

For The Attention of James Harris, I.C.S.T.I.S.

**Prior Permission Response
On Premium Rate Services Used In Television And Radio Programmes**

**Prepared by Elaine Bentley, General Manager, BBC Audiocall
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1. Definition Of Broadcast Premium Rate Services

Broadly Audiocall believes that this should be definitely used for call TV services. In the event that it is across the piece for all broadcast TV premium rate applications, Audiocall would need assurance as to the speed in which I.C.S.T.I.S. would give permission as there are sometimes very quick turnarounds on broadcast (TV and radio) and these would need to be taken into account and allowed for.

2. Calls Received Before And After Lines Open And Closed

In Audiocall's opinion, this represents a tiny percentage of the overall calls, (always less than 1% of the overall calls, but generally around 0.4%)
Viewers are informed when the lines are closed and that if they call, their call will not be counted but will be charged. This is more of a network consideration. Currently there is no facility to allow for this. Talks of putting an unobtainable tone at line closure will result in further calls to the network from the public thinking they have a problem with their line and in turn, could clog up the network further and confuse all parties. This needs careful consideration and application to ensure caller gets best experience. Audiocall also believes that there should be a degree of responsibility on the part of the caller once they have been told the lines are closed. One wouldn't go to a store after closing time and expect for the cost/time incurred in getting there to be re-imbursed or in the event of a postal entry being sent and received after the closing time, would I.C.S.T.I.S./OFCOM expect the postage to be refunded?

3. Connectivity And Capacity

Audiocall agrees in principle with the points raised

4. Conduct

Audiocall agrees with all points under conduct except in relation to the independent third party verification suggestion on prizes worth more than £5,000. It is not workable in our opinion and not necessary. Care should be taken at whatever prize amount offered and not set at >£5,000.

5. Cost And Conditions

Agree

6. Coherence

Audiocall firmly believes that the service provider is wholly responsible for the provision of premium rate services. Audiocall takes this responsibility very seriously and advises both internal and external production companies and broadcasters on what they can and cannot do under the I.C.S.T.I.S. code of practice and would not allow any deviation in this.

7. Same Risks In Radio As TV

Agree

8. Definition Of Broadcast PRS Extending To Radio

Yes

9. Call TV

Agree

10. Auction Services

If the prior permission is going ahead, then yes auction services should fall within the proposal

11. Music Channels

N/A

12. Charitable Element Services

Again, if prior permission is going ahead, then yes these services should fall within the proposal

13. Chat Services

Broadly agree

14. Other Categories Of Service

No

15. Prior Permission For Broadcast PRS At Service Provider Level Only

Again, if prior permission is going ahead, then yes it should be at service provider level and consistently apply to the service provider throughout

16. Effective Improvement Of The Proposed Prior Permission Regime

Again, if this goes ahead, there should be a tiered approach depending on historical information relating to the service provider's etc and possibly a traffic light system for the benefit of speed in applications. I.C.S.T.I.S will need to be very pro-active in this area to satisfy the very real commercial demands.

17. Broadcasters And Production Companies Being Directly Answerable To The I.C.S.T.I.S. Code?

Audiocall does not believe this to be a practical or workable solution – we believe that all this will do is dilute the 'responsibility' chain with the potential of each party involved believing that someone else is responsible at the end of the line. By keeping it simple and at service provider level, there is no doubt as to who is responsible and who should be leading the compliance issues, the service provider