



fair telecoms campaign

The Big Question for all 084 phone number users

Ofcom

“Service Charge”



In the light of the Ofcom announcement of 15 April 2013,

if you are to continue imposing a “Service Charge” on callers by using 084 numbers, will you be declaring it now or wait to be told to do so?

The Ofcom announcement

The “Service Charge” and the “Access Charge”, which are presently combined to make up the cost of calling 084 / 087 / 09 and 118 numbers, will be separated.

- The “Service Charge” is to the benefit of the person called:
 - For 0845 numbers this is 2p per minute
 - For 0844/0843 numbers this is up to 7p per minute (the latter applies for those cases where BT currently charges 5.105p per minute - including VAT @ 20%).
- The “Access Charge” is to the benefit of the telephone company with whom the call is made:
 - At present this varies from -2p per minute up to 39p per minute.

In due course Ofcom will introduce regulations which will compel honest declaration of these charges and a simple structure for Access Charges. (See [Simplifying non-geographic numbers](#).)

The question

Users must decide whether they wish to retain their Service Charge, when compelled to declare it. They may also wish to continue to exploit the present “confusion”.

We suggest that **The Big Question** be posed to all users of 084 numbers. Customers, patients, members, owners, shareholders, etc. may expect an answer.

Many significant examples of 084 users are found in the briefings linked to our [news release](#), including [examples](#) of the Ofcom-suggested style of **Service Charge** declaration.

The answers

The **fair telecoms campaign** will be very interested to hear the answers and will be pleased to publish them. Please ensure that answers are valid and repeatable.

Answers to **The Big Question** may address, or prompt, possible supplementary questions:

- ? Do you use most of the **Service Charge** to offset the cost of your telephone service - this is normal, it is rare for all of the **Service Charge** to be taken as a “cashback”
- ? Do you justify the **Service Charge** on the basis that callers receive a “**Premium Rate Service**”
- ? If you need the features of a non-geographic number, why do you not use 03
- ? **Do you only tell the truth when forced to do so by law**

