Title:

Mr

Forename:

John

Surname:

Green

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?:

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

There are many opportunities from converging technologies but one is always concerned at the end costs from downloading what could be significant amounts of data (eg maps and internet downloads). If one is overseas, for example, bills can be cripplingly high and this is the major reason why I fight shy of downloads over my current, old, mobile phone. It would be nice, however, to download onto my GPS the

latest maps where a city centre has had major road changes. My current GPS maps for Sheffield City Centre are out of date, for example, and I've found myself driving where roads shouldn't exist in Scotland!

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

To maintain a fair market which doesn't endanger the citizens living near masts or other transmission equipment yet allows companies to make sufficient profit to develop their infrastructure and new products whilst limiting their ability to overcharge customers.
I think that we shouldn't have a multiplicity of masts with each company having to have its own transmission systems in each part of the country, but roaming so that each device picks up and uses the nearest signal as happens in most of Europe.

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

It is very difficult to determine, in advance, what systems won't exist in future - for example, mobile television in the back seats of cars, internet signals being picked up by computers and GPS receiver / transmitters (automatic braking when another GPS receiver is detected within, say, 3 metres) traffic jams being detected far in advance and a vehicle being re-routed automatically to avoid it - the possibilities are seemingly endless.
Research is needed into discrete forms of transmission equipment that can be used in areas of natural beauty which are remote but where emergency services need to be called.

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?:

People being easily able to change their provider whilst keeping their existing number. Home phone calls being automatically diverted to a mobile handset if unanswered. Reasonable charges whilst using a phone abroad.
I was once called whilst I was abroad by an organisation for which I am a volunteer in the UK. Having to pay for receiving a call which I didn't want didn't exactly please me. I believe that no charges should be made for receiving calls or texts. There would be outrage if internet users were charged for all spam emails they get.

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

Simple surveys and regular meetings with different parts of the industry.

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 the question that you might be expected to be able to answer - far less me! However, 3G seems to have failed largely because of the high entry costs for licences and consequent high charges. It is fear of the end charges, particularly for retired users (like me) that tend to hinder our takeup of the latest equipment and the services that they offer.

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

I'm very happy with my provider but I don't like the costs when using my phone abroad - especially those for receiving calls. My phone is about 4 years old so I have not tried to use internet services on my phone, except inadvertently, but I am a heavy internet user at home - so would use it if a) my phone was capable and b) the charges were very reasonable.

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

Take action!

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?:

4.3b: Probably, but I think you should review your objections to roaming. It doesn't bother me when I'm abroad and I see the signal is coming from different providers. If this means that there is better coverage and fewer masts together then this would be much better. (There are several locations near to my home which have two masts and two transmission boxes close together - yet none on a major cross country route across the Pennines.

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

People are able to use mobile devices to call emergency services. They are also able to take photos or film as evidence or for broadcast news. Unfortunately they have also been used by the few to record their own criminal activities.

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

That equipment should be designed for use by people who are blind or have sight problems. I know that bank 'holes in wall" machines are impossible for blind people to use because systems differ and there are multiple screens rather than one simple system. Big keys are liked by others.

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?:

Unfortunately you can't stop equipment designed for good purposes not being used for bad ones. I think we have become overly fond of 'health and safety' and 'human rights' legislation. I have signed up to services designed to stop nuisance marketing calls, but that doesn't seem to have stopped them.

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

What I do mind is being on a remote road and not being able to get a signal - not because I get calls, but because of the possible need to call for help either to emergency services or for road side assistance. There are no mobile services on the A57 Snake Pass for example, and no public phone boxes. Any breakdowns usually involve a walk of many miles to get help because people are reluctant to stop and offer help or lifts. Objections are made to locating masts in areas of natural beauty. Personally, I don't see what there is to object to when most phone masts are discreet and look just like a telegraph pole. Perhaps research is needed into other forms of mast and/or transmission equipment.
There are many parts of the Peak District where there is no signal but there are many climbing accidents where calls to the emergency services are vital to save lives.

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

Integration of equipment - GPS & laptop computers (or smaller devices); GPS / Phone / Recording and broadcast devices.

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?:

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

Yes.

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?:

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?:

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?:

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?:

Privacy is a major concern, Whilst I know that using a mobile device can show where it was at any time I would not want details of any calls or texts declared to any official body without a court order being made. There has been far too great a relaxation of our safeguards in recent years even though I have nothing to fear.

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

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

Regulators should act.

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?:

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?:

Perhaps you should consult with the emergency services, highways agency, RNLI and coastguard as well as with breakdown companies.

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?:

Involve expert users from this group. I used to work with a blind person who had been a software engineer despite being blind from birth.

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

Additional comments: