid and non-phone in terms of expectations

In summary, the pattern of responses, for in-going expectations, shows a marked difference between 'known' and 'unknown' transactions across phone-paid and non-phone-paid users.

Broadly speaking, the research identifies a sizable sub-set of phone-paid users who have markedly different expectations, given that charges incurred on their phone bill or PAYG credit were initially unknown to them.

In marked contrast, some phone-paid and most non-phone-paid users' expectations were more strongly aligned given that charges were known and expected.

The evidence, overall, suggests that known payments that demanded a refund triggered a more confident response. This was created by awareness of the circumstances, the merchant involved and, from this, a more certain and better understanding of rights, responsibilities and the process they needed to go through.

Broadly, both phone-paid and non-phone-paid participants, in a known context, claimed to feel more empowered and protected, feeling that the merchant involved had a reputation to protect. Even if there was some difficulty in contacting them, or effort needed to get an immediate response, there was greater certainty about the end-result. For non-phone-paid users in particular, confidence was particularly well-developed, given strong awareness of buyer protections, guarantees and chargeback mechanisms set up by marketplace / shopping sites and payment providers.

Many mentions were made of guarantees offered by the likes of Amazon and eBay, plus chargeback options from online payment services like PayPal. For eBay, the actual term 'buyer guarantee' was used and referred to.

By contrast, phone-paid users, in an unknown context, often reacted in a very different way, with many claiming to be uncertain, confused, and often feeling vulnerable, with little if any experience of what to do or where to go, or how best to disprove that they had consented to the charge.

Some were so uncertain that they had initially come to the view that they were at fault because they had not detected the problem quickly enough, further delaying the time before they decided to take action. As we go on to describe in Section 3.3, the time taken to discover a charge (or series of charges) on a phone bill could be lengthy. The primary factors in this were that (i) the phone bill amount was typically checked as a total on their bank statement (rather than checking itemised amounts on the phone bill itself and (ii) amounts charged per month could be relatively very small (and easily missed).

3.3 Experiences – refund seeking journeys

3.3.1 Introduction

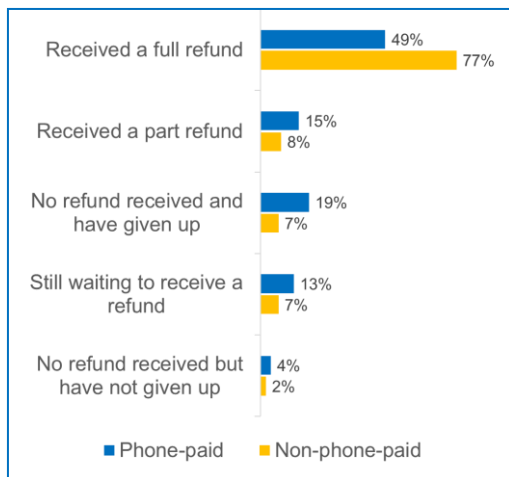
In this section, we set out the key stages of the main journeys that participants have experienced. These journeys fall into two main categories, i.e., 'unknown' and 'known', with the former being more strongly associated with phone-paid. In both categories, we explore who participants contacted first, how easy or difficult it was to get through and resolve the problem and, if referred elsewhere, what happened after that. We start more generally with a description of the outcomes of these journeys, i.e., refund success and how refunds were received.

3.3.2 Success in getting a refund, refund source, and method of refunding

The evidence suggests strongly that phone-paid users had significantly greater difficulty in getting a refund than their non-phone-paid counterparts. This is shown in Figure 13 below. As can be seen, only around half of phone-paid refund seekers received a full refund. This compares with nearly 8 out of 10 non-phone-paid refund seekers. The great majority of phone-paid refund seekers who did not get a refund were unknown phone-paid purchasers, i.e., those who did not knowingly authorise or a consent to a charge (or series of charges) on their phone bill). In known contexts, refund success was much higher.

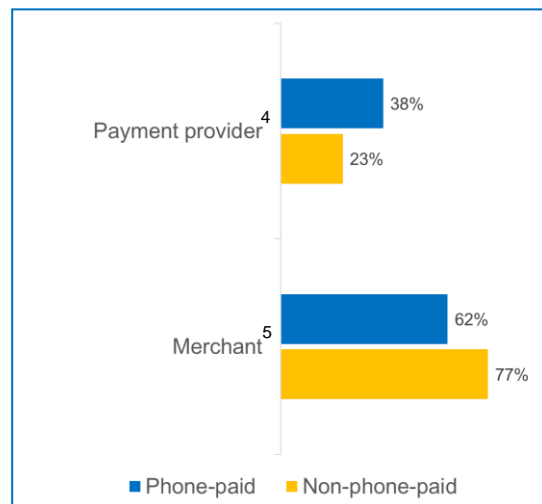
In addition, unknown phone-paid refund seekers were more likely to receive a part refund, or be inclined to give up, or were still waiting to receive a refund. Nearly a fifth of all phone-paid refund seekers claimed that they had now given up altogether.

Figure 13: Refund success: Right now, which one of the following statements best applies?



Bases: Total: 558; Phone-paid (139) and Non-phone-paid (419) refund seekers

Figure 14: Refund source: Who have you received a refund from?



Bases: Total: 490; Phone-paid (104) and Non-phone-paid (386) refund seekers

Figure 14, above, shows that around 4 out of 10 phone-paid refund seekers who received a full or part refund, did so from their telephone service provider.

Deeper investigation suggested that phone-paid refund seekers received a part-refund from their telephone service provider as a 'gesture of goodwill'. Typically, this was after refund seekers had failed to reach the merchant that charged them or, having reached them, convince the merchant that they had not consented to the charge.

⁴ In Figure 14, for phone-paid, the payment provider was described to participants as their telephone service provider.

⁵ Again, in Figure 14, for non-phone-paid, the 77% figure for 'Merchant' includes marketplace / shopping sites. The exact break down is end-retailer merchant: 43% and marketplace/ shopping sites: 34%.

In other instances, phone-paid refund seekers were either refused a refund or awarded only a part-refund by the merchant because they had not reported the charge quickly enough, or did not put a stop to the subscription via a text request. In Section 3.4 we describe case study examples of this in more detail, demonstrating participants' claimed difficulties in stopping a subscription charge that they (i) were not aware of, and (ii) were not aware of having consented to.

One final point is that around a fifth of phone-paid refund seekers who received a full refund, only did so because of the PSA's adjudication or only after the 'threat' of reporting their issue to the PSA. Others who received a full refund did so from 'known' merchants, where the charge was known and had been consented to. In a small number of cases, phone-paid refund seekers got an immediate refund from an 'unknown' merchant (once contacted) leading some to suppose that the merchant 'knew' that they had taken the money fraudulently and were relying on people not to bother claiming for it.

"I only got a part refund because they said I didn't report it quickly enough"

"I got a part refund from [telephone service provider], as a good will gesture, but only after a lot of complaining"

"How could I stop something that I knew nothing about? It's very wrong"

"I got a refund from [merchant] straightaway. I suspect that they knew they were in the wrong. Makes me wonder how much they get away with because people don't bother to claim"

"Got a refund as I expected to from [known merchant]. All very simple really"

3.3.3 Number of points of contact and timeframe

The evidence from our larger-scale survey and in-depth investigation suggests strongly that the process for refund-seeking in the phone-paid space is significantly more difficult than that for non-phone-paid methods.

Difficulties were particularly evident for 'unknown' transactions. Several phone-paid-refund seekers complained that the process was 'complicated' and time-consuming, given what many considered to be two main factors:

1. Multiple points of contact, with some phone-paid refund seekers finding themselves going 'around in circles' between their telephone service provider and the merchant
2. Diffused responsibility, in instances where their telephone service provider did not consider themselves to be responsible and the merchant was hard to identify, did not respond or refused to accept liability.

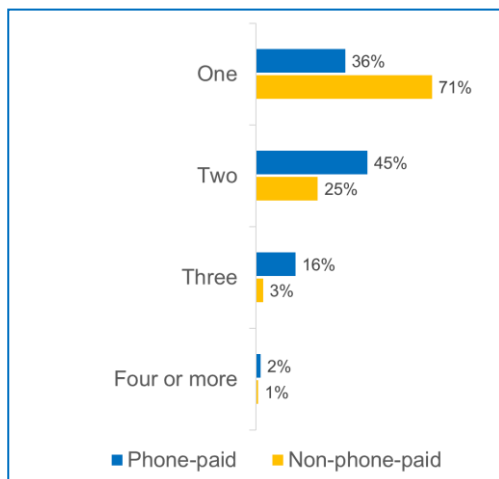
For these refund seekers, the experience was often described as frustrating and sometimes very stressful given no well-established or well-understood refund process and a feeling, instead, of insecurity and lack of control.

This contrasted strongly in known contexts, for both phone-paid and non-phone paid where, for the most part, the process of refund seeking was more often described as simpler, easier and less time-consuming by comparison.

Figures 15 and 16, below, show the number of organisations dealt with and the total number of contacts made, across all organisations dealt with.

Figure 15: Number of organisations:

How many different organisations have you dealt with during the refund process?



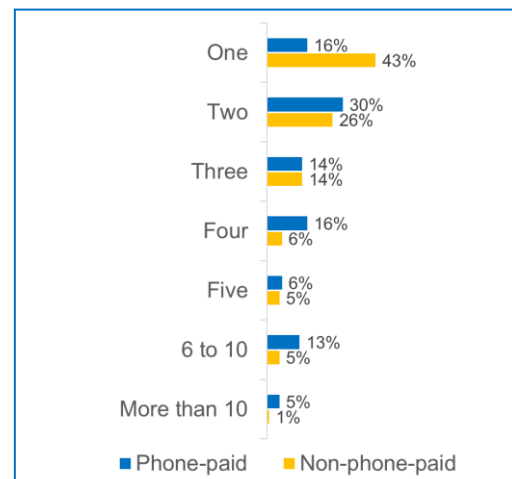
Bases: Total: 490; Phone-paid (104) and Non-phone-paid (386) refund seekers who obtained a refund

Averages:

Phone-paid: 1.8 organisations
Non-phone-paid: 1.3 organisations

Figure 16: Total number of contacts:

What is the total number of times you have contacted all organisations during the process?



Averages:

Phone-paid: 4.2 contacts
Non-phone-paid: 2.5 contacts

As can be seen in these Figures (above), instances of multiple contacts are significantly greater for phone-paid than for non-phone-paid. For phone-paid, the approximate average number of organisations contacted was 1.8 and the total number of contacts was 4.2. This compares with 1.3 and 2.5 respectively for non-phone-paid. Nearly a fifth of phone-paid refund seekers claimed to have made 6 or more contacts, with some claiming to have made more than 10 contacts.

These differences are largely reflected in the timeframes for resolving the request for a refund. Figures 17 and 18, below, show the overall timeframe for the process, and levels of satisfaction with this.

Figure 17: Overall time frame:

Roughly speaking, how long has the process taken (so far)?

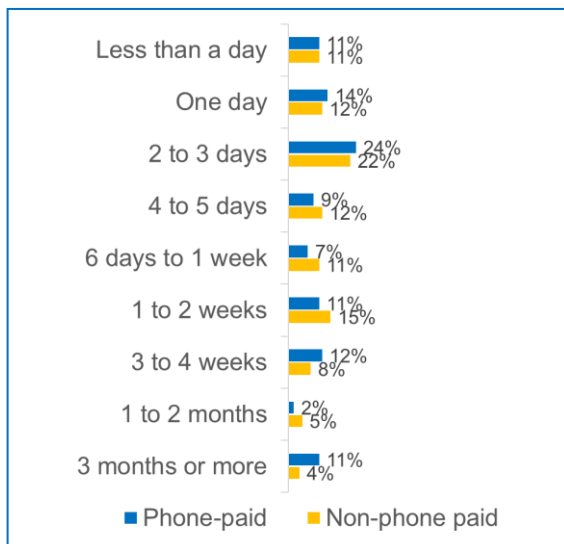
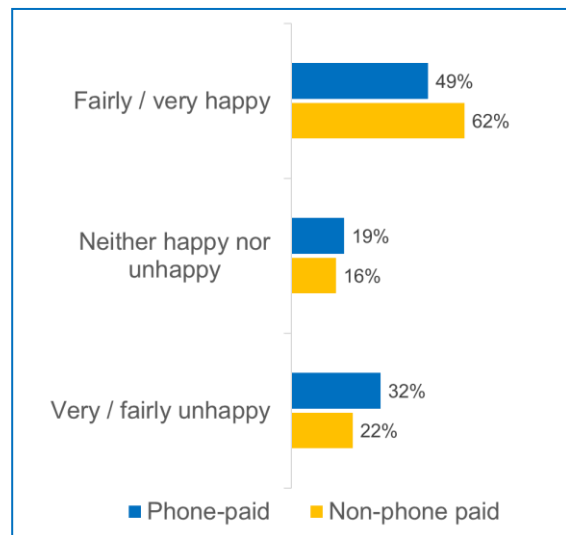


Figure 18: Satisfaction with timeframe:

How happy or unhappy are you with the length of time it has taken?



