



Rip-off customer support numbers banned

The government has today published the regulations which will prohibit use of 084, 087 and other “rip-off” telephone numbers for enquiries and complaints.

Many of the provisions of the **Consumer Contracts (Information, Cancellation and Additional Payments) Regulations 2013**, which are today [published in draft](#), simplify and consolidate existing law, but **THIS IS NEW!**

“where a trader makes a telephone number available by which a consumer may contact the trader about a contract ... the number must be one of the following - (a) a geographic number; (b) a mobile number; (c) a number to which calls must be free of charge.” (see [Charges for communication by telephone - #39](#))

Other services

Numbers used to provide additional services (e.g. extra technical advice about related matters) may still be subject to the Service Charge that applies to all 084, 087 and 09 numbers.

Under the regulations, basic contact from a Customer cannot be undertaken using a number on which a Service Charge is applied.

This does not apply to customers of government services

The **Department for Work and Pensions**, and other public bodies, will be free to continue using 0845 numbers for contact from their customers.

Calls to the **Citizens Advice consumer helpline**, to complain about traders using 0845 numbers or in breach of any of these regulations, will be to **0845 4 04 05 06**.

Timetable

BIS is inviting comments on the draft regulations by 11 October. They will become law by the end of 2013, to be in effect by the middle of 2014.

Comment

David Hickson of the fair telecoms campaign said:

“It is reassuring that the Premium Charges associated with 084 numbers are now recognised for what they are. This ban will be great for consumers and it will also highlight many other situations where use of the numbers must cease.”

