

**Ofcom to apply new legal requirements on broadcasters in support of "Clear Call Rates for Everyone"**

Ofcom [is consulting](#) on revisions to the "Broadcasting Code", which will apply the provisions of the ["Clear Call Rates for Everyone" regulations](#) to broadcasters.

These revisions will require broadcasters to provide proper information about call costs when using **084/087/09 "Unbundled Tariff Numbers" (UTNs)** for audience interaction. Significantly, the new requirement will *i) cover 084 numbers* and *ii) require declaration of the "Service Charge"* - the additional element of the call cost to the benefit of the person called. Present requirements, for all users, require only atypical examples of total call cost and exclude 084 numbers.

The fair telecoms campaign wants more

We recognise that there is a limit to what Ofcom can do by regulation and we therefore make a direct appeal to all broadcasters to meet the following demands:

- **Cease imposition of a Service Charge for contact from those you serve**

Many broadcasters still use 084 numbers for normal contact - see notes overleaf and our briefings-

[BBC Radio Stations inviting listeners to call on 0845 telephone numbers](#) (check for updates)

[Companies in breach of new Consumer Contract Regulations](#) (ref Sky TV)

Whilst many have changed, often to 03 numbers, over recent years, anomalies such as those covered by our briefings remain. We also regularly come upon individual cases where 084 (and even 087) numbers are still used - often by third party contractors such as ticket agencies.

The **fair telecoms campaign** wholly supports Ofcom's intention that **UTNs** are only used where there is a clear justification for the service provider imposing a charge on the caller, and we seek support for the application of this perfectly fair principle.

- **Ensure that all numbers with a Service Charge are highlighted as such**

The legal requirement to declare the Service Charge associated with every **UTN** will only come into effect from June 2015. It would be a great assistance to viewers and listeners, as well as those who need to move away from 084 numbers, if all examples of their current improper use were to be highlighted (where appropriate) ahead of the forthcoming regulatory requirements.

- **Assist us and Ofcom in spreading the word**

We have been delighted to have had many opportunities to draw attention to the issue of misuse of 084 telephone numbers, both by broadcast contributions and through briefings. Key topics have included NHS GPs [\[e.g. 1\]](#) (where much work still has to be done) [\[e.g. 2\]](#) and Government [\[e.g. 3\]](#) (where the focus now moves from the centre to outlying parts and contracted services).

There has long been public confusion about the cost of telephone calls, which has been wickedly exploited both by telephone companies and by users of expensive numbers. We are ready to address this at whatever level of detail is required, from explaining the simple principles to the often more complex task of busting common myths and exposing scams [\[e.g. 4\]](#).

Materials are being issued to explain the forthcoming regulatory changes through the Ofcom-led ["UK Calling" communications campaign](#). We will be joining the many bodies engaged in that effort, but are always ready to work with broadcasters, with necessary support from Ofcom. We see the need for 'feature items' covering this topic at length, in addition, or linked, to news stories.





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In a spirit of fairness ...

The briefings overleaf drew attention only to BBC Radio and BSkyB.

The following examples cover the other TV broadcasters:

ITV Anglia News	0844 881 6900
ITV Border News	0844 881 5888
ITV Central News	0844 881 4000
ITV Meridian News	0844 881 2000
ITV Tyne Tees News	0844 881 5153
ITV Wales News	0844 881 0200
Channel 4 learning	0844 800 4445
Channel 5 Customer Services	0845 705 0505 *
* terms and conditions out of date on 10 October 2014?	
	0845 308 8000 "Low cost number" ? <i>(regional TV News caption)</i>