Bases: Total: 558; Phone-paid (139) and Non-phone-paid (419) refund seekers

Averages:

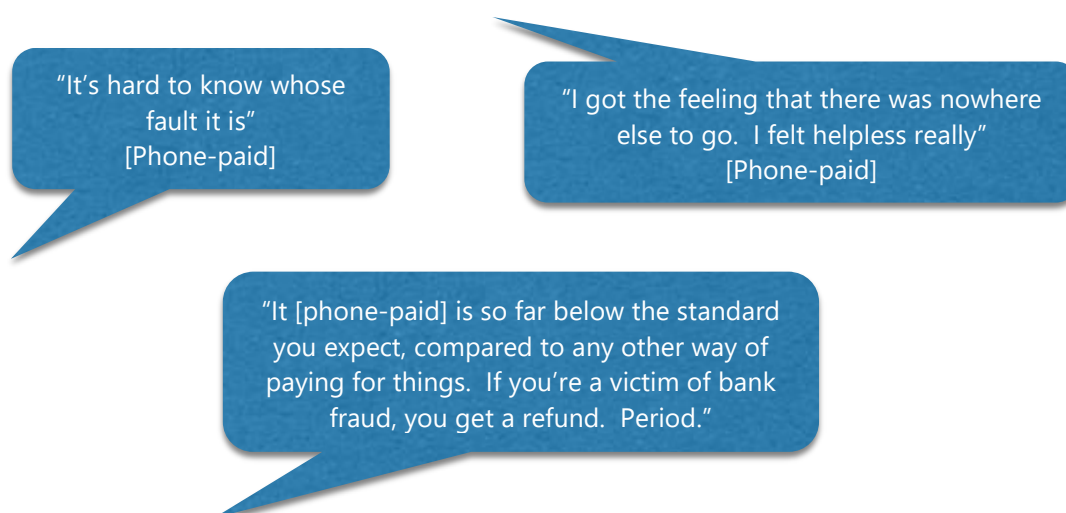
Phone-paid: 19 days
Non-phone-paid: 10.2 days

As can be seen, timeframes for phone-paid were typically longer than those for non-phone-paid. On average, the approximate time taken to resolve a phone-paid request was 19 days. For non-phone-paid, it was 10.2 days. In Figure 18, it can be seen that a sizable subset of phone-paid refund seekers (32%) were either fairly or very unhappy with this. This compares with around a fifth of non-phone-paid refund seekers.

Overall, the process for **non**-phone-paid and known phone-paid was not by any means trouble-free. Many non-phone-paid and some known phone-paid participants reported difficulties in getting their refund agreed, over sometimes quite lengthy time-frames. This was though, in more cases, a function of difficulties that were commonly found to be the case when dealing with organisations and call-centres in particular. These difficulties, typically, were mentioned as call-queuing, getting through to speak to the right person, difficulties with communication and understanding when speaking to offshore call centres, the use of 'scripted responses', having to describe the problem from scratch when calling again, and so forth.

These were difficulties encountered by many participants across the sample. Deeper investigation however, revealed a critical difference between phone-paid (particularly 'unknown') and non-phone-paid.

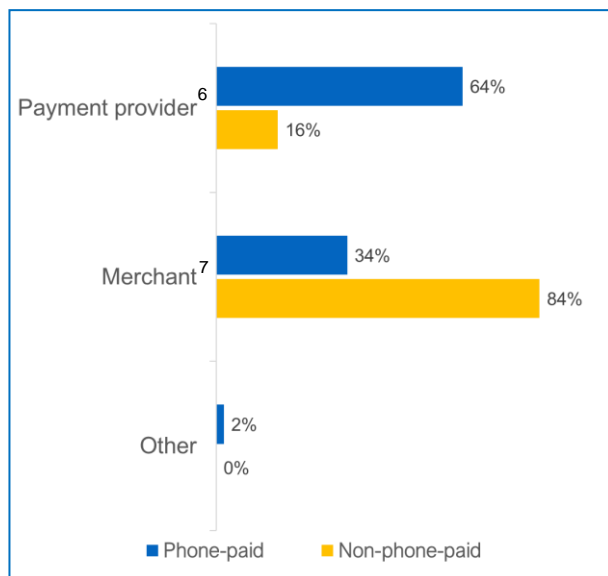
This critical difference related to the need for repeated contact and referral as a result of (i) telephone service providers stating that they were unwilling to take responsibility, and (ii) merchants either being difficult to identify and reach or being unresponsive when reached. Instances of these two factors in the non-phone-paid space were far fewer.



3.3.4 First point of contact and response

Refund seekers' first point of contact provides a strong indication of unique differences between phone-paid and non-phone-paid in terms of the journey and approach taken. Figure 19, below, shows this difference in terms of contact with the payment provider.

Figure 19: First point of contact: When seeking a refund, who did you **first** contact?



Bases: Total: 558; Phone-paid (139) and Non-phone-paid (419) refund seekers

As can be seen, for non-phone-paid purchases, the merchant (or marketplace / shopping site) was contacted in the first instance by nearly 9 out of 10 refund seekers. This compares with around a third of phone-paid refund seekers. This difference indicates a significantly greater incidence of known purchases in the non-phone-paid sample, i.e., that non-phone-paid refund seekers knew who to contact and knew also that the merchant was responsible for administering a refund.

For phone-paid refund seekers, deeper investigation revealed that contacting their telephone service provider in the first instance was driven by lack of awareness of the merchant and, in some instances, difficulty in contacting the merchant in the first instance.

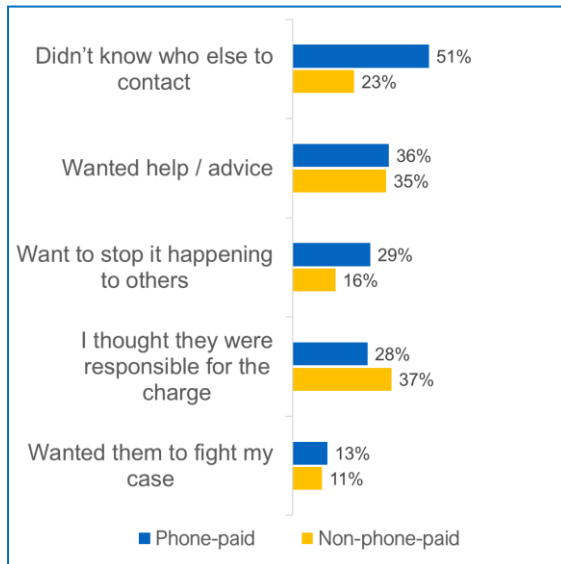
⁶ For phone-paid, the payment provider was described to participants as their telephone service provider.

⁷ For non-phone-paid, the 84% figure for 'Merchant' includes marketplace / shopping sites. The exact break down is end-retailer merchant: 51% and marketplace/ shopping sites: 33%.

More specifically, Figures 20 and 21, below, set out the reasons why refund seekers contacted the organisation that they did in the first instance.

Figure 20: Payment provider first:

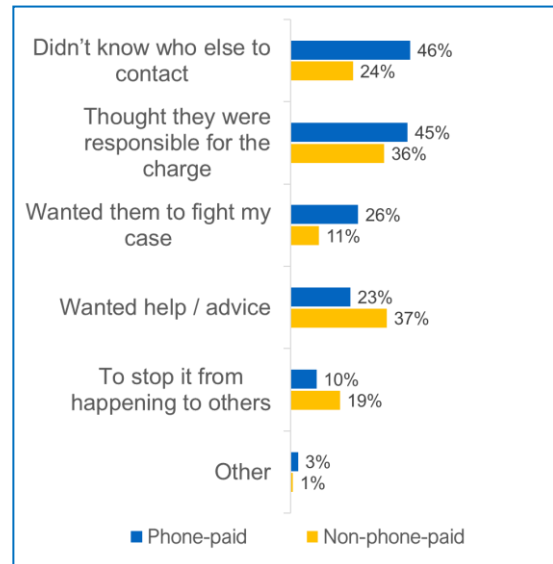
Why did you contact this organisation first?



Bases: Total: 152; Phone-paid (87) and Non-phone-paid (65) refund seekers who contacted their payment provider first

Figure 21: Merchant first: Why did you contact this organisation first?

Why did you contact this organisation first?



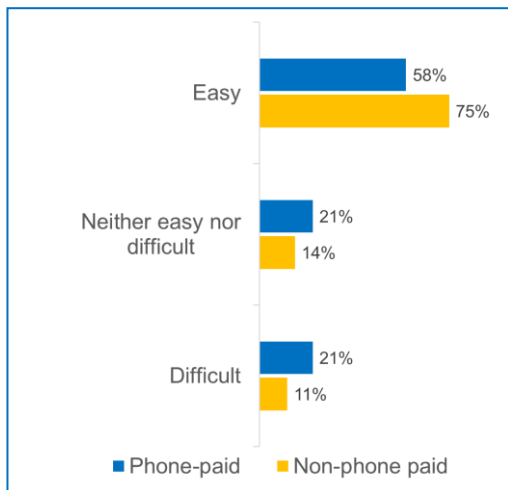
Bases: Total: 184; Phone-paid (46) and Non-phone-paid (138) refund seekers who contacted the merchant first

As can be seen, around half of all phone-paid refund seekers who contacted their telephone service provider first did so because they did not know who else to contact. This compares with around a fifth of non-phone-paid refund seekers. A similar pattern is evident for refund seekers who contacted the merchant in the first instance.

Deeper investigation indicates that some phone-paid refund seekers contacted their telephone service provider in the first instance because they could not easily reach or make contact with the merchant.

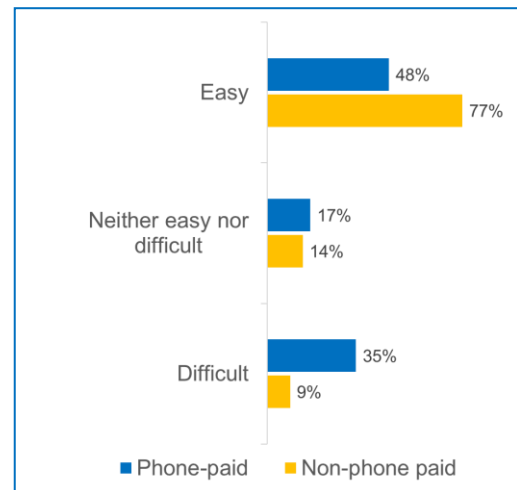
This is confirmed in Figure 23, below, i.e., just over a third of phone-paid refund seekers claimed that it was difficult to contact the merchant. This is significantly greater than the 9% of non-phone-paid refund seekers who claimed to have difficulty contacting the merchant.

Figure 22: Ease of contact with payment provider: How easy or difficult was it to get through to the right person to speak to?



Bases: Total: 152; Phone-paid (87) and Non-phone-paid (65) refund seekers who contacted their payment provider first

Figure 23: Ease of contact with merchant: How easy or difficult was it to get through to the right person to speak to?



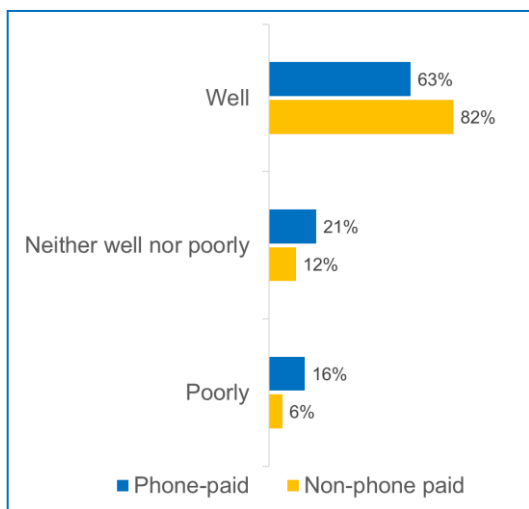
Bases: Total: 184; Phone-paid (46) and Non-phone-paid (138) refund seekers who contacted the merchant first

Overall, the evidence suggests that some phone-paid merchants are more difficult to reach than non-phone-paid merchants. In some instances, refund seekers complained that hard-to-reach merchants were found (eventually) to operate under different names, did not publish a contact number, did not answer the phone when a number was published, or did not respond to email.

A similar pattern is evident when merchants were reached. Figure 25, below, shows that around a third of phone-paid merchants responded poorly. This compares with 6% for non-phone-paid merchants.

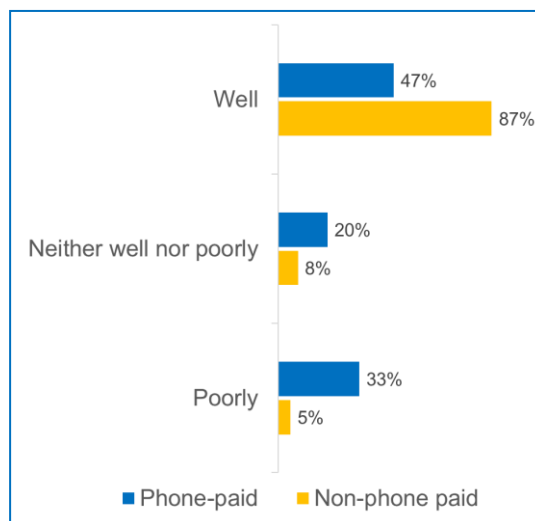
Figure 24: Payment provider response:

How well or poorly did this first organisation respond to your refund request?



Bases: Total: 152; Phone-paid (87) and Non-phone-paid (65) refund seekers who contacted their payment provider first

Figure 25: Merchant response: How well or poorly did this first organisation respond to your refund request?



Bases: Total: 184; Phone-paid (46) and Non-phone-paid (138) refund seekers who contacted the merchant first

Looking in more depth at why participants described the response as poor, it was clear that some phone-paid merchants refused to accept the refund claim, insisting that the refund seeker had agreed or consented to the purchase. In some cases, a merchant would send a standardised letter that included a statement of transactions but no proof that the refund seeker had consented to the purchase.

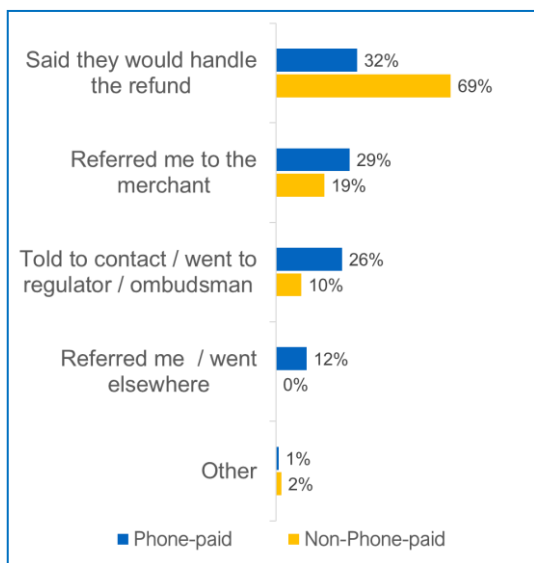
Those merchants who responded well tended to be known, for both phone-paid and non-phone-paid. Typically, these were for purchases and services related to charity donation, TV broadcasting competitions and voting, and high-profile music or film streaming services.

