

Consultation:	<b>0871 Services</b>
FAO:	Mr Nathan Marshall
Name of respondent:	<b>Brian Cooper</b>
Representing (self or organisation/s):	<b>Self</b>

**Q1: Do you agree with our proposal to create a Statement of Application for the 0871 number range? If not, please provide your reasons and alternative suggestions.**

Basically - Yes - but see detailed comments elsewhere.

**Q2: Do you agree that the current application of Section 1 of the Code is appropriate to apply to the 0871 number range? If not, please give your reasons.**

Basically - Yes - but see detailed comments elsewhere.

**Q3: Do you agree that this is a fair and proportionate application of the network operators' due diligence requirements to the 0871 number range? If not, please give your reasons. ICSTIS would welcome further information regarding quantification of costs.**

Yes

**Q4: Do you have any further information and evidence regarding usual payment times?**

**Additionally it would be helpful to have responses that indicate to what extent Service providers rely on immediate payments from network operators to cover their operational costs.**

no comments

**Q5: Do you agree that this is a fair and proportionate application of a delayed payment mechanism to the 0871 number range? If not, please provide your reasons.**

no comments

**Q6: Do you agree that the current application of Section 3 of the Code is appropriate to apply to the 0871 number range? If not, please provide your reasons.**

Yes, but . . . section 3 says service providers also have non-premium-rate customer service numbers, but you feel that using 0870/0871 numbers is reasonable. This contradicts the fact that ICSTIS will regulate 0871 numbers, indicating they are, in fact, premium rated (less than 09xx numbers, true, but above standard charges). Customer service providers are not permitted to use premium rate numbers, so that should also extend to 0871.

The over-riding principle should be that **any** rates which are above the standard rate for that type of call (ie. 'at a premium'), should be classed as "Premium Rate" and coded appropriately. So, 08xx numbers should either be free (0800, etc.) OR at the STANDARD RATE THEY PURPORT TO BE (0845 LOCAL ; 0870 NATIONAL) AND CHARGED SO THAT THE MILLIONS OF PEOPLE WHO PAY TELEPHONY PROVIDERS TO HAVE 'CALL BUNDLES' (ie. unlimited 'standard' UK calls, or mobile 'inclusive minutes') are NOT DISADVANTAGED.

THIS IS THE CRUNCH POINT : The present system MASSIVELY DISADVANTAGES the ordinary consumer.

In reality, today, there is no longer a case for "Local" or "National" calls at all, so even 0870 numbers are 'at a premium' to the cost of calling their geographical equivalents.

The additional fact that businesses can exploit their callers by earning revenue from such calls is **disgraceful !** A pricing system which can encourage keeping callers on the line longer, by various means, is an invitation to **fraud !!!**

**Q7: Do you agree that the current application of Section 4 of the Code is appropriate to apply to the 0871 number range? If not, please provide your reasons.**

Basically - Yes - providing there's no conflict with comments elsewhere.

**Q8: Do you agree that it is fair and proportionate to apply ICSTIS' current application of the prior permission regime under Section 5.1 of the Code to the 0871 number range? If not, please provide your reasons.**

Yes

**Q9: Do you agree that Option D is a fair and proportionate application of the undue delay requirements in paragraph 5.4.2 of the Code to the 0871 number range? If not, please provide your reasons and alternative preferred option. Additionally, please provide details of any other options you feel may be appropriate for ICSTIS to consider.**

No. Both Ofcom and yourselves receive many complaints about 0871 numbers and Ofcom are currently investigating 0870 fraudulent misuses, based on 'revenue share'. When 0870 ceases to provide this opportunity to make money, most organisations currently using 0870 are likely to change over to 0871 numbers - and this will certainly be true for fraudsters exploiting the 'revenue share' offered. Premium rate numbers are not permitted to charge for call queuing, and 0871 should be included in that regulation. Not to do so, is not in the interests of the consumer.

The claim that the use of 0871 will be for advanced network facilities does not hold ; these facilities are available with 0845 and 0870 numbers. It's clear the use of 0871 is almost solely for revenue share (of up to 6p/min).

The general public are largely aware that 09xx numbers are more costly, and therefore act accordingly and with caution. That awareness does not extend to the use of 0871 numbers. Very few companies would use 09xx numbers because of consumer backlash, so the use of 0871 'premium rate' numbers is a 'stealth' charge, and encourages keeping customers on the phone for extended periods by various means.

The public needs protecting - at the very least by classifying 0871 as "Premium2" or something similar, and also by prohibiting the charging of 'call queuing' OR by requiring a statutory announcement of the call cost per minute and the anticipated time a caller is likely to be held in a queue.

**Q10: Do you agree that this is a fair and proportionate application of the pricing information requirements under Section 5.7 of the Code to the 0871 number range? If not, please provide your reasons.**

Yes - except that, although the general public are largely aware that 09xx numbers are more costly, and therefore act accordingly and with caution, that awareness does not extend to the use of 0871 numbers.

The public needs protecting - at the very least by classifying 0871 as "Premium2" or something similar, and also by prohibiting the charging of 'call queuing' OR by requiring a statutory announcement of the call cost per minute and the anticipated time a caller is likely to be held in a queue.

**Q11: Do you agree that it is appropriate to allow a three-month implementation period, as outlined above?**

Yes

**Q12: Do you agree that this is a fair and proportionate application of ICSTIS' scope of regulation in respect to content of services provided on the 0871 number range? If not, please provide your reasons.**

Yes

**Q13: Do you agree that the current application of Section 6 of the Code is appropriate to apply to the 0871 number range? If not, please provide your reasons.**

Yes - except where it might conflict with my other comments.

**Q14: Do you agree that the current application of Section 7 of the Code is appropriate to apply to the 0871 number range? If not, please provide your reasons.**

Yes - except where it might conflict with my other comments

**Q15: Do you agree that the current application of Sections 8 to 11 of the Code is appropriate to apply to the 0871 number range? If not, please provide your reasons.**

Yes - except where it might conflict with my other comments

**Q16: Do you agree that this is a fair and proportionate application of the funding model in Annex 1 of the Code to apply to the 0871 number range? If not, please provide your reasons.**

Yes

**Q17: Do you agree that this is a fair and proportionate method of collection of the funding levy to apply to the 0871 number range? If not, please provide your reasons.**

Yes

**Q18: Do you agree that a minimum payment amount from each network operator should be £500 per annum? If not, please provide your reasons.**

Yes

**Q19: Do you agree that it is not appropriate for ICSTIS to create and promote a separate brand for regulation of the 0871 number range? If not, please provide your reasons.**

Yes - so long as the fact that 0871 is a premium rate number is not kept under wraps. Maybe call it "Premium2" or some similar term. Also, it should not be permitted for providers to refer to it as "National Rate".

**Q20: Is there any other way in which ICSTIS' regulatory framework should be amended or otherwise so as to regulate the 0871 number range in a way that is fair and proportionate?**

Ofcom regulations require that companies initiating phone calls should not display a CLI number costing more than local rate (0845). So, companies who do have 0871 numbers should also have a CLI display number of a lower rate (free / local rate / geographical). This should help prevent 'missed/silent' call frauds, where consumers call back to see who called them.

**Q21: Do you agree that this is an appropriate wording for a Statement of Application based on ICSTIS' proposals? If not, please provide your reasons and alternative wording.**

No comments