fair telecoms campaign briefing

# Continuing foolish use of 084 and 087 numbers

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# Why it is foolish to use 084 and 087 numbers

Regardless of any breach of regulatory prohibition, use of 084 and 087 numbers is invariably utterly foolish.

The “unbundled tariff”, which applies to these numbers along with the “genuine premium rate” ranges (09 and 118) causes callers to incur an “Access Charge” to the benefit of their telephone service provider.

## *Access Charges*

Access Charges, see this list (check Websites for latest charges), are currently between 12p and 78p per minute, including VAT, for major providers. Some business tariffs may offer lower Access Charges, but the same principle applies.

The amount earned (exclusive of VAT) on a 087 number can be no more than 10.833p per minute. On a 084 number it is limited to 5.833p per minute. (Inclusive of VAT the amounts are 13p and 7p.)

This means that the caller is paying more than twice what is being received by the service provider of the user of the number. Some of this may be passed on or used as a discount against the cost of the telephone service. In many cases however, what is earned in this way is even dwarfed by the amount of VAT earned by the government from the call!

## *Cost / Benefit breakdown*

See the following examples of the cost / benefit breakdown per minute.

| Make-up of Cost | | | | | Breakdown of benefit | | | | Effective Tariff |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Number | Provider | Service charge | Access Charge | TOTAL | VAT | to OCP | to User | User % of total | |
| 084 | BT | £0.07 | £0.12 | £0.19 | £0.04 | **£0.10** | £0.05 | 26% | 280% |
| 084 | EE | £0.07 | £0.78 | £0.85 | £0.15 | **£0.65** | £0.05 | 6% | 1600% |
| 087 | BT | £0.13 | £0.12 | £0.25 | £0.05 | **£0.10** | **£0.10** | 40% | 150% |
| 087 | EE | £0.13 | £0.78 | £0.91 | £0.16 | **£0.65** | £0.10 | 11% | 810% |
| 084 | BT | £0.02 | £0.12 | £0.14 | £0.03 | **£0.10** | £0.01 | 7% | 1300% |
| 084 | EE | £0.02 | £0.78 | £0.80 | £0.14 | **£0.65** | £0.01 | 1% | 7900% |

Looking at the benefit gained, in relation to the cost incurred, one could look at the provision of the service provided through use of a 084/087 number as being subject to a “tariff” of between 150% and 1,600%! With regard to contemporary ways of looking at things, this could help to highlight the foolishness of using these numbers.

# Current examples

It must be noted that use of these numbers has dropped off dramatically over recent years. In many cases this has been due to regulation, although the realisation that premium rate numbers should be used only for genuine premium rate services is growing.

Many of the examples which follow demonstrate breaches of regulation, including:

- A failure to declare the Service Charge and refer to the existence of the Access Charge.
- Illegitimate use of the number for a consumer after-sales service line.
- Failure to comply with the very particular requirements which apply to ICSS services.

The purpose of this publication is not to focus on these breaches, as it aims to address primarily the foolishness of use of these numbers.

**These are not premium rate services, it is therefore foolish to use numbers which are subject to a mechanism designed for such services.**

The main list which follows is grouped according to the type of activity being undertaken.

It is however proceeded by some cases which could be thought to be notable.

Each entry represents a link to the website where the use may be verified.

N.B. There are many references to use of 084 and 087 numbers published by third parties – **only references found on direct websites are used here**. This is one of many reasons why this list should not be regarded as complete.

## *Previously published lists*

In the **fair telecoms campaign** response to the most recent Ofcom consultation on this matter we published an update to earlier lists of users of 084/087 numbers in notable areas.

The following list represents a further update to that list.

### Charities

Attend (Volunteering support) (0845 450 0285 *)
Community Transport Glasgow (0845 605 5955)
DDA (Dangerous Dogs Act)Watch (0844 844 2990)
Ectopic Pregnancy Foundation (0845 070 4636 *)
Freedom Charity (0845 607 0133 *)
Herpes Viruses Association (0845 123 2305 *)
Migraine Action (0845 6011 033 *)
National Bullying Helpline (0845 225 5787 *)
National Centre For Eating Disorders(0845 838 2040 *)
Network 81 (0845 077 4055 *)
Press For Change - The UK's Leading Experts in Transgender Law (08448 708 165 *)
PROSTaid (0844 800 7801 *)
The Churches Conservation Trust (0845 303 2760 *)
Tymes Trust (children and young people with ME) (0845 003 9002 *)
Yes to Life (Your options for cancer) (0870 163 2990 )

N.B. Those marked with a '*' fail to comply with the requirement to state the Service Charge and advise of the "Access Charge".