“No problem. It took a wait to get through, but once I spoke to them, they gave me a refund straight away and didn’t question it at all”
[Known phone-paid]

“Very difficult. She was quite rude and you could tell she was fed up with the calls. I got a flat refusal telling me that I’d signed up to the service and had to pay. I did no such thing”
[Unknown phone-paid]

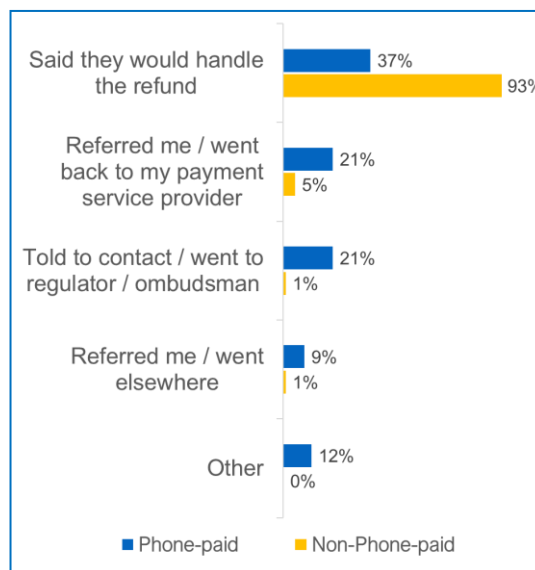
Figures 26 and 27, below, show the range of responses that refund-seekers described when asked what happened when they got through to either their payment provider or the merchant.

Figure 26: Payment provider response: What was the main thing you did or were told by this first organisation?



Bases: Total: 152; Phone-paid (87) and Non-phone-paid (65) refund seekers who contacted their payment provider first

Figure 27: Merchant response: What was the main thing you did or were told by this first organisation?



Bases: Total: 184; Phone-paid (46) and Non-phone-paid (138) refund seekers who contacted the merchant first

As can be seen in the above, for phone-paid, just over two-thirds (68%) of refund seekers claimed that their telephone service provider declined to handle the refund, referring them instead to the merchant, the PSA, or elsewhere. This compared with around a third (31%) of non-phone-paid payment providers.

Of the 32% of telephone service providers who handled the refund, refund seekers stated that around half took responsibility for the refund and the other offered the refund on behalf of the merchant as a gesture of good will.

When in contact with the merchant, just under two-thirds (63%) of phone-paid refund seekers were either referred elsewhere, or responded in a way that led them to go elsewhere; either back to their telephone service provider or to the PSA. This compared with over nine out of ten (93%) of refund seekers who were dealt with directly by the merchant.

Further investigation into refund seekers' experience and perception of telephone service providers suggests the following:

- Most phone-paid refund seekers did not, ultimately, regard their telephone service provider to be responsible for the refund. This was particularly the case for known phone-paid transactions.
- Some refund seekers, instead, considered that their telephone service provider may not be responsible, but should take responsibility in cases where it was difficult or impossible for the refund seeker to contact or get a response from the merchant, i.e., for unknown phone-paid transactions.
- A few phone-paid refund seekers expressed stronger views that their telephone service provider was seeking to 'absolve' themselves of the responsibility whilst knowing that the merchant had acted unethically.

"I didn't feel that [telephone service provider] was passing the buck. They did what they could do and put them in touch with the PSA. There was nothing more they could do"
[Phone-paid]

"[Telephone service provider] should have alerted me, and acted to stop it"
[Phone-paid]

"They [telephone service provider] know it's happening and are turning a blind eye to it. The person I spoke to said that people were getting caught out. I'd imagine there is nothing I can do about it legally. It's a moral consideration"
[Phone-paid]

This appears to be in major contrast to non-phone-paid payment providers who were much more often reported to take responsibility in circumstances where the refund seeker could not reach or get a response from the merchant or to investigate the difficulty on the refund seeker's behalf.

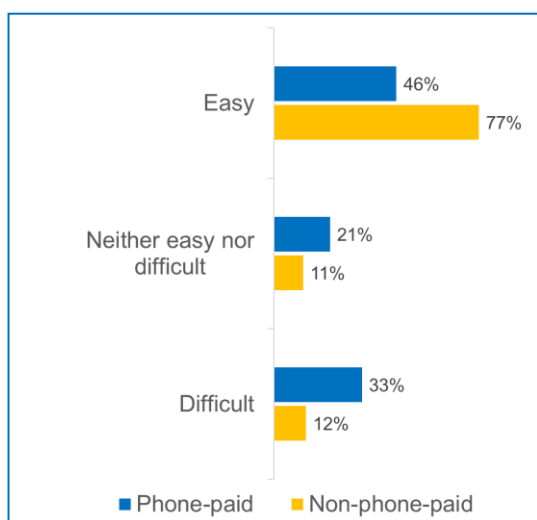
"I've had dealings with [payment provider] before. It's good because they guarantee that you will get a refund"
[Non-phone-paid]

"[Payment provider] just dealt with it then and there. They didn't need to because [merchant] was at fault, but they took action on my behalf"
[Non-phone-paid]

3.3.5 Referral to merchants and their response

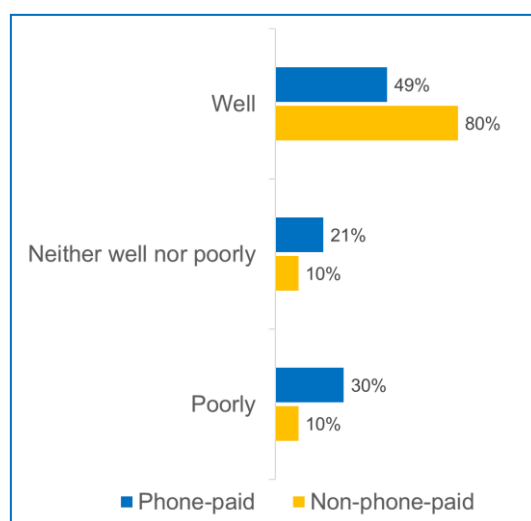
In this section, we look at the response of merchants when refund seekers were referred to them by payment providers. As can be seen in Figures 28 and 29 below, the pattern of response for phone-paid and non-phone paid referrals is largely similar to that for non-referrals.

Figure 28: Ease of contact with merchant: When referred, how easy or difficult was it to get through to the right person to speak to?



Bases: Total: 122; All phone-paid (61) and non-phone-paid (61) refund seekers who were referred to the merchant by their payment provider

Figure 29: Response of the merchant: When referred, how well or poorly did this organisation respond to your refund request?



Bases: Total: 122; All phone-paid (61) and non-phone-paid (61) refund seekers who were referred to the merchant by their payment provider

As can be seen, around a third of phone-paid refund seekers had difficulty contacting the merchant after referral and, when contacted, claimed that the merchant’s response was poor. This compares with around one in ten non-phone-paid refund seekers. Around eight out of ten non-phone-paid seekers claimed that the merchant was easy to contact and responded well. This compared with around half of phone-paid referrals, many of which originated from unknown phone-paid transactions.

These phone-paid referrals to non-responding merchants often led to repeated contact with their telephone service provider and, ultimately for some, to the PSA.

3.4 Case studies in the phone-paid and non-phone-paid markets

3.4.1 Introduction

In this section we describe a number of key case studies that typify the main themes identified in this research. For phone-paid, we describe two main types of journey, i.e., one that originated from an unknown transaction from an unknown merchant and a second that originated from a known transaction from a known merchant.

For non-phone-paid, we describe two journeys: one for a known transaction with a known merchant and the other with a known transaction for an unknown merchant.

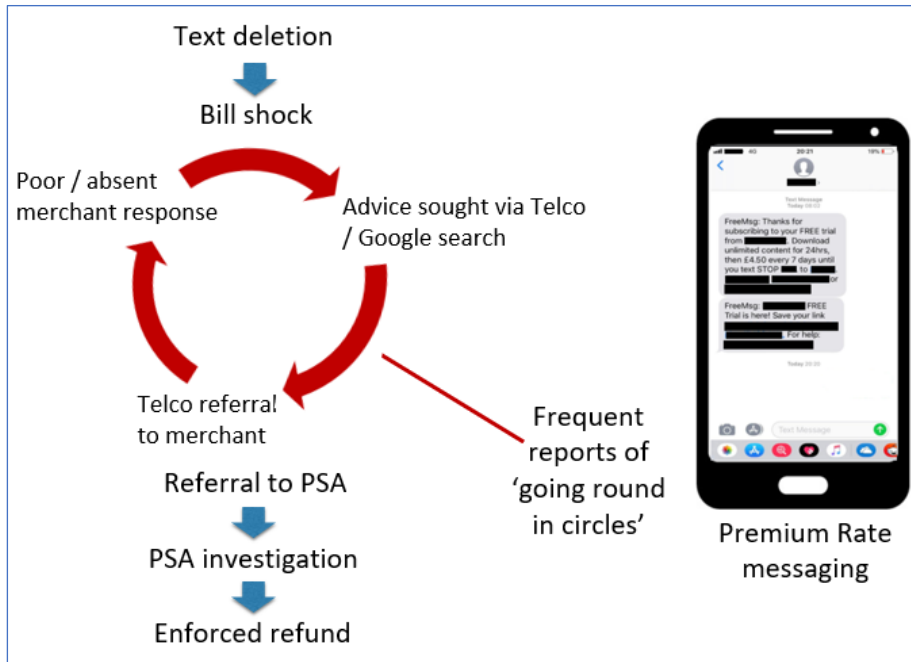
3.4.2 Phone-paid: unknown charges from unknown merchants

A common instance in this research, of unknown charges from unknown merchants, related to phone-paid subscription services. Typically, participants were unaware⁸ that they had received a text message saying that they have subscribed to a service and will be charged £x per month unless they reply with 'STOP'. Unless diligent in checking their phone bill, a charge or series of charges go unnoticed until eventually they are spotted.


In some instances, in this study, participants did not spot the charges until the end of their contract, at which point renewal or a switch to another telephone service provider prompted the question as to whether they wished to continue with the subscription. This could be seen to lead to considerable uncertainty as to what to do and how best to seek a refund, often going around in circles.

⁸ We know, from previous research, that commonly people will delete the message believing it to be spam or the fear that replying risks confirming their personal details and some sense will mean that they have consented to the service.

The journey 'archetype' in this scenario is summarised as follows:



From our in-depth interviews, a typical case study is as follows:

<p>Case Study #1 – unknown charge & unknown merchant</p>	
<p>Andrew⁹: Sales manager Total charges: £31.50 His claim: An unknown charge from an on unknown merchant. No consent given, and no evidence of consent provided by merchant Status: Received a full refund Timeframe: 2-3 months</p>	<p>Unknown phone-paid subscription</p> 
<p>The details:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Andrew was checking his bank statement and saw that his monthly payment to his mobile network service was higher than normal • After looking at his phone bill, he saw a series of charges going back over a period of 2 to 3 months <p>[Continued . . .]</p>	
<p>“I was told by [telephone service provider] that, unfortunately, a lot of people get caught out by this”</p>	

⁹ Names used in the report are fictitious, to preserve participant anonymity.

- He called his telephone network service provider to query the charges. The reply was that he had been automatically signed up to an online gaming subscription and needed to contact the merchant to stop it and claim a refund.
- The charges were stopped during the call by Andrew's telephone service provider. He was also advised that if he could not get a satisfactory response, he could take his case to the PSA who 'would resolve it for him'
- Four different names of companies had made the charges on Andrew's phone bill, making the task of contacting them more time-consuming and difficult
- Andrew emailed one of the merchant names, explaining that he had not authorised the charges
- He received a reply saying that he had been allocated a case number and heard nothing more
- Andrew then called the merchant and he was told that he must submit evidence that he did not authorise the charges
- After going back to his telephone service provider, and finding that there was nothing that they could do, Andrew took his case to the PSA. He received a reply to say that the case would be investigated
- About six weeks later, Andrew received a text message that included a code with an instruction to obtain a cash refund from his nearest main Post Office.

In our study, there were a number of variations of the above 'archetype' that made the task of seeking a refund easier. Facilitatively, there were some cases where the telephone service provider would offer a 'goodwill' payment to relieve the refund seeker from the time and effort required to contact and negotiate with the merchant. In other cases, some merchants were more responsive by issuing an immediate refund. This tended to be the case when told that the PSA were investigating.

"They [merchant] coughed up after I mentioned the PSA"

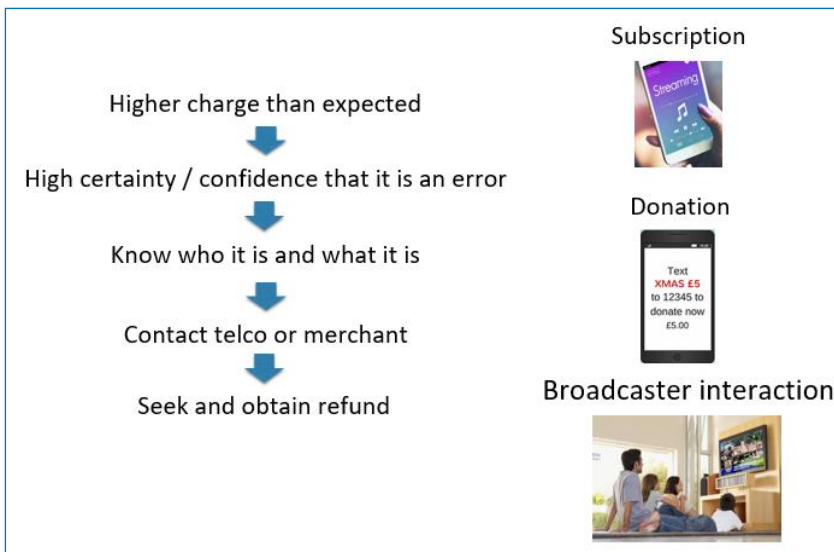
"I think that [telephone service provider] knew it was a scam which is why they gave me a refund"

Others felt that their telephone service provider could do more, particularly in alerting them to the charge.


"They know this is going on, so why didn't they alert me?"

