



## fair telecoms campaign

## press cutting



The message that calls to 0845 numbers are unduly expensive is getting out

These extracts are from coverage of [the story issued by the National Audit Office](#) which stated: *"Most of HMRC's numbers are still 0845 numbers which result in high call charges for some customers."*

Every example refers to the additional cost. There is no reference to "local rate".

### [BBC News](#)

Many of HMRC's phone lines have 0845 prefixes, which can **cost callers on mobile phones between 12p and 41p per minute**, whether they are on hold or speaking to someone. Calls from **landlines cost between 1p and 10.5p per minute**, depending on the time of day.

### [Channel 4 News](#)

The fact that many of these hotlines are **0845 numbers makes it more expensive for callers**, because these are not normally included in mobile phone call plans.

### [Daily Telegraph](#)

Customers who call HMRC from their mobile phone face the steepest charges on these numbers, paying **up to 41p a minute to phone an 0845 number** .... Even those calling from their landlines will pay **up to 10.5p a minute**, depending on the time of day, for an 0845 number.

### [Daily Mail](#)

The NAO ... was highly critical of how callers have to use an **expensive 0845 number**. The cost varies but it can hit up to 41p per minute to ring from a mobile. This is at a time when a growing number of families do not have a landline.

### [Independent](#)

Given **calls to 0845 numbers can cost up to 45p a minute** from mobiles that means some customers are spending £5 before they even get through to an advisor. While HMRC does not directly profit from the income from 0845 number its telephone operator Cable & Wireless does.

### [Guardian](#)

The National Audit Office ... found that many of the helplines are **premium-rated 0845 numbers** and raise £136m a year from callers.

### [FT](#)

The Revenue uses **expensive 0845 numbers** which mean its phone service provider, Cable and Wireless, profits while customers wait.

### [The Sun](#)

The average wait on **costly 0845 numbers** for those that did get through was 4mins 42secs.

### [Mirror](#)

Some 6.5million people were left holding for longer than 10 minutes even though they were calling on **expensive 0845 numbers**.

### [Metro](#)

MP Margaret Hodge, public accounts committee chairman, said: 'I find it totally unacceptable HMRC uses **costly 0845 numbers** and charges people for the privilege of waiting for the department to pick up.'

David Hickson



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