

The conduct of live services – Fact Sheet #2

What is the purpose of this fact sheet?

To assist Network operators and providers by clarifying the Phone-paid Services Authority's expectations relating to introductory messages that consumers hear when they connect to live services using a premium rate services line.

1. Definition of a live service

- 1.1. Live services are defined as those that enable a consumer to speak with a real person (i.e. a service that involves a two-way or multi-way live voice conversation). There are many different types of live service – technical support, counselling and professional advice services being a few examples.
- 1.2. A further class of live services are live entertainment services. These are services defined as being either 1-2-1 chat services (sexual or non-sexual), or psychic/tarot services – services that allow the caller to speak live with an operator or another user for 'entertainment purposes'. Similarly, multi-party chat services are also classed as 'live services'; the difference being that they enable two or more persons (the participants) to simultaneously conduct a telephone conversation with one another in a monitored chat-room.
- 1.3. Providers should also note that some categories of live service are subject to Special Conditions. Providers should refer to the Phone-paid Services Authority website www.psauthority.org.uk for further information on [Special Conditions](#) and for a list of these categories and service-specific information that relates to them. Providers should also consult the General Guidance Note on '[The avoidance of undue delay](#)' and the General Guidance Note on '[Promoting PRS](#)' for advice on these areas and the way in which they might relate to live services.

2. Introductory messages – information that the Phone-paid Services Authority recommends callers should hear upon connection

- 2.1. The Phone-paid Services Authority recommends that all live services must include introductory messages (i.e. messages that are heard by callers on call connection), detailing the call cost per minute and the identity of the provider that is providing the service, as a point of best practice and in support of transparency and pricing outcome at Section 2.2 of the Code.
- 2.2. This information should to be given by way of either an automated recorded message given out prior to connection to an operator, or by way of a standard statement recited by a live operator – with either being acceptable.
- 2.3. Some live services, such as Live Entertainment and Chat Services for example, must provide additional information in their introductory messages, such as confirmation

that callers must be 18 and over – please refer to the notices of [Special Conditions](#), as appropriate.

- 2.4. Please note: providers operating lower cost services on the 087x number ranges should refer to the General Guidance Note on '[Lower-cost services](#)' with regard to introductory messages.
- 2.5. Where a service offers the facility of onward connection within the service, as with Directory Enquiry and International Call Routing Services, pricing information should be repeated immediately before the call is routed to its final destination.
- 2.6. Where calls are recorded, consumers must be clearly informed of this, in accordance with Data Protection legislation.
- 2.7. Announcements upon connection, and those heard prior to onward connection within a service, must not be unreasonably prolonged or cause undue delay (please refer to the Guidance on [The Avoidance of Undue Delay](#)). Announcements should not exceed 30 seconds in duration; should a provider have a reason for longer announcements, they are encouraged to seek advice from the Phone-paid Services Authority prior to the service going live.
- 2.8. The announcements upon connection to a service may be chargeable, unless explicitly prohibited through a relevant Special Condition or other notice.