3.4.3 Known charges from known merchants

A very different and common journey in the phone-paid space related to known charges from known merchants. Typically, this was where a participant had actively chosen to make a phone-paid purchase, knew what the purchase was for and knew the merchant that they were purchasing from. A journey of this kind was often related to mainstream activities, like charity donation, broadcaster voting or competition entry, or subscription to music streaming services. The journey 'archetype' for phone-paid in this scenario was relatively simple, 'linear' and more certain in terms of resolution. It is summarised as follows:



From our in-depth interviews, a typical case study is as follows:


Case Study #2 – known charge & known merchant	
<p>Julia: Administrator Total charges: £150 Her claim: That additional amounts of money were taken from her phone account, beyond the £5 that she had donated Status: Received a full refund Timeframe: 5 days</p>	<p>Known charity donation</p>  <p>"I was just happy that they did what they said they would do"</p>
<p>The details:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Julia made a donation of £5 via text to a charity • At the end of the month, she checked her phone bill and saw that numerous additional amounts of £5 had been taken, totalling £150 • Her initial thought was that it was a technical error made by her telephone service provider • Julia contacted her telephone service provider via webchat to get advice, feeling confident that the problem would be resolved though worried that it would take a long time • Her telephone service provider promised to investigate and come back to her within 2 days • Julia received a call 2 days later with a summary of the issue and a request that she send an email to confirm that the summary was correct, after which a refund would be issued • One day later, she received a full refund. 	

A similar pattern of response was very common among non-phone-paid refund seekers, who had purchased, knowingly, from a known marketplace, shopping site or online retailer. As with the above phone-paid example, the process of seeking a refund was often described as straightforward, simple and predictable, leading to success in getting a refund in many cases.

The key 'hallmarks' of this known journey related to familiarity, experience, high expectation and well-established procedures and policies for accepting and dealing with refund requests.

Typically, non-phone-paid refund seekers in this context expressed high levels of trust in the likely responsiveness of known, high profile merchants online, together with awareness of controls and protections put in place, particularly by major, well-known marketplace and shopping site operators. Often, the experience of the process was facilitated by ease of identifying a single point of contact. Trust, ease and eventual success all led in many cases to high levels of confidence in repeat purchasing.

From our in-depth interviews, a typical **non**-phone-paid case study is as follows:

Case Study #3 – known charge & known merchant	
<p>John: Technician Total charges: £300 His claim: Having bid successfully and paid the money, the components he purchased did not arrive Status: Received a full refund Timeframe: 2-3 weeks</p>	<p>Known purchase of computer components</p>
<p>The details:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • John bid successfully for some computer hardware components and paid for them via his PayPal account • He then waited for delivery and nothing arrived. He contacted the seller and did not receive a reply • John then called eBay and they said that they would investigate • Throughout, John claimed to feel confident that he would get his money back given that eBay offered a buyer’s guarantee and PayPal also offered a chargeback guarantee. He was also very reassured because he used a credit card for his PayPal account, knowing that this meant that the credit card company was jointly liable in the event of fraud • After a few days, eBay contacted John to confirm that the money had been wrongly taken and he would be refunded via PayPal. 	 <p><i>“I feel even more confident about buying and selling on eBay after this experience. I feel very well protected”</i></p>

3.4.4 Known charges from known and unknown merchants

In both the phone-paid and non-phone-paid spaces, some refund seekers felt that there was definite room for improvement when dealing knowingly with unknown merchants online.

Typically, these refund seekers claimed to feel less confident given that unknown merchants were believed to have less of a reputation to defend and protect. This could be seen in the difficulties they had in their refund seeking journey, particularly in terms of reaching the merchant and convincing them that their claim for a refund was legitimate. Often, in retrospect, it was more of a ‘gamble’ to buy direct from these online retailers which led many to purchase from them through higher profile marketplaces and shopping sites.

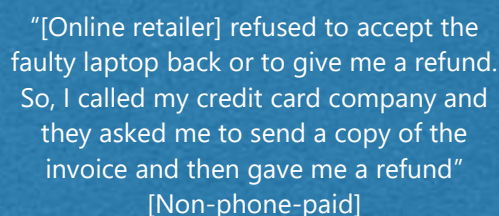
From our in-depth interviews, a typical case study in the non-phone-paid space for a known transaction with an unknown merchant is as follows:

Case Study #4 – known charge & unknown merchant	
<p>Louise: Nurse Total charges: £219 Her claim: Having purchased with a credit card, the laptop arrived and it was not working Status: Received a part refund Timeframe: 3-4 weeks</p>	<p>Known purchase of a laptop from an online reseller</p>
<p>The details:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Louise Googled 'cheap laptops' and found a reseller online offering a laptop within her price range • She purchased it using a credit card and, on delivery, found that it was not working • Louise contacted the reseller and said she wanted to return the laptop and be refunded. The reseller refused, offering instead to provide a 20% discount, suggesting that this would cover the cost of getting it fixed • Louise was very unhappy with this and was determined to pursue a full refund, confident that she was entitled to one. She paid a courier to return the laptop with a demand for a full refund • Having received no reply, Louise called the reseller and had difficulty in getting anyone to answer. After at least six attempts, she eventually she got through, but the reseller continued to offer a discount rather than a refund • Louise then threatened to take the case to Ombudsman Services. At this point, the reseller agreed to give her a refund, but refused to repay her the courier charge. • Louise left it at that, convinced that she would never purchase directly again. 	<div data-bbox="1066 913 1353 1182" data-label="Image"> </div> <p><i>"They offered me a discount rather than a refund. The minute they said that, I knew I was in the right and would eventually get my money back"</i></p>


In cases of the kind described above, where a purchase has been made knowingly, for a product or service from an unknown merchant, many non-phone-paid refund seekers claimed to be bolstered in their confidence given the protections afforded to them by their payment provider plus ready access to an independent dispute resolution service.

Some were aware of the protection that was offered by credit card providers in the case of fraud. Many were aware of chargeback guarantees from online payment providers like PayPal. Awareness could be seen to bolster confidence given that it was an option, or 'backstop' to turn to if they encountered a refund refusal by the merchant.

Many refund seekers were also aware of the actions that banks and other major financial institutions took to reduce fraud. Trust was not entirely evident, but many claimed to be reassured by evidence of proactive methods of protection (e.g., alerting people about suspicious transactions, and blocking the use of cards when fraudulent activity was suspected).



"[Online retailer] refused to accept the faulty laptop back or to give me a refund. So, I called my credit card company and they asked me to send a copy of the invoice and then gave me a refund"
[Non-phone-paid]



"Banks are pretty good at protecting people. I get alerts when anything happens"
[Phone-paid]

3.5 Overall impact

3.5.1 Introduction

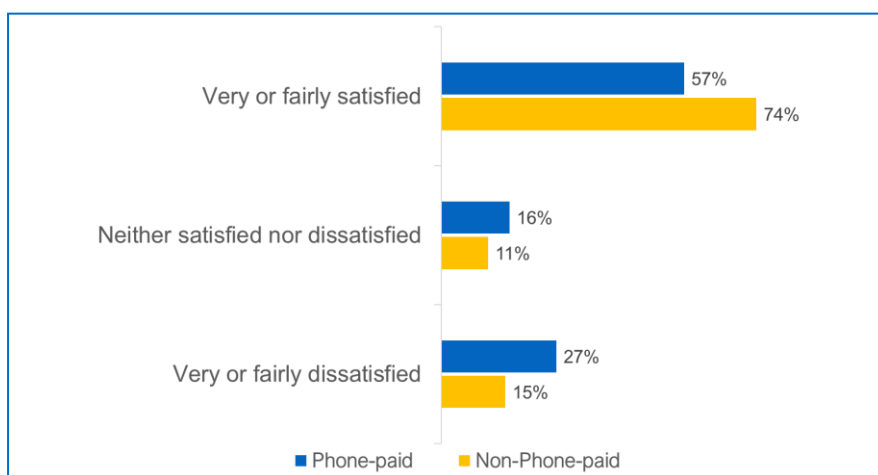
At the end of their refund seeking journeys, we asked participants to tell us what their overall feeling was in terms of satisfaction with the process and outcome. We also explored the impact that the experience had on their trust in phone-paid and non-phone-paid services, and their propensity to use these services again in the future. We start with a look at overall satisfaction.

3.5.2 Overall satisfaction

When asked to describe their level of satisfaction with the process of seeking a refund, there was a marked difference between phone-paid and non-phone paid refund seekers. Figure 30, below, shows the overall pattern of responses.

Figure 30: Satisfaction with the whole experience

Overall, taking everything into account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you (so far) with the whole experience of seeking a refund?



Bases: Total: 558; Phone paid refund seekers: 139; Non-phone paid refund seekers: 419

As can be seen, the level of dissatisfaction is significantly greater among phone-paid refund seekers. We know from deeper investigation that a major contributor to this are phone-paid transactions made unknowingly to unknown merchants. Success for these types of transactions was limited unless investigated and acted upon by the PSA.

Satisfaction among known phone-paid and known non-phone-paid refund seekers was by no means perfect, indicating that there are definite problems and difficulties in seeking a refund in known purchase contexts, particularly with unknown online retailers and resellers.

This said, a significantly higher proportion of phone-paid (57%) and particular non-phone-paid (74%) refund seekers claimed to be either fairly or very satisfied with the process and the outcome.

"I felt violated. I wouldn't go near a phone service in the future. It isn't safe. Makes me check everything on my phone now"
[Unknown phone-paid]

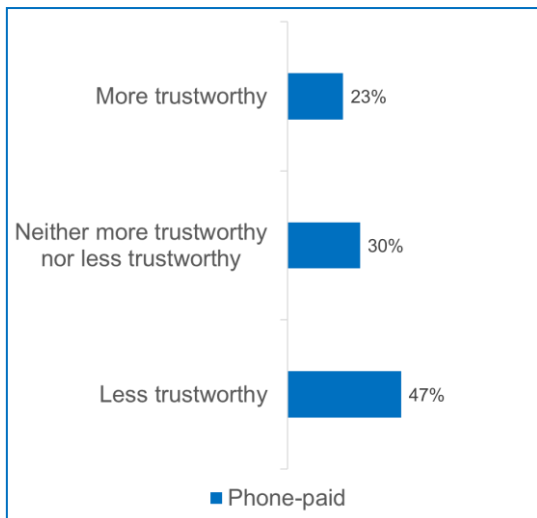
"Some lessons learned. I think I will stick to companies online that I know and trust"
[Non-phone-paid]

3.5.3 Claimed impact on trust in and use of the payment method in the future

These differing levels of satisfaction are reflected in the levels of claimed impact on trust and propensity to use in the future. Figures 31 and 32, below, show these patterns.

Figure 31: Trust in phone-paid method:

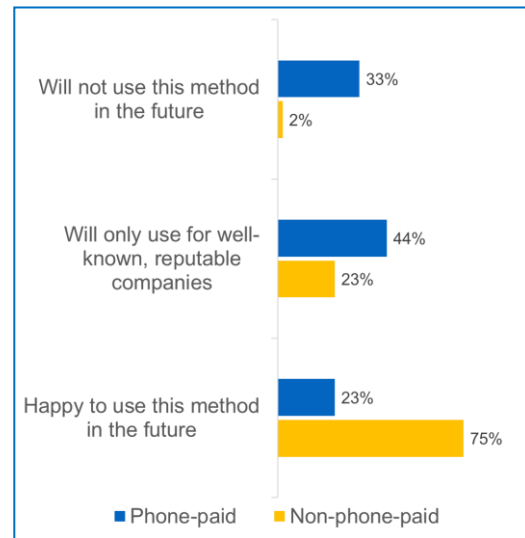
How much do you trust phone-based payments compared to other payment methods?



Bases: All phone-paid users: 243

Figure 32: Willingness to use in future:

[Regarding payment methods], what will you do in the future?



Bases: Total: 622; All phone-paid users (243) and non-phone-paid users (419)

Broadly, nearly half of all phone-paid users in the sample claimed that phone-payment, as a method of purchasing, was less trustworthy than other payment methods. Nearly eight out of ten claimed that they would either never use phone payment in the future or would only do so when purchasing from well-known and reputable merchants online.

This contrasts strongly with non-phone-paid refund seekers, with 98% of them saying that they would use a non-phone-paid method in the future, either for any kind of purchase or from well-known, reputable merchants online.

“Would I use PayPal again? Of course”
[Non-phone-paid]

“Makes sense to use phone payment for well-known companies online, but I would still be a bit wary. It’s a phone account, not a financial company”
[Non-phone-paid]

3.6 Taking the case further – awareness and perceptions of the PSA

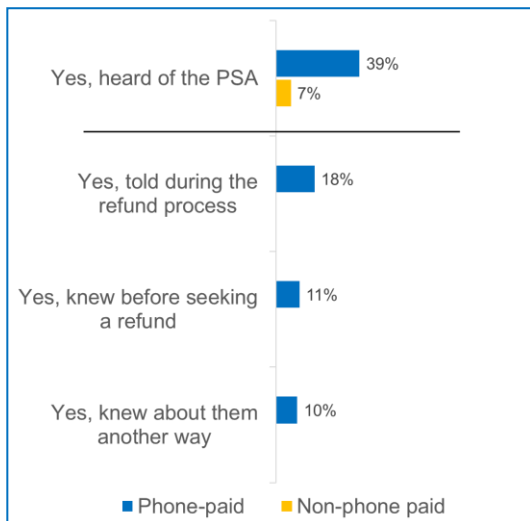
3.6.1 Introduction

In this final section, we describe phone-paid and non-phone-paid users and refund seekers’ views of the PSA, when encountered and known of. We also cover satisfaction with the PSA among phone-paid refund seekers whose case has been investigated by the PSA. We start by looking at awareness.

3.6.2 Awareness of the PSA

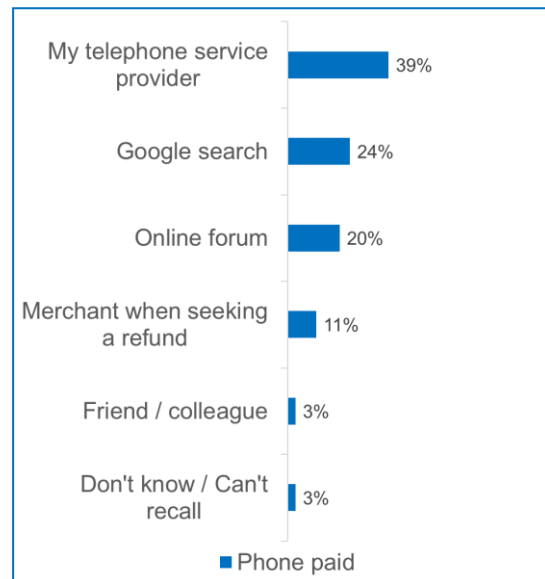
All participants in the sample were asked about their awareness of the PSA. In Figure 33, below, it can be seen that awareness is low among non-phone-paid users and higher among phone-paid users. This was primarily as a result of exposure to the PSA during the refund process.

Figure 33: Awareness of the PSA: Before this survey, had you heard of the Phone-Paid Services Authority (PSA)?



Bases: Total: 662; Phone-paid users: 243 and Non-phone-paid users: 419

Figure 34: Source of awareness: How did you first find out about the Phone-Paid Services Authority (PSA)?



Bases: All phone-paid users aware of the PSA: 94

Figure 34, above, shows that phone-paid users’ telephone service provider is the primary source of awareness of the PSA, and a stronger source than that for merchants.

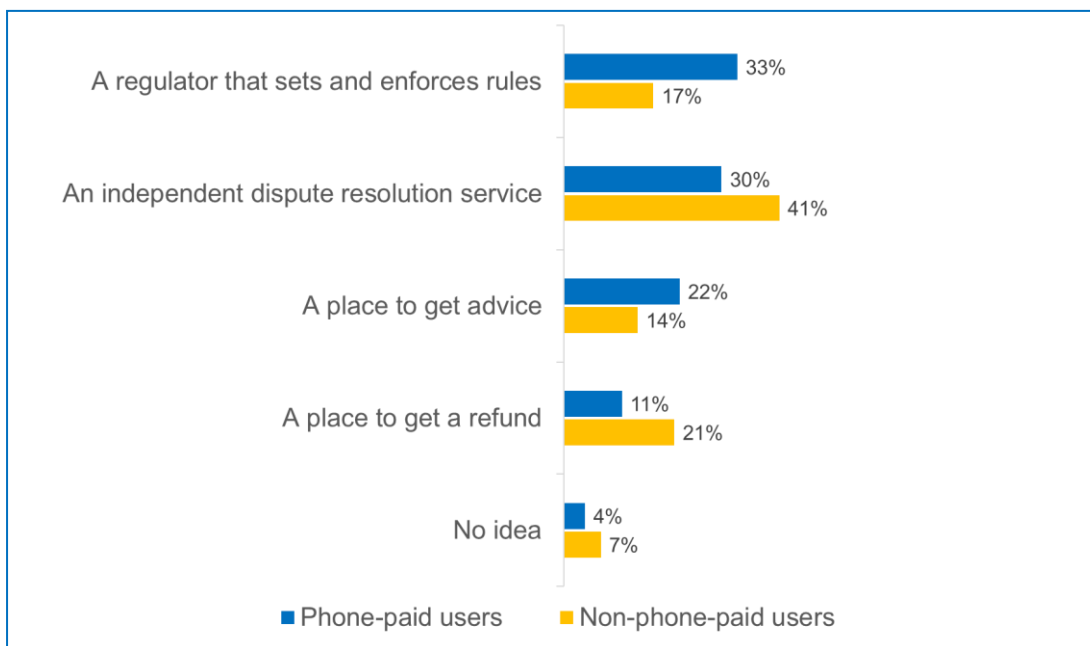
3.6.3 Perceived role of the PSA

Given low awareness, particularly among non-phone-paid users, perceptions of the PSA’s role were mixed and relatively undeveloped. Phone-paid refund seekers had better formed views that were shaped, primarily, by how their telephone service provider initially described the PSA, what they saw and read online in online forums, and how, later on in the process, they were dealt with (among those taking their case to the PSA).

Figure 35, below, shows how these impressions influence the way they describe the role and remit of the PSA.

Figure 35: Perceived role and remit of the Phone-paid Services Authority (PSA)

Which one of the following statements best fits with the understanding you had of The Phone-paid Services Authority (PSA) when you first heard about them (or came across them)?



Bases: Total: 123; Phone paid (94) and Non-phone paid (29) users aware of the Phone-paid Services Authority (PSA)

As can be seen, perceptions of the PSA were mixed, suggesting some degree of confusion about the role, particularly as a regulator versus an independent dispute resolution service. Around four in ten phone-paid users, who were aware of the PSA, misconstrued the PSA as a dispute resolution service or a place to get a refund.

Deeper investigation suggests that call handlers of telephone service providers were quite often inclined to describe the PSA in these terms, increasing expectations that the PSA would act directly to handle their case with the merchant on their behalf and would provide a refund.

For some phone-paid refund seekers, who were aware of the PSA but did not take their case to the PSA, there were some claimed barriers to doing so. This was particularly the case when the PSA was considered to be an Ombudsman rather than a regulator. Some could be deterred by this given associations with excessive form-filling and the time and effort required to gather evidence. Some refund seekers could also be put off by the perceived small amount of money that they had lost, given a belief that an Ombudsman would only be appropriate to use for much larger amounts.

Conversely, those refund seekers who more accurately understood the PSA's role as regulator could be put off by the idea that the PSA was there to set policy and to enforce rules. This could be seen, in some instances, to reduce the expectation (or hope) that the PSA could or would act on their behalf to get their money back.

"It says that PSA will not take up individual cases or pursue refunds, but they want information that can help them to take action. Not sure that they can really have the one without the other"

"I didn't think about what they were. I just wanted them to get my money back"

This said, many, who reported their issue to the PSA claimed to be unconcerned about the PSA's role, believing that taking it to the PSA was their only option left, and in the hope that the PSA would act in a way that led to a refund of their money.

When prompted with a fuller description of the PSAs' role, views tended to be mixed. On the one hand, the PSA's role as regulator was seen by some to be a 'force for good', in aiming to reduce harm to consumers. On the other hand, some felt that the PSA had limited direct relevance, given its stated position that it could not act directly on an individual's behalf.

"Good to know, particularly if it helps to stop this from happening to other people. I think of vulnerable people – like the elderly who need protection"

"They don't do individual cases, so there's no point really. They want to pursue class actions but that's not reassuring for me personally"

3.6.4 Satisfaction with the PSA

Phone-paid refund seekers, who were aware of the PSA and particularly those who took their case to the PSA were asked about their level of satisfaction. In this, we identified three main categories:

1. Those in receipt of an 'enforced' refund

Typically, these refund seekers expressed high levels of satisfaction.

For many, the sense of satisfaction was particularly fulfilling, i.e., they obtained a refund and the merchant was 'punished' and deterred by the actions of the PSA.

Many also claimed that the experience of the PSA was better than expected.

"Terrific. Initially, I thought that the PSA wouldn't act on my behalf"

2. Those in receipt of a refund as a result of using the PSA's name

Typically, satisfaction was high because they received a refund that they might not have received had they not known about the PSA.

In this case, the PSA helped to add weight and authority to their claim, i.e., mentioning to the merchant that they were in contact with the PSA increased the chances of getting a refund.

PSA influence in this way was less fully satisfying, given that the merchant was not ultimately deterred or punished for its perceived malpractice.

"They only gave me the money back because I said I was taking it to the PSA"

3. Those who have not received a refund after the PSA's investigation

Typically, satisfaction was very low indeed in cases where the PSA had investigated and decided that further action was not merited.

This could cause frustration and a feeling of there being nowhere else to go. For some, who felt entirely vindicated in their claim, the perception of the PSA was an organisation that was ineffective, lacking power and authority.

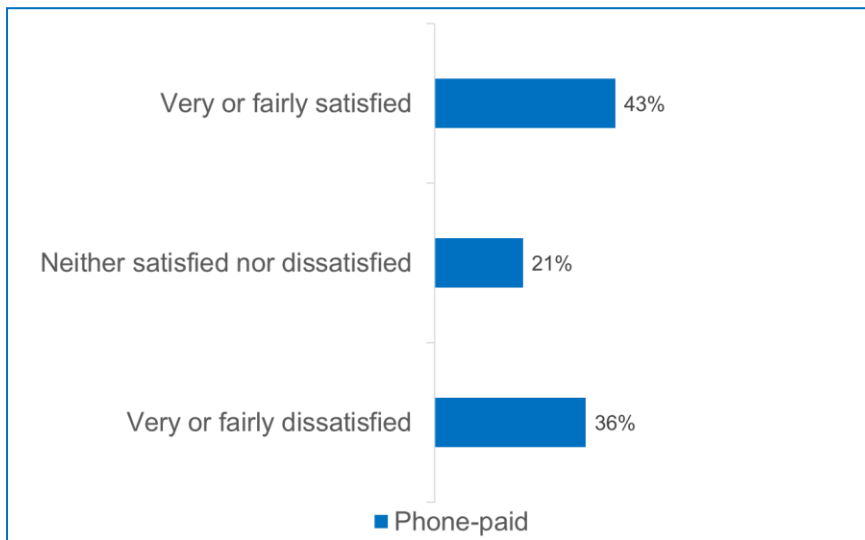
Negative views were particularly apparent among those who had been under the impression that going to the PSA would mean getting a refund.

"Very disappointing. I was told by [telco] that I would get a refund"

These different impressions and attitudes are reflected in the overall responses to our satisfaction question in the larger scale survey. Figure 36, below, shows the overall pattern of response.

Figure 36: Overall satisfaction with the Phone-paid Services Authority (PSA)

Overall, taking everything into account, how satisfied are you (so far) with the way that the PSA has handled your case?



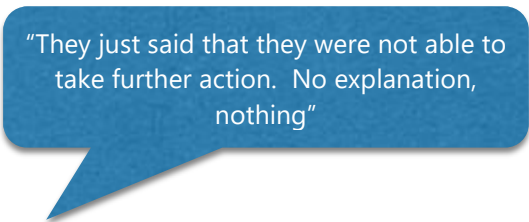
Base: All Phone-paid refund seekers who took their case to the Phone-paid Services Authority: 32

As can be seen, satisfaction is somewhat polarised, with around four out of ten feeling satisfied and just over a third feeling dissatisfied.

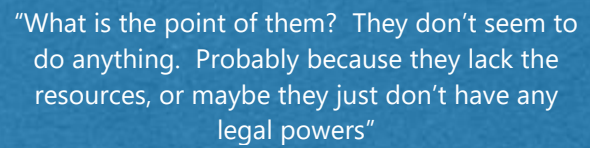
Deeper investigation suggests that dissatisfaction could be exacerbated by some perceived shortfalls in communication with refund seekers who had taken their case to the PSA. In some cases, refund seekers complained of poor updating, i.e., that they had heard nothing from the PSA since the initial confirmation of receiving their complaint.

"I got a confirmation email and then heard nothing after that"

Others who were notified, after the PSA's investigation, that they would not receive a refund were particularly unhappy with the lack of communication regarding the details of the case. Some of the least satisfied in the sample complained that they had been given no reason why the case was not to be enforced or why a refund was not forthcoming. Some suggested that knowing more about the reasoning behind the PSA's decision would lessen the disappointment and provide more by way of closure.



"They just said that they were not able to take further action. No explanation, nothing"

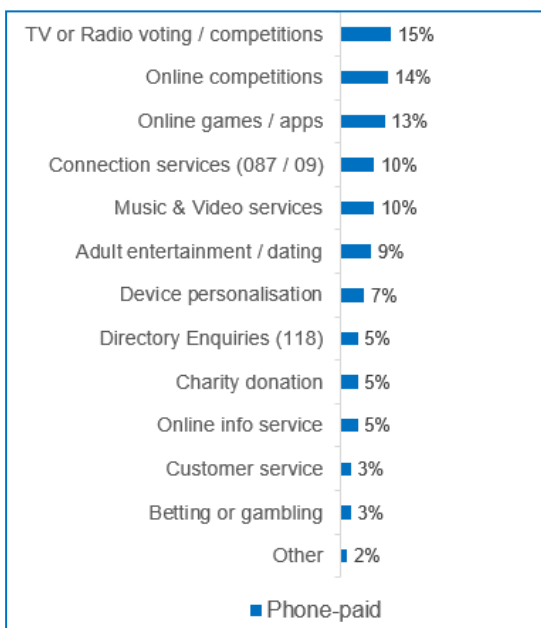


"What is the point of them? They don't seem to do anything. Probably because they lack the resources, or maybe they just don't have any legal powers"

4. Back-up – detailed sample characteristics

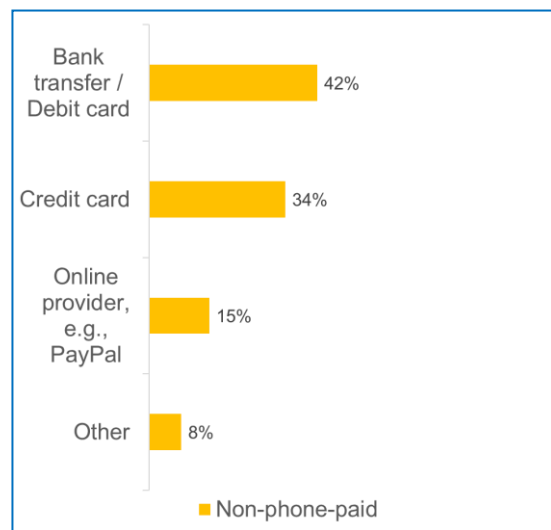
4.1 Phone-paid and non-phone-paid payment services represented

Figure 37: Phone-paid services: Have you been charged on your mobile or landline phone bill (or PAYG credit) for any of the following phone-paid services in the last two years or so?



Base: All phone-paid users: 243

Figure 38: Non-phone-paid payment services: Have you sought a refund for an online purchase using any of the following methods of payment?



