

Consultation:	0871 Services
FAO:	Mr Nathan Marshall
Name of respondent:	David Richard Fish
Representing (self or organisation/s):	Self

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.
Yes, in so far as it doesn't conflict with any of the answers/comments/suggestions below.
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.
Yes, in so far as it doesn't conflict with any of the answers/comments/suggestions below.
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.
N/a
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.
Yes
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.
No, because as mentioned in that section service providers also hold non-premium rate UK customer service numbers. You currently think 0871 numbers are ok, which seems like a clear contradiction as ICTIS will be regulating them as they are in effect premium rate numbers. As currently proposed the scheme will defeat the point of the service provider not holding a non-premium rate number as they hold an 0871 number! I would suggest the service providers having to hold a geographical rate number or 0870 number, once the new regulations come into force, not an 0871 number.
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.
Yes, in so far as it doesn't conflict with any of the answers/comments/suggestions below.
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. There have been significant complaints concerning 0871 numbers and at this time Ofcom is currently investigating scams on 0870 numbers. Once 0870 loses its revenue share, most companies/organisations are expected to migrate to 0871 and this means scam artists will also do this. What you propose - by not doing anything about call queuing - is not at all in the consumer interest, but is in the interest of companies/organisations using these numbers.

It has been stated by ICSTIS that many companies/organisations will use 0871 not for the revenue share (can be as much as up to 6p/min) but for the advanced network features. If this was true then companies/organisations would use other lower-rate non-geographical numbers like 0845 which offer the same advanced network features except in most cases revenue sharing isn't passed to the company instead being retained by the service provider to pay for the advanced network services. Therefore, the primary interest in using 0871 is for the revenue share in addition to the advanced network features available but the difference is that many consumers currently aren't aware that 0871 is premium rate which is why many companies/organisations have already migrated to 0871.

Many companies/organisations would not dare move to 09x (not even for the promise of 15p/min) because they are aware that consumers recognise that 09x is a premium rate and that this would cause many complaints. Instead they have opted for 0871 where revenue still exists but without consumer knowledge that they are in fact ringing a premium rate number (albeit lower amounts) and according to your proposal, being able to gain revenue even whilst consumers are held in a queue. I have my own experience of being held in a queue for over 20 minutes when ringing a company on their 0870 number. This equates to the company getting over £1 for every call they get that lasts 20 minutes and all the service they have provided is to hold the call in a queue! There is therefore a very clear incentive for companies to keep callers waiting. An experience that many customers find exceedingly frustrating and costly.

I believe with the extra revenue possible from 0871 numbers that this revenue is used to ensure that consumers aren't charged for being kept on hold for undue delays and aren't charged for being held in a long queue. I don't believe that with the extra revenue possible from 0871 numbers that this would add any extra financial burden on to companies/organisations operating 0871 numbers. If this is not agreed/possible then instead, a poor second choice but better than nothing, would be an announcement when the number is initially rung that states where you are in the queue and how long it's estimated you'll be before being answered, better still would be an estimated cost!. This would allow consumers to know in advance that they could be a long time and can choose to ring back later, etc. Again, this could all be paid for out of the revenue from the call they receive which given your belief that the companies only use 0871 for its network features and not to deliberately gain revenue from the call would seem to be perfectly reasonable.

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.

No, because consumers will not be aware that 0871 is a premium rate number (unlike 09x where consumer knowledge that this is a premium rate is greater), companies/organisations should also be obliged to say when they answer the call that "calls will cost 10p/min from a BT landline (other providers may charge more)." This really has hardly any financial impact on the companies/organisations using these numbers, in fact the extra 10 seconds or so it takes to say this will cost Consumers, but at least consumers would be fully aware that they are paying at least 10p/min.*

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, in so far as it doesn't conflict with any of the answers/comments/suggestions below.

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, in so far as it doesn't conflict with any of the answers/comments/suggestions below.

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, in so far as it doesn't conflict with any of the answers/comments/suggestions below.

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 ICSTIS doesn't try and hide the fact that 0871 is a premium rate number (albeit lower amount than 09x) and that Communication Providers /Service Providers do not advertise the 0871 number range just as 'national rate', which some currently do.

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?

To discourage scams with missed phone calls/silent calls, ICSTIS should ensure that companies/organisations using a 0871 do not display via CDI (Caller Display Identity) their 0871 number. Instead, companies/organisations should use free phone or lower-cost number ranges. This would also save Ofcom having to investigate missed calls/silent calls (whether deliberate or not) as this is potentially in contravention of current Ofcom rules. Currently, Ofcom rules state that companies/organisations making phone calls (sales, etc) should not display any number costing more than the rate of a 0845 on CDI.

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.

N/a