

Dear Sir

OFCOM'S CONSUMER POLICY

The Executive Summary - Five thousand words that say nothing and leave me convinced that OFCOM's so called duty to protect the citizen-consumer is and never has been any more than hot air.

For example. For 13 years the 0990/0870 scam has been allowed to grow into a huge industry that feeds greed and deceit amongst telecom providers and commercial users alike. And what have OFCOM done at the end of this 13 years? Yesterday they proudly announce

"The change [to 0870 calls] is likely to significantly reduce the price of many calls to 0870 numbers"

while at the same time they give all present 0870 number user at least 18 months to prepare announcements of the cost of these calls or migrate to even more expensive 0871 numbers.

What makes OFCOM think that any company with a long track record of making money from 0870 numbers are going to give up that income when all they need to do is add another recording to their existing preamble.

OFCOM continues to recommend that public bodies should not use NTS numbers exclusively (ie: without giving equal prominence to a geographic alternative) especially when dealing with people on low incomes or other vulnerable groups. But what has happened? Nothing. How on earth is the DVLC supposed to know whether a telephone enquiry about a licence application lost in the post is from a high or low income driver?

Far from responding to consumers' concerns for transparency, OFCOM's proposal allowing TWO completely different charging regimes on the same number prefix, will simply add to the present confusion.

Come on, OFCOM. Why not simply admit that you are there to represent the interests of what is probably the most deceitful telecoms industry in the world, AND NO ONE ELSE.

Yours faithfully

I.R.MacCallum