Base: All non-phone-paid users: 419

Note: Participants were asked to select the service that they had most recently used (or could recall the best) in cases where a refund had been sought for more than one service in the last two years or so.

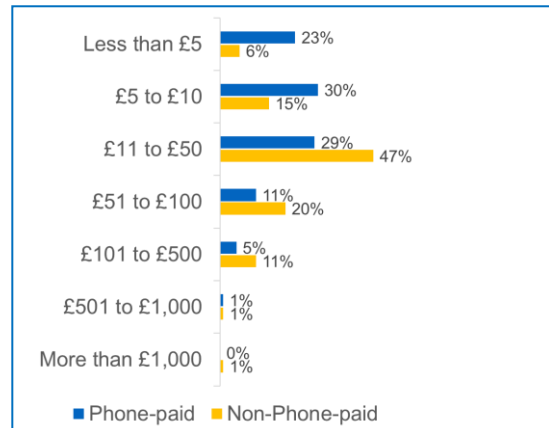
4.2 When the process of seeking a refund started, amount sought and method or repayment

Figure 39: When process started: asd?



Bases: Total: 558; Phone-paid (139) and Non-phone-paid (419) refund seekers

Figure 40: Refund amount sought: asd?



Bases: Total: 662: All non-phone-paid (329) and non-phone-paid (419) users

Averages:
Phone-paid: £48
Non-phone-paid: £74.80

Figure 41: Phone-paid refund method:

When you obtained your refund, how did you receive it?

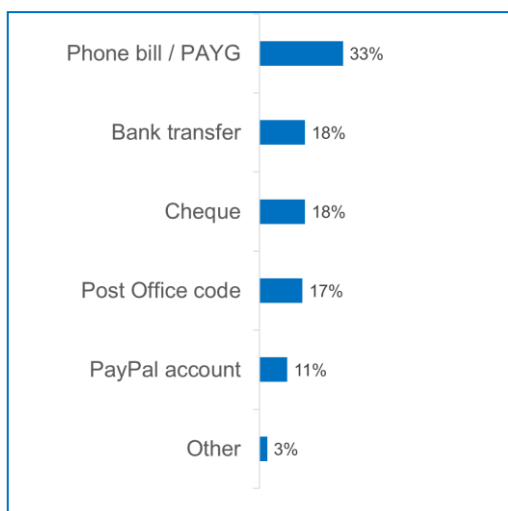
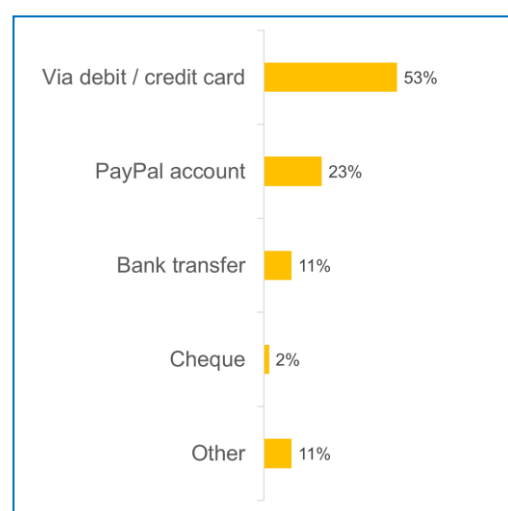


Figure 42: Non-phone-paid refund method:

When you obtained your refund, how did you receive it?



Bases: Total: 490; Phone-paid (104) and Non-phone-paid (386) refund seekers who have obtained a refund

5. Technical appendices

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5.1 A note on analysis and reporting of qualitative and quantitative data

Qualitative data

It is important to note that the qualitative findings of this report are not statistically representative of the views of the general public. Qualitative research is designed to be illustrative, detailed and exploratory and provides insight into the perceptions, feelings and behaviours of people rather than conclusions drawn from a quantitative sample.

The perceptions of participants make up a considerable proportion of the evidence in this study. As far as possible we have stated the prevalence of feeling about a particular point across the participants, although in some cases it has not been possible to provide a precise or robust indication of the prevalence of a view. This is a generally accepted characteristic of qualitative research.

Verbatim comments have been used throughout this report to help illustrate and highlight key findings. Where verbatim quotes are used, they have been anonymised and attributed with relevant characteristics of gender, user-type and phone-paid service purchased / complained about. All verbatim comments reflect both spontaneous views and views after deliberation. Where relevant we have indicated which types of views are represented. The comments can be taken to reflect genuine views held by participants.

Quantitative data

For our larger-scale survey findings in numerical form, only statistically significant differences are reported within the text. Reported differences between survey figures are significant at the 95% level to accommodate the impact of sample design and its size. This means that there is a high level of confidence that any reported differences reflect a true attitudinal or behavioural change rather than being caused by a change in sample methodology or profile.

5.2 Copy of qualitative topic guides

Four guides were used for the qualitative findings in this research, one for each target sample. These are summarised as follows:

Topic Guide

Target 1 - PRS refund complainants who have contacted the PSA

1. MODERATOR INTRODUCTION

2. START WITH AN OVERVIEW OF THEIR 'JOURNEY'

Initial purchase and its cost:

- Did you know you made a purchase?
- What kind of purchase was it / did you make? And how did that happen?
- When did you know how much you would be charged?
- Did you check your phone bill?
- Did you expect to be charged? Or was it a surprise?
- What, if anything, were you unhappy about?

Seeking a refund:

- What made you want to seek a refund? What first prompted you to do this?
- What did you do first? (Did they do any kind of search, on Google for example?)
- Who did you first contact? (was this your telephone service provider, the goods / service provider, the PSA, or someone else?)
- Who, if anyone, eventually took responsibility and handled your request?
- [If PSA not first contacted], at what point did you contact the PSA?
- The status right now: closed and resolved satisfactorily, closed and resolved but not satisfactorily, on-going, dropped by you.

3. REFUND-SEEKING TRIGGER AND INITIAL MOTIVATIONS

- How did you find out that there was a problem?
- Did you come across the problem by chance or would you normally have spotted it?
- How did you feel at this moment in time? Why?

Explain: Let's turn to what you **hoped or expected** to happen. What did you want to achieve?

- How high or low were your expectations at this point in time? What makes you say that?
- How **strongly** or otherwise did you feel about the need to seek a refund? Why?
- What was the main motivation?

Focus on customer rights – and comparisons with other providers / payment methods they have experience of:

- How confident did you feel?
- What did you think your customer rights were?
- How, if at all, is this the same or different to getting refunds from other providers and with other payment methods?

3. MAKING INITIAL CONTACT

Who did you **first** contact, to seek a refund? Tell me more about that.

Explore responses fully at a spontaneous level, and then probe if necessary:

- What was it that made you contact this particular organisation **first**?
What made you do that?
- Why not contact [telco / merchant] in the first instance?
- How did you make the contact (phone, email, letter, etc.)? Why?
- Was it easy or difficult to get through? How many people did you have to speak to before getting to someone who listened and acted on your behalf?
- In retrospect, did you feel that this organisation contact was the 'right' one to contact first? Why? Why not?
- What, if anything, might you have done differently, at this stage? Why?
- How did you feel you were being treated at this stage?
- What were you told? What, if anything, was explained to you?
- Being informed about how long it would take. Did they plan to ask about this?
- Being dealt with by a dedicated personal case handler? Did this matter or not?
- Only having to state their case once
- The organisation showing concern to resolve the problem
- Taking responsibility and not referring you elsewhere
- Taking your enquiry / request seriously.

CHECK: DID THE ORGANISATION THEY FIRST CONTACTED AGREE TO INVESTIGATE OR ATTEMPT TO HANDLE THEIR REQUEST?

IF YES (DIRECT), CONTINUE TO SECTION 4 AND THEN SECTION 6 ONWARDS
IF NO (REFERRAL), SKIP TO SECTION 5 AND THEN SECTION 6 ONWARDS

4. DIRECT - HANDLING OF THEIR REFUND REQUEST

- Did they suggest you should seek your refund elsewhere, at any point?
- In your estimation, did you feel that the organisation you were talking to was actually responsible for the problem that led you to ask for a refund?
- Or, were they taking responsibility on another organisation's behalf? What gave you this impression?

CHECK: If the organisation who dealt with their request was their telephone service provider, ask: How long did it take for [telephone service provider] to reach a decision?

- There and then, when speaking to them?
- Sometime later, after speaking to [merchant] on your behalf?
- Was the decision to give you a full refund?
- If so, how easy or difficult would you say it was to get the refund? Why?

5. REFERRED – RESPONDING TO THEIR REFUND REQUEST

- Did you **choose** to contact [organisation] or were you **told** to contact them?
- If **told** to go elsewhere:
 - What reasons did the first organisation give for suggesting you go elsewhere?
 - How did you feel about this? Why? Tell me more
- If you chose to go elsewhere:
 - Why did you choose to contact [organisation] instead?
 - How did you feel about this? Why? Tell me more
 - Did [first organisation contacted] help in any way? If so, how?
- Overall, in retrospect, would you have done things differently? For example, would you have contacted [second organisation] first? Why?

CHECK: DID THEY CHOOSE TO CONTACT PSA / OR WERE THEY REFERRED THE PSA AT THIS POINT?

IF NO, THEN CONTINUE

IF YES, SKIP SECTION 6 AND GO TO SECTION 7 ONWARDS

6. RESPONDING TO THEIR REFUND REQUEST – THEIR EXPERIENCE

- Were you informed about how long it would take?
- Were you dealt with by a dedicated personal case handler? Did this matter or not?
- Did you have to state your case more than once?
- Did you get regular updates?
- How much concern did the organisation show to resolve the problem?
- How much did you feel valued? If not, how were you made to feel?

If not mentioned, probe more specifically for:

- Ease
- Speed of response
- Quality of information provided during the process
- Frequency of communication throughout
- The tone of the response
- [Organisation]'s understanding of the issue / willingness to compensate you

Probe in particular for comparisons:

- For all (above) that apply, how good or bad was your experience?
 - How did it compare with any experience you have had elsewhere? (seeking a refund from a different provider / via a different payment method)
-

7. OVERALL SATISFACTION AND THE FINAL OUTCOME

What happened then? How, if at all, was your request resolved? What was the final outcome?

- You received a full refund?
- You received a part refund?
- You didn't get a refund?
- You gave up?
- You are still trying / expecting to receive a refund?

If they received a full or part refund:

- How do you now feel about this outcome? What makes you say that?
- How easy or difficult do you think it was to get to this point? Why do you say that?
- How did this compare to . . .
 - Your initial expectations?
 - The timeframe the [organisation] gave you upfront (if a timeframe until resolution was given)?
 - Your experiences elsewhere (with other payment methods)?
- How did you **receive** your refund?
 - Credit on your phone bill or pay-as-you-go account?
 - Credit to your PayPal account?
 - Bank transfer?
 - Redemption code for use at the Post Office?
 - Cheque?
 - Other?
- Was this way of receiving the refund acceptable? Why? Why not?

If they have NOT received a refund / given up / still trying:

- How do you feel about this? Happy? Unhappy? Why?
- Why have you not received a refund?
- What made you give up?

Overall, taking all of your views and experiences into account, what could be improved?

8. THEIR EXPERIENCE OF THE PSA - SPONTANEOUS

Unless covered in depth already, probe as follows:

- How did you find out about the PSA?
- Were you referred to the PSA? If so, by whom?
- What made you want to contact the PSA?
- What did you expect or hope that PSA would do?
- Did you know about the PSA before your complaint? What did you think their role was?
- What was your understanding of the PSA before you made contact?
- What happened then? What did you do after contacting the PSA?

Focus on their experience of the PSA:

- How did you contact the PSA? (Phone / online)
- What did the PSA say to you? How did you feel about this?
- Ease of dealing with the PSA
- Speed of response
- Quality of information provided during the process
- Frequency of communication throughout
- The tone of the response

Overall:

- How did you feel about the experience you had with the PSA?
- Was it what you expected? If not, why not?
- CHECK: where are you with them now? Have you received a refund? What have you been told?

9. REVISIT THE ROLE OF THE PSA – AT A CONSIDERED LEVEL**DESCRIBE / REMIND THEM OF THE PSA'S ROLE / REMIT (READ OUT):**

The PSA will not take up individual cases or pursue refunds. They are a regulator, not an ombudsman or legal arbitrator. They help to look after your interest by setting and enforcing rules for providers of phone-paid services. They check every issue that you report to us and take action when they need to. The information which you give can help to identify problems in the phone-paid services market. If necessary, they will launch an investigation, issue a fine and even prohibit a provider from trading.

Formal investigations can lead to the service provider agreeing to fix any problems with the service and may include a requirement to give refunds to any eligible consumer – which will normally include any consumer who has complained to us. The service provider must then provide the refund. Failure to provide the refund or failure to do so promptly and in an easily accessible manner may be investigated and could ultimately lead to further enforcement action.

Consumers who complain to PSA and become eligible for a refund by this route, should receive an email or a letter informing them of the outcome of the PSA's investigation or Tribunal case. Some cases are quite complex and it may be some months before hearing anything.

Explore how this description compares with:

- What they feel they understand already
- How it is similar or different to what they expected
- How satisfied or otherwise they are with the PSA in terms of their remit (or particular aspects of it)
- How it compares with the way that other bodies (that they have experience of) act on the consumer's behalf. **Probe fully here**
- What way, if any, the PSA can or should act differently, and why?

THANK AND END

5.3 Copy of quantitative survey questionnaire

PSA Refunds Research

Quantitative survey – Targets 2,3 & 4

24th June 2019

SAMPLE DEFINITIONS AND STRUCTURE:

Target	Definition
Premium Rate Service users	1. Refund complainants who HAVE contacted the PSA
	2. Refund complainants who have not contacted the PSA
	3. Users who have not sought a refund
Non-Premium Rate Service users	4. General consumers who have sought a refund online (in other sectors / via other payment methods)

SCREENER

Our survey is about '**phone-paid services**'.

A phone-paid service is when any goods or services that you purchase are charged directly to your telephone bill or to your Pay-As-You-Go credit. You make a purchase, and the cost of it is added to your bill or taken off your credit.

This may include billing to your house phone (if you have a fixed landline) as well as to your mobile phone. It depends, of course, on which phone you use.

