

**Title:**

Mr

**Forename:**

Stuart

**Surname:**

Dollin

**Representing:**

Self

**Organisation (if applicable):**

**What do you want Ofcom to keep confidential?:**

Keep nothing confidential

**If you want part of your response kept confidential, which parts?:**

**Ofcom may publish a response summary:**

Yes

**I confirm that I have read the declaration:**

Yes

**Ofcom should only publish this response after the consultation has ended:**

You may publish my response on receipt

**Question 1.1: What are the implications of market change for mobile and wireless services?:**

Not sure what you mean here! Market changes should make mobiles simpler and less expensive to use

**Question 1.2: How are citizens and consumers affected by developments in the mobile sector?:**

Only in that developments in mobile technology should enhance consumer's lives and not seek to replace existing communications technologies

**Question 1.3: What are the purposes of mobile regulation, and where should its focus lie?:**

Regulation should control the balance between the legitimate right of mobile companies to operate profitably and the rights of consumers not to face high charges and restriction due to collusion between mobile operators.

**Question 1.4: What is the scope for deregulation, competition and innovation in the mobile sector?:**

Can this really be answered in a simple paragraph? Regulation should only server the points raised in 1.3 with operators free to offer whatever technologies and innovations they think fit. Regulation only comes into play if they use this as an excuse to artificially raise prices for basic services and exclude certain consumer sectors from mobile service altogether.

**Question 3.1: What do you think are the features of a well-functioning mobile market? What evidence do you see that those features are present in the UK market?:**

A range of service providers offering mobile services that are inexpensive and suitable for consumer needs. With a number of operators already in the UK market this seems to be at least partly true. Features that militate against this are confusing price tariffs, exclusivity in certain areas (e.g. Apple's iPhone being only available on O2), high call charges for pay-as-you-go tariffs and, most importantly the exorbitantly high charges that fixed line operators have to charge to call a mobile number - this is caused by unacceptably high termination charges.

**Question 3.2: What measures are most appropriate to assess whether the mobile sector is performing well for citizens and consumers?:**

On-going surveys and response to consumer comments and concerns.

**Question 3.3: How will market dynamics change as a result of trends such as availability of new spectrum, mobile broadband and new ways of delivering voice services?:**

This is largely unknown but it would be good if it enabled mobile operators to offer tariffs that are broadly similar to landline operators both in terms of cost of calls and inclusive services (e.g. free calls in off peak times, calls at 3p per minute in peak times - to all networks both mobile and landline).

Extra features should come as secondary to this.

**Question 4.1: What is your experience, as an individual consumer or an organisation that uses mobile services?:**

I use a pay as you go phone and although the call charges are high, I don't make many. Having a mobile that will receive calls for a simple outlay of just £10 is certainly good. I've had few reasons to be dissatisfied.

**Question 4.2: How should regulators and policy-makers respond to signs of rising consumer concern? :**

They should be champions who can work on a consumers behalf to resolve issues. Biggest complaint is that most operators don't have a landline number for customer service but instead rely on a mobile number - free to call from your mobile, but if your mobile doesn't work, a call from a landline can be very expensive.

**Question 4.3: What are the important factors to consider in striking a balance between protecting mobile consumers and enabling markets to work flexibly? Have we got this balance right in today's mobile market?:**

See answer to Q 1.3 . Provided this balance is met, there should be few concerns. When this balance is not right, regulators should have much stronger powers to redress such imbalances.

**Question 5.1: How does the use of mobile services affect our participation as citizens in society?:**

It shouldn't affect them at all - and largely doesn't for me. We should, however, guard against the assumption that everyone has a mobile - and one with the latest technology - in determining new ways of implementing the basic functioning of society - e.g. voting.

**Question 5.2: What factors should we take into account in thinking about access and inclusion issues in mobile markets?:**

None other than tariffs should be available to all citizens regardless of issues such as credit worthiness, income or other such factors.

**Question 5.3: What factors should we take into account in thinking about new services, and how those services may affect issues like protection of children, privacy and security?:**

Common sense should prevail here protection issues should be no less vigorous than those for other forms of communication and data protection. We should never lose sight of the fact that many children have mobiles and any use of technology should take this into account on pain of harsh penalties.

**Question 5.4: Have you been affected by issues about coverage or 'not spots'? How has it affected you?:**

No... but consumers should realise that coverage can never be 100 per cent and should never assume so - unless mobile companies actually promise such coverage, they cannot be held responsible for the stupidity of consumers who expect and demand it.

**Question 7.1: What do you see as the most influential trends and features of mobile and wireless markets in future?:**

Difficult to tell - and difficult to get excited. I want a service that makes and receives calls and basic texts on tariffs which are same as, say, BT, landlines. Anything that assures that is good, other trends and features are of little concern... except... I'd like to see mobile broadband connectivity considered in the same light.

**Question 7.2: What new policy and regulatory challenges could the trends identified in this section bring? Which policy and regulatory challenges could they address?:**

Regulatory challenges remain as in Q1.3 and should drive the market towards features described in Q7.1 . Other than that, care should be taken to protect consumers from unwarranted advertising in whatever form (SMS, Internet, etc) perhaps using similar legislation that bans the receipt of Junk E-Mail and ordinary mail

**Question 8.1: Should Ofcom do more to promote competition in mobile and wireless markets?:**

They should drive the market to the tariff model as in Q1.3 - other than that, competition by means of value added services need only be watched.

**Question 8.2: Ofcom's strategy in telecommunications is to promote competition at the deepest level of infrastructure that is effective and sustainable. How might this strategy be applied, given future developments in the mobile sector? Under what circumstances, if ever, would it make sense to consider access regulation for mobile platforms?:**

Again 'promote' is the wrong word. Ofcom should control and regulate basic access leaving mobile companies to compete on value added features.

**Question 8.3: What role can competition play in ensuring that future development of the mobile internet provides an open and flexible environment for a wide range of services? Should Ofcom explore open access requirements to ensure opportunities for innovation? What role might 'net neutrality' play in the mobile sector?:**

Competition is a valuable tool, but domination in any technology area is dangerous - an example is Microsoft's domination of the computer operating system market. Ofcom must never allow similar technology domination to happen in the mobile market.

**Question 8.4: What role might competition play in addressing questions about transparency of prices, services and contractual conditions offered to consumers of mobile and wireless services? What role should regulation play in addressing these questions?:**

Competition has no role in this. It is up to regulation to enforce easy to understand pricing and contractual conditions, making any contracts that infringe the regulations unenforceable in law, AND... leaving the mobile company open to significant penalties for trying to enforce them.

**Question 8.5: What is the best way to promote content standards and ensure privacy protection for increasingly complex content and transaction services? How will privacy issues fare in a world where services are more personal and more complex?:**

Paradoxically, competition would probably ensure high standards of content. Privacy protection, on the other hand should be rigorously enforced by law. And... the law has to be continually reviewed by independent monitors (i.e. people not connected with the industry) to ensure that such regulation never falls behind current technology.

**Question 8.6: Will the mobile termination rate regime need to evolve or change more fundamentally? What is the best approach to adopt?:**

It needs to change fundamentally to the extent that termination charges into mobile networks are the same as into landline networks so calls effectively cost the same from mobiles to landlines and, most importantly from landlines to mobiles. If necessary this should be enforced by regulation and threat of removal of operating licences. The mobile networks are now sufficiently mature that call costs should not need to cover the repayment of capital investment in infrastructure especially with the ever increasing volumes of calls being made. Investment in new features and technologies can, however, be covered by the charges for those extra facilities provided such increases are not applied across the board for basic services.

**Question 8.7: If competition does not reduce international roaming charges sufficiently, how should regulators respond, if at all?:**

Calling abroad from the UK would be covered in Q8.6. For those consumers calling from abroad to the UK, it is their own responsibility to check the costs (which should be very clear and transparent) and then make a judgement as to whether the importance of such calls is worth the cost. If they deem that such calls are worth it, they shouldn't then complain about how much it costs. Perhaps competition will influence this but it is not a matter for regulation

**Question 8.8: How might universal service and universal access need to adapt in a world where we increasingly rely on mobile services? What role might mobile play in universal access delivery in future?:**

Simply we, as consumers, should guard against over reliance on mobile services and regulation should ensure that this situation is never allowed to happen.

**Question 8.9: Can markets and commercial agreements address issues such as ?not spots? and emergency access?If not, what role might be played by a regulator to address these issues?:**

Again, we should never be arrogant enough to assume that mobile coverage is universal. If anything redressing this illusion is the way regulation should go.

**Question 8.10: How might access for particular groups (such as the elderly and disabled users) need to evolve in future? What role can competition play in addressing these questions?:**

Provided that equipment is available for such groups (e.g. phones with large keys) there is no reason to push this. Although mobile technology is convenient it should never be allowed to supplant conventional communications and this is the best way that such groups can be protected.

**Question 8.11: Do you have any comments regarding our proposed way forward and the objectives of the next phase of this Assessment?:**

Not at this present time

**Additional comments:**