

Consultation:	0871 Services
FAO:	Mr Nathan Marshall
Name of respondent:	John Harvey and Elizabeth Harvey
Representing (self or organisation/s):	Ourselves, and all consumers.

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, but only where it does not conflict with the answers 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, but only where it does not conflict with the answers 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.

No comment.

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.

Service providers should be required to hold geographical or 0870 numbers and NOT hold "premium rate" 0871 numbers.

Section 3 states that service providers also hold "non-premium rate" UK customer service numbers and that you currently believe that 087x numbers are also acceptable.

This is a contradiction as 0871 will be "premium rate" numbers - this is why they will be regulated by ICSTIS.

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, but only where it does not conflict with the answers 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.

All 0871 calls should include announcements each time the accumulated charge has increased by an additional £0:50p or £1:00.

You state that both OFCOM and you have received complaints concerning 0871 numbers and that OFCOM is investigating scams / fraudulent use on 0870 numbers. Once 0870 loses its revenue share, most companies and organisations are likely to move to 0871 numbers and scammers / fraudsters will do the same.

You propose doing NOTHING about call queueing. This is NOT IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST as companies can charge callers merely by keeping them on hold. It is already common to hold for tens of minutes on call centre lines - now the public will be expected to pay for this. This is completely unacceptable and is CLOSE TO THEFT.

It has been stated by ICSTIS that many bodies will use 0871 for the advanced network features and not for the revenue share (which can be as much as up to 6p/min). If this was true, companies could use 0845 numbers which offer the identical advanced network features. The reason companies will use 0871 is to take money from callers by revenue sharing. Many callers are not aware that 0871 calls are charged at a premium rate which is why many companies have already migrated to 0871.

Companies do not move to 09x numbers, even at 15p/min, because they know that callers know 09x calls are charged at premium rates. This is why they opt for 0871 numbers which generate revenue probably without callers realising.

The proposals allow companies to gain revenue while consumers are held in a queue as well as while they are put on hold after the call has been answered. Callers are often held in queues for over 20 minutes when ringing some 0870 numbers today - on an 0871 number this would cost £1 and the caller has received nothing in exchange for his payment. There is no incentive for the company to reduce the call queue times - indeed their incentive is to extend the call queue time as long as possible as this generates more revenue for them.

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.

Callers will not be aware that 0871 calls are charged at a premium rate number, unlike 09x calls, where consumer knowledge that these are premium rate is greater.

0871 calls should be required to announce that "the call will be charged at 10p/min from a BT landline and other providers may charge more".

0871 numbers have all the hallmarks of the TV Premium Rate phone calls to so called "quiz" shows and should be tightly regulated in the consumer interest.

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, but only where it does not conflict with my other answers.

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, but only where it does not conflict with my other answers.

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, but only where it does not conflict with my other answers.

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.

Why have you asked a question with a double negative - it confuses responders?

I agree that it is necessary for ICSTIS to create and promote a brand for regulation of 0871 numbers. The reasons are:

- 1 to educate consumers that 0871 is a premium rate service, albeit cheaper than 09x
- 2 to ensure that companies do not advertise the 0871 number range as 'National Rate' where consumers are led to believe that this means it is priced at the same price as a standard local call to the nearby local town. Some companies already do this.

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?

The regulatory framework should be modified to prevent abuse due to missed phone calls and silent calls. OFCOM rules state that companies making phone calls (sales, etc) must not display any number on CLI costing more than the rate of an 0845 call.

ICSTIS should therefore ensure that companies using 0871 numbers do not display the 0871 number on Caller Display Identity (CLI). Companies should be obliged to use freephone or lower-cost number ranges. This would save OFCOM having to investigate missed / silent calls, whether deliberate or not, in contravention of current OFCOM rules.

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 comment.