ASK Q1 TO Q3 FOR TARGETS 2 & 3 – ALL OTHERS GO TO FILTER ABOVE Q4

Q1. Thinking carefully, have you been charged on your **mobile or landline phone bill (or pay-as-you-go credit)** for one or more of the following phone-paid services, in the last two years?

IF MORE THAN ONE, PLEASE SELECT THE MOST RECENT ONE (OR THE ONE THAT YOU CAN RECALL MOST ABOUT)

Rotate order

Select one only.

1	Online competition or quizzes (e.g., 'Win an iPad', Win £3,000 to spend at M&S, etc.)	
2	TV or Radio competitions or quizzes (e.g., Chance to win £100,000 cash with Good Morning Britain. Win a prize worth over £80,000 with The Voice UK, etc.)	
3	TV or Radio show voting and interaction (e.g., voting on X-Factor, Britain's Got Talent, Strictly, I'm a Celebrity, Get Me Out of Here, etc.)	
4	Charity donations via text (one-off-donations or subscriptions)	
5	Internet-based information services (books, magazines, newspapers) charged to your phone bill	
6	Games or apps (not on social networks) charged to your phone bill	
7	Games on social networks charged to your phone bill	
8	Virtual gifts on social networks (e.g., Swapits) charged to your phone bill	
9	Music or video content charged to your phone bill	
10	Tarot or astrology charged to your phone bill	
11	Ringtone, ringback tones, wallpapers, etc., charged to your phone bill	
12	Directory enquiries (e.g., numbers starting with 118)	
13	Adult content (e.g., video clips, chat, images, via numbers starting 09 or by text)	
14	Dating or flirt chat services charged to your phone bill	
15	Betting or gambling (including lottery scratch cards) via text or direct charging to your phone bill	
16	Voice-based information services (e.g., weather hotline, text alerts, etc.), charged to your phone bill	
17	Customer service (e.g., advice or sales, that is paid for and charged to your phone bill)	
18	A connection service (i.e., a 087 or 09 number that connects you (with or without your knowledge) to a customer service department, which is then charged to your phone bill)	
19	A refund for any other type of phone-paid service , not mentioned above	CLOSE
20	None – No refund sought for any kind of phone-paid service, in the last two years	CLOSE

Q2. For any of these phone-paid services, are you seeking, or have you sought a refund?
Select only

1	Yes		CODE AS TARGET 2 AND CONTINUE
2	No		CODE AS TARGET 3 AND CONTINUE

Q3. For refund you are seeking / have sought, which one of the following statements best describes why you sought a refund? **Rotate order**

Select one only

1	I did NOT purchase the goods / services that I was charged for		CONTINUE
2	I DID purchase the goods / services that I was charged for and the charge was more than I expected		
3	I DID purchase the good / services, and the charge was correct, but I was unhappy in some other way		
4	NONE of the above		CLOSE

ASK Q4 TO Q9 FOR TARGET 4 – OTHERWISE GO TO FILTER ABOVE Q10

Introduction: Our survey is about the different methods there are to make a payment for goods and services online. Throughout this survey, we would like you to think about your personal and / or household expenditure, not work or business-related payments.

Q4. Thinking carefully, has there been any occasion in the last couple of years, when you discovered a charge (or series of charges) for a product or service online you **KNEW NOTHING ABOUT AND DIDN'T EXPECT**, on your...

Select all that apply

1	Bank statement		GO TO Q5
2	Your online payment service account (e.g., PayPal)		
3	Credit card statement		
4	Your mobile phone bill or pay-as-you-go credit		
5	Your landline phone bill		
6	A statement from any other kind of payment method (please specify		
7	No, none of these		GO TO Q6

Q5. Did you seek a refund for this unexpected charge on your . . .

Please indicate any for which you sought a refund

SHOW ONLY THOSE CODED AT Q1

1	Bank statement	
2	Your online payment service account (e.g., PayPal)	
3	Credit card statement	
4	Your mobile phone bill or pay-as-you-go credit	
5	Your landline phone bill	
6	A statement from any other kind of payment method (please specify	
7	No, I did not seek a refund	

- Q6.** Think carefully again, has there been any occasion in the last couple of years, when you saw a charge (or series of charges) for a product or service online that you **KNEW ABOUT BUT WAS MORE THAN YOU EXPECTED** on your . . .

Select all that apply

1	Bank statement		GO TO Q7
2	Your online payment service account (e.g., PayPal)		
3	Credit card statement		
4	Your mobile phone bill or pay-as-you-go credit		
5	Your landline phone bill		
6	A statement from any other kind of payment method (please specify		
7	No, none of these		GO TO Q8

- Q7.** Did you seek a refund for the amount you were overcharged on your . . .

Please indicate any for which you sought a refund

SHOW ONLY THOSE CODED AT Q5

1	Bank statement	
2	Your online payment service account (e.g., PayPal)	
3	Credit card statement	
4	Your mobile phone bill or pay-as-you-go credit	
5	Your landline phone bill	
6	A statement from any other kind of payment method (please specify	
7	No, I did not seek a refund	

- Q8.** Think carefully again, has there been an occasion in the last couple of years, when you bought goods or a service **online**, you were charged the correct amount, but you were not happy with the goods or service (e.g. they did not arrive or did not meet your expectations)?

If more than one occasion, please think of the most recent one.

Select all that apply

1	Yes, but I didn't do anything about it		GO TO Q9
2	Yes, and I sought a refund		
3	Yes, and I sought a replacement		GO TO FILTER ABOVE Q10
4	No		

- Q9.** Thinking about when you were not happy with the goods or service, how had you made the payment online?

Select all that apply

1	Bank debit card	
2	Credit card	
3	An online payment service (e.g., PayPal)	
4	A charge to your mobile phone bill or pay-as-you-go credit	
5	A charge to your landline phone bill	
6	Using another payment method (please specify)	
7	Don't know / can't remember	

CHECK TARGET CLASSIFICATION

Classifications	
(Q1: 1-19) AND (Q2: 1) AND (Q3: 1-3)	CODE AS TARGET 2
(Q1: 1-19) AND (Q2: 2) AND (Q3: 1-3)	CODE AS TARGET 3
(Q4: 1, 2, 3 or 6 AND Q5: 1, 2, 3, or 6) AND / OR (Q6: 1, 2, 3 or 6 AND Q7: 1, 2, 3 or 6) AND / OR (Q8: 2 AND Q9: NOT 4 or 5)	CODE AS TARGET 4

IF RESPONDENT CANNOT BE CLASSIFIED INTO TARGETS 2,3 OR 4, THEN CLOSE**MAIN QUESTIONNAIRE****INTRODUCTION**

We are conducting some research for a not-for-profit industry regulator, and would like you to answer a few questions about seeking a refund for any kind of purchase you have made online (even if you decided not to do so). The survey will take no more than 10 minutes of your time.

All information is strictly confidential and will be dealt with in accordance with the Market Research Society Code of Conduct. Your details will not be passed on to any third party and you will receive no marketing material as a result of completing this questionnaire.

If you are happy to continue, please click below.

WHAT'S THE SURVEY ABOUT?**TARGET 2:**

We will be asking you about your experience of seeking a refund for a payment you saw on your **mobile or landline phone bill**. We will also ask you about any outside body you may have contacted for help or advice (if applicable).

We are interested in **knowing** how well your refund process was handled. We are **not** interested in what people buy or the reasons why they buy. Our questions are solely related to the refund process.

TARGET 3:

We will be asking you why you **did not** seek a refund for a **charge on you mobile or landline phone bill** you were unhappy with. We will also ask you what you expect that the refund process would have been like if you had gone ahead and sought a refund.

TARGET 4:

We will be asking you about your experience of seeking a refund from an online purchase you made.

We are interested in **knowing** how well your refund process was handled. We are **not** interested in what people buy or the reasons why they buy. Our questions are solely related to the refund process.

Importantly, if you have sought more than one refund in the last 2 years, please think only of the most recent occasion (or the one that you can best recall), when going through the questionnaire.

ALL:

If you are happy to continue, please click below.

ASK Q10 & Q11 FOR TARGETS 2 & 4 ONLY – OTHERWISE GO TO FILTER ABOVE Q12**Q10.** Approximately, when did you start the process of seeking a refund?*Select one only*

1	Within the last four weeks		GO TO Q11
2	1 to 3 months		
3	3 to 6 months ago		
4	7 to 12 months ago		
5	1-2 years ago		
6	More than 2 years ago		CLOSE
7	Don't know / really can't recall		

Q11. How much by way of a refund were you (or are you currently) seeking?*Select one only*

1	Less than £5	
2	£5 to £10	
3	£11 to £50	
4	£51 to £100	
5	£101 to £500	
6	£501 to £1,000	
7	More than £1,000	

ASK Q12 TO Q17 FOR TARGET 3 ONLY – OTHERWISE GO TO FILTER ABOVE Q18**Q12.** Approximately, when did you first find out about the charge on you mobile **on your mobile phone bill, pay-as-you-go credit or landline phone bill** that you were unhappy about?*Select one only*

1	Within the last four weeks		GO TO Q13
2	1 to 3 months		
3	3 to 6 months ago		
4	7 to 12 months ago		
5	1-2 years ago		
6	More than 2 years ago		CLOSE
7	Don't know / really can't recall		

Q13. Thinking about the amount on your phone bill or pay-as-you-go credit that you were unhappy about, how much was this for?*Select one only*

1	Less than £5	
2	£5 to £10	
3	£11 to £50	
4	£51 to £100	
5	£101 to £500	
6	£501 to £1,000	
7	More than £1,000	

Q14. Which one or more of the following statements best describes why you chose not to seek a refund for this phone-based payment?

Select all that apply

1	The amount was too small to bother	
2	I thought it would take up too much of my time	
3	The refunds process is too complicated	
4	I don't know who is responsible for administering the refund	
5	I am not confident that I would succeed to get a refund	
6	I did not know who to contact	
7	I could not find any contact details for the company providing the service	
8	I discovered, or came to the view, that I had no grounds for seeking a refund	
9	Other (please state)	

Q15. If you had chosen to seek a refund, how confident do you think you would have been in getting a refund?

Select one only

1	Very confident	
2	Quite confident	
3	Neither confident nor un-confident	
4	Not very confident	
5	Not at all confident	

Q16. If you had decided to seek a refund for this phone-based service, who do you think you would have contacted first? **Rotate order**

Select one only

1	My telephone service provider	
2	The provider of the goods or services that charged me	
3	Other (please state)	
4	Don't know	

Q17. Again, if you had chosen to seek a refund, who did you think should be responsible for administering your refund? **Rotate order**

Select one only

1	My telephone service provider	
2	The provider of the goods or services that charged me	
3	Other (please state)	
4	Don't know / can't say	

ASK Q18 FOR TARGETS 2 AND 4 ONLY – OTHERWISE GO TO FILTER ABOVE Q19**Q18.** When you first started out to seek a refund, how confident were you in getting the refund?*Select one only*

1	Very confident	
2	Quite confident	
3	Neither confident nor un-confident	
4	Not very confident	
5	Not at all confident	

ASK Q19 FOR TARGET 2 ONLY– OTHERWISE GO TO FILTER ABOVE Q20**Q19.** Before you made contact with any organisation (to seek your refund), who did you think should be responsible for administering your refund? **Rotate order***Select one only*

1	My telephone service provider	
2	The company that made a charge to my phone bill	
3	Other (please state)	
4	Don't know / can't say	

ASK Q20 FOR TARGET 4 ONLY– OTHERWISE GO TO FILTER ABOVE Q21**Q20.** Before you made contact with any organisation (to seek your refund) who did you think should be responsible for administering your refund? **Rotate order***Select one only*

1	The payment method provider that you used (e.g., PayPal, credit card company)	
2	The company online that actually received your payment	
3	A shopping site online (e.g., eBay, Amazon) that the company you bought from was trading through	
4	Other (please state)	
5	Don't know / can't say	

ASK Q21 & Q22 FOR TARGETS 2 AND 4 ONLY– OTHERWISE GO TO FILTER ABOVE Q23**Q21.** Right now, which one of the following statements best applies?*Select one only*

1	I have received a full refund	GO TO FILTER ABOVE Q23
2	I have received a part refund	
3	I have been told I will receive a refund and am waiting to receive it	ASK Q22
4	I have not received a refund and have now given up trying to get one	
5	I have not received a refund but have not given up seeking one	GO TO Q27
6	Other (please state)	

Q22. Which, if any, of following statements best describe why you gave up on seeking a refund?

Select all that apply

1	It was taking up too much of my time		GO TO Q27
2	The amount is or was too small to bother with		
3	I gave up because I felt I couldn't get any further		
4	The refunds process is too complicated		
5	I don't know who is responsible for administering the refund		
6	I am not confident that I will succeed to get a refund		
7	I discovered, or came to the view, that there were no real grounds for seeking a refund		
8	Other (please specify)		

ASK Q23 FOR TARGET 2 ONLY – OTHERWISE GO TO FILTER ABOVE Q24

Q23. Which one of the following best described who you have received a refund from?

Select one only

1	My telephone service provider	
2	The company that made a charge to my phone bill	
3	Other (please state)	
4	Don't know / can't say	

ASK Q24 FOR TARGET 4 ONLY – OTHERWISE GO TO FILTER ABOVE Q25

Q24. Which one of the following best described who you have received a refund from? **Rotate order**

Select one only

1	The company that I bought the product or service from	
2	A shopping site (like Amazon, eBay, Argos, etc.)	
3	Your credit card company	
4	Your bank	
5	Your online payment service (e.g., PayPal)	
6	Other (please state)	

ASK Q25 & Q26 FOR TARGETS 2 AND 4 – OTHERWISE GO TO FILTER ABOVE Q27

Q25. When you obtained your refund, how did you receive it? **Rotate order**

Select one only

1	Credit on my phone bill or pay-as-you go account		CONTINUE
2	Credit to my PayPal account		
3	Refunded via a bank transfer		
4	A redemption code to be exchanged for cash at the Post Office		
5	Received a cheque, posted to me		
6	Refunded back via my debit card		TARGET 4 ONLY
7	Refunded back via my credit card		TARGET 4 ONLY
8	Some other way (please state)		

Q26. How long did it take for your refund to be processed (once agreed)?

Select one only

1	Immediately	
2	Up to 24 hours	
3	1-3 days	
4	4 to 6 days	
5	1-2 weeks	
6	3-4 weeks	
7	More than a month	
8	I don't know (the refund just appeared)	

ASK Q27 FOR ALL TARGETS 2, 3 & 4

Q27. In your view, what is a reasonable time for a refund to be processed (once agreed)?

Select one only

1	Immediately	
2	Up to 24 hours	
3	1-3 days	
4	4 to 6 days	
5	1-2 weeks	
6	3-4 weeks	
7	More than a month	

ASK Q28 TO Q30 FOR TARGETS 2 AND 4 – OTHERWISE GO TO FILTER ABOVE Q31

Q28. How much effort would you say it has taken (or is taking) you to get a refund?

Select one only

1	A lot	
2	Quite a lot	
3	Some	
4	A little	
5	None at all	

Q29. And how determined or otherwise are you (or were you) to succeed in getting your refund?

Select one only

1	Absolutely determined. I will pretty much stop at nothing to get my refund	
2	Very determined, but there's a limit to how much time I can devote to it	
3	Not much – it's not worth a great amount of determination	
4	Very little – no great amount of determination is (or was) needed	

Q30. When seeking your refund, what was MOST important to you?

Select one only

1	To get my money back	
2	To get my money back AND to stop this from happening to other people	
3	To stop this from happening to other people	

ASK Q31 FOR TARGET 2 ONLY – OTHERWISE GO TO FILTER ABOVE Q32**Q31.** When seeking a refund, who did you **first** contact?*Select one only*

1	Your telephone service provider	GO TO FILTER ABOVE Q34
2	The company that made a charge to my phone bill	GO TO FILTER ABOVE Q42
3	Other	GO TO Q33

ASK Q32 & Q33 FOR TARGET 4 ONLY – OTHERWISE GO TO FILTER ABOVE Q34**Q32.** When seeking a refund, who did you **first** contact? **Rotate order***Select one only*

1	A shopping site (like Amazon, eBay, Argos, etc.)	GO TO FILTER ABOVE Q34
2	Your credit card company	
3	Your bank	
4	Your online payment service (e.g., PayPal)	
5	The actual company online that I bought the product or service from	GO TO FILTER ABOVE Q42
6	Other	GO TO Q33

Q33. Which, if any of these, did you **first** make contact with? **Rotate order***Select one only*

1	The Phone-paid Services Authority (PSA)	
2	Ofcom	
3	The Charity Commission	
4	Which?	
5	An online forum	
6	Solicitor	
7	Member of Parliament	
8	Citizens Advice	
9	MoneySavingExpert.com (Martin Lewis)	
10	Payment Systems Regulator (PSR)	
11	Financial Conduct Authority (FCA)	
12	The Advertising Standards Authority (ASA)	
13	Other (Please type in the name or type of organisation you first contacted) _____	
14	Not sure / can't recall the name	

ASK Q34 TO Q36 FOR TARGETS 2 AND 4 – OTHERWISE GOT TO FILTER ABOVE Q37**Q34.** Why did you contact this organisation first?*Select all that apply*

1	I thought they were responsible for the charge	
2	I did not know the provider of the goods or services (that charged me), and wanted to find out	
3	I only had contact details for this organisation	
4	I thought this organisation would help me get the refund	
5	I wanted advice from this organisation	
6	I wanted them to fight the case on my behalf	
7	I wanted to tell them what had happened, so that they might stop it from happening to other people	
8	Other (please specify)	

Q35. When first making contact, how easy or difficult was it to get through to the right person to speak to (via phone, email, letter, etc.)?*Select one only*

1	Very easy	
2	Fairly easy	
3	Neither easy nor difficult	
4	Fairly difficult	
5	Very difficult	
6	Didn't get through / couldn't get a response	

Q36. And, overall, how well did this first organisation that you contacted respond to your request for a refund?*Select one only*

1	Very well	
2	Fairly well	
3	Neither well nor poorly	
4	Fairly poorly	
5	Very poorly	

ASK Q37 FOR TARGET 2 – OTHERWISE GO TO FILTER ABOVE Q38

Q37. Which ONE of the following statements best describes the main thing you were told by this first organisation that you contacted?

Select one only

1	They said that they would handle the refund process and did not refer me elsewhere	
2	I was told to contact (or was passed on to) the provider of the goods or services that had charged me	
3	I was told to contact (or was passed on to) my telephone service provider	
4	They told me to contact an independent outside body that can help to solve a dispute (like an ombudsman)	
5	They told me to contact the Phone-Paid Services Authority (PSA)	
6	They recommended that I contact another organisation (other than my telephone service provider, or the company that charged me, or the PSA) to get help in seeking a refund	
7	I chose to go elsewhere to get help in seeking a refund	
8	Other (Please specify)	

ASK Q38 FOR TARGET 4 – OTHERWISE GO TO FILTER ABOVE Q39

Q38. Which ONE of the following statements best describes the main thing you were told by this first organisation that you contacted?

Select one only

1	They said that they would handle the refund process and did not refer me elsewhere	
2	I was told to contact (or was passed on to) the provider of the goods or services that had charged me	
3	They told me to contact the payment method provider (e.g., credit card company, PayPal, bank, etc.)	
4	They told me to contact an independent outside body that can help to solve a dispute (like an ombudsman)	
5	Other (Please specify)	

ASK Q39 TO Q41 FOR TARGETS 2 AND 4 – OTHERWISE GO TO FILTER ABOVE Q42

Q39. At any point, did you contact, or attempt to contact, the provider of the goods or services that had charged you?

Select one only

1	Yes	CONTINUE
2	No	GO TO FILTER ABOVE Q46

Q40. When contacting the provider of the goods or services that had charged you, how easy or difficult was it to get through to the right person to speak to (via phone, email, letter, etc.)?

Select one only

1	Very easy	
2	Fairly easy	
3	Neither easy nor difficult	
4	Fairly difficult	
5	Very difficult	
6	Didn't get through / couldn't get a response	

Q41. And, overall, how well did this organisation that you contacted respond to your request for a refund?

Select one only

1	Very well	
2	Fairly well	
3	Neither well nor poorly	
4	Fairly poorly	
5	Very poorly	

ASK Q42 TO Q45 FOR TARGETS 2 AND 4 IF MERCHANT WAS THE FIRST CONTACT (CODE 2 AT Q31 OR CODE 5 AT Q32) – OTHERWISE GO TO FILTER ABOVE Q46

Q42. Why did you contact this organisation first?

Select all that apply

1	I thought they were responsible for the charge	
3	I only had contact details for this organisation	
4	I thought this organisation would help me get the refund	
5	I wanted advice from this organisation	
6	I wanted them to fight the case on my behalf	
7	I wanted to tell them what had happened, so that they might stop it from happening to other people	
8	Some other reason	

Q43. When first making contact, how easy or difficult was it to get through to the right person to speak to (via phone, email, letter, etc.)?

Select one only

1	Very easy	
2	Fairly easy	
3	Neither easy nor difficult	
4	Fairly difficult	
5	Very difficult	
6	Didn't get through / couldn't get a response	

Q44. And, overall, how well did this first organisation that you contacted respond to your request for a refund?

Select one only

1	Very well	
2	Fairly well	
3	Neither well nor poorly	
4	Fairly poorly	
5	Very poorly	

FOR TARGET 2:

Q45. Which ONE of the following statements best describes the main thing you were told by this first organisation that you contacted?

Select one only

1	They said that they would handle the refund process and did not refer me elsewhere	
2	I was told to contact (or was passed on to) my telephone service provider	
3	They told me to contact the Phone-Paid Service Authority (PSA)	
4	They recommended that I contact another organisation (please state)	
5	None of the above	

FOR TARGET 4:

Q45. Which ONE of the following statements best describes the main thing you were told by this first organisation that you contacted?

Select one only

1	They said that they would handle the refund process and did not refer me elsewhere	
2	I was told to contact (or was passed on to) my payment method provider (e.g., credit card company, Pay Pal, bank, etc.	
3	They told me to contact an Ombudsman or regulator	
4	They recommended that I contact another organisation (please state)	
5	None of the above	

ASK Q46 TO Q50 FOR TARGETS 2 AND 4 – OTHERWISE GO TO FILTER ABOVE Q51

Q46. In total how many different organisations did you deal with (or have you so far dealt with) during the refund process?

Select one only

1	One	
2	Two	
3	Three	
4	Four or more	

Q47. Overall, what is the **total number of times** you have made any kind of contact with any organisation during the refund process?

Please count up all the contacts that YOU made, whether this was in writing/email or by telephone. Do not count any contact you received from an organisation.

If you cannot say precisely, please make a best estimate

Select one only

1	One only	
2	Two	
3	Three	
4	Four	
5	Five	
6	6 to 10	
7	11 to 15	
8	16 to 20	
9	More than 20	

Q48. And, roughly speaking, how long has the process taken (so far)?

1	Less than a day	
2	One day	
3	2-3 days	
4	4-5 days	
5	6 days to 1 week	
6	1 to 2 weeks	
7	3 to 4 weeks	
8	1 to 2 months	
9	3 months or more	

Q49. Generally speaking, how happy or unhappy are you with the length of time it has taken (or is taking)?

1	Very happy	
2	Fairly happy	
3	Neither happy nor unhappy	
4	Fairly unhappy	
5	Very unhappy	

Q50. Overall, taking everything into account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you (so far) with the whole experience of seeking a refund?

Select one only

1	Very satisfied	
2	Fairly satisfied	
3	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	
4	Fairly dissatisfied	
5	Very dissatisfied	

ASK Q51 AND Q52 FOR TARGETS 2 & 3 – OTHERWISE GO TO FILTER ABOVE Q53

Q51. In general, do you think your consumer rights when seeking refunds for phone-paid payments are the same or different to those for other payment methods?

Select one only

1	Fewer rights when seeking phone-paid refunds	
2	Same	
3	More rights when seeking phone-paid refunds	
4	Don't know	

- Q52.** How much do you trust phone-based payments (that are charged to your phone bill, or phone credit), compared to other payment methods?

Compared to other payment methods, the phone-based method is:

1	Much more trustworthy	
2	A little more trustworthy	
3	Neither trustworthy nor untrustworthy	
4	A little less trustworthy	
5	Much less trustworthy	
6	Don't know / can't say	

ASK Q53 FOR TARGETS 2 AND 3 – OTHERWISE GO TO Q54

- Q53.** Which one of the following best describes how you feel about using the phone-based payment method in the future, where the charge appears on your mobile or landline phone bill? **Rotate order**

Select one only

1	I am happy to use this method in the future	
2	I will only use this method if the company taking the payment is well known to me or has a good reputation from online reviews	
3	I will not use this payment method in the future	

ASK Q54 FOR TARGET 4 – OTHERWISE GO TO FILTER ABOVE Q55

- Q54.** Again, taking everything into account, which ONE of the following statements best describes what you will do in the future?

Select one only

1	I will continue to use the method of payment that I sought a refund for	
2	I will only use this method if the company taking the payment is well known to me or has a good reputation from online reviews	
3	I will not use this payment method in the future	

ASK Q55 & Q56 FOR TARGETS 2, 3 AND 4 – OTHERWISE GO TO FILTER ABOVE Q57

- Q55.** If and whenever a refund is agreed, there are various ways in which the money can be repaid to you.

In principle, which ONE of the following statements best applies to you in terms of how you receive a refund?

Select one only

1	I should be given a choice of how and where my money is repaid to me	
2	I don't need a choice, so long as it is the same method I used to pay for the goods or service, i.e., credited to my phone bill (or pay-as-go-account)	
3	I don't mind what method is used to pay me back	

Q45. Below, is a list of alternative methods that could be used to send a refund to you. For EACH ONE of these methods, please state how happy or unhappy you would be to receive a refund in this way. **Rotate order**

Please provide an answer for each method (one per row)

		Very happy	Fairly happy	Neither happy nor unhappy	Fairly unhappy	Very unhappy
1	A credit on my phone bill or pay-as-you go account	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
2	A credit to my PayPal account	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
3	An online bank transfer	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
4	A redemption code to be exchanged for cash at the Post Office	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
5	A cheque, posted to me	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]

Our final few questions relate to the Phone-paid Services Authority which is the sponsor of this survey.

ASK Q57 FOR TARGET 2 – OTHERWISE GO TO FILTER ABOVE Q58

Q57. Prior to this survey, had you heard of The Phone-paid Services Authority (PSA) (previously known as PhonePayPlus)?

Select one only

1	Yes, I was told about them when going through the refund process	GO TO Q59
2	Yes, I knew about them before seeking a refund	
3	Yes, I have heard about them another way	
4	No, never heard of them	GO TO CLASSIFICATION

ASK Q58 FOR TARGETS 3 AND 4 – OTHERWISE GO TO CLASSIFICATION

Q58. Prior to this survey, had you heard of The Phone-paid Services Authority (PSA) (previously known as PhonePayPlus)?

Select one only

1	Yes	CONTINUE
2	No	GO TO CLASSIFICATION

Q59. How did you first find out about The Phone-paid Services Authority (PSA)?

Select one only

1	A Google search when going through the refund process	
2	Saw them mentioned in an online forum	
3	My telephone service provider told me	
4	The company providing the goods/service told me	
5	From a friend/colleague/family member	
6	Other (please state)	
7	Don't know / can't say	

Q60. Which ONE of the following statements best fits with the understanding you had of The Phone-paid Services Authority (PSA) when you **first** heard about them (or came across them)?

Please don't try to guess (or base it on what you know now). We want to know what your impression was (right or wrong) when you were first introduced to the PSA. **Rotate order**

Select one only

1	A regulator that sets and enforces rules for providers of phone-paid services	
2	An independent body that could assess and resolve issues and disputes between customers and phone-paid service providers	
3	A place to go to get a refund	
4	A place where I could go to get advice	
5	Other (please state)	
6	I had no idea what the PSA was or does	