## Local Authorities

Amber Valley Borough Council (0845 3723801 - C Tax)
Barrow-in-Furness Borough Council (0845 603 1510 - C Tax)
Breckland Council (0845 600 1936 - C Tax)
Blaenau Gwent CBC | 24 hour automated payment line (0845 604 2635) - All
Lancaster City Council (0845 6017297 - C Tax)
London Borough of Barnet (0845 356 3456 - Rent)
Southend-on-Sea Borough Council (08702 406650 - C Tax)
Staffordshire County Council (0845 045 0929 - ALL)
Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council (0845 371 9901 - C Tax)
TFL: Independent Revenue Collection and Support payment line (0870 067 1303)
TFL: London Underground payment line (0870 067 1303)
TFL: DLR payment line (0870 067 9870)
TFL: Elizabeth line payment line (0870 067 9890)
TFL: TfL Buses penalty fare notices payment line (0870 067 9895)
TFL: TfL Buses unpaid fare notices payment line (0844 544 7173)
Swindon Borough Council (0845 6035058 - C Tax)

## Leading Football Clubs

Celtic (0871 226 1888 - Club and Ticket Office)
Derby County (0871 472 1884 - Club and Ticket Office)
Fulham (0843 208 1222 - Club Switchboard)

# *Some most notable cases*

## Major users

Picturehouses (the one remaining leading cinema chain using these numbers)
See tickets
Ticketmaster

## Other most notable cases

BT Relay UK (Service for the "deaf, hard of hearing or speech impaired")
BT Text (For all recipients of SMS to landlines)
Rugby Football League | Ticketing
RVS - volunteering
Traveline
XoServe (Find My Gas Supplier)

## Government (probably in breach of Cabinet Office stipulation)

Civil Service Recruitment
HM Treasury Careers
Ministry of Justice
National Careers Service (government)
NHS England - The Health Informatics Service (THIS)
Suffolk Coastal Port Health Authority
The National Joint Registry
The Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner
UK Visas and Immigration - Right of Abode

# *Probably in breach of Consumer Contract Regulations*

## Alarm Monitoring companies

247 Monitored Security
Abel
ABS Alarms
AIM monitoring
AMCO
APS Security
Cornerstone Security Group
EMCS
Farsight Security | Alarm Receiving Centre
innovation Fire and Security
SMC Monitoing
Southern Monitoring
Telecare24 - "Recommended by Dr Hilary Jones"

## Other

Agility Mail
Appliances Direct
BSK jewellers
Damart
DHL Express | Track Your Parcel
Equifax
Experian
Glastec - Glass scratch repair
Regent Gas
Royal Moderna Sharm al Sheikh

# *Probably in breach of FCA regulations*

Barclays
BNP Paribas
Santander

# *Probably in breach of PSA regulations covering ICSS*

Article City
Breath Takers
Broadband Numbers
Choose My Support
Contact Number UK
Diverse-Energy
dvla-contact-number.co.uk
gethuman.com
Helpful Numbers
Number Directory
Student Finance
UK Contact Number
UK Contact Phone Numbers

# *Miscellaneous*

## Transport Providers

DFDS
Ferryto
Hebridean Air Services
Isle of Man Steam Packet Company
National Express
Newcastle International Airport
Prestwick Airport
Quantas
Southern Ferries
Vrio - international travel support

## Consumer services

Church Times Bookshop
Club Kidz
Cotton Traders
Frostbyte Solutions (via DM Club) - providers of premium rate numbers
Garden Gear
Hollywood Bowl
Home.co.uk - online estate agent
Kwenzi Support Services - Specialist mental Health Services for young people
Miller Homes
National Solicitors (Employment Solicitors)
Pierre & Vacances
Pocket Watch Store
RB Health and Safety
Rentacrowd
Smugglers End Park | Winchelsea Beach
Telestunt (international call connection service)
Tile & Stone Medic
Wendland Roof Solutions

## Services to Business

(N.B. The impact and the regulatory requirements may be different, but the rip-off and the foolishness are the same)

1link - fleet management
ADP (HCM solutions)
Aequator Swiss Made Coffee Machines
Angel Solutions (for schools)
Assocation of Lifetime Lawyers
Banner (Logistics)
Bell Technologies - Butler Call
Bunzl Catering Supplies
CCS-UK User Group
Coffee Omega
conferencecall.co.uk
Customer Service | DHL
D&H Group - Farm equipment supplier
DDC - Due Diligence Checking Ltd
Dental referral management system
Dr Office - Office supplies
Eneco - energy brokerage
Equipserve
Eteach - EdTech software and services
Exponential-e Applied Innovation
First Aid Online
Foster Coldstores
Foxhall Business Centres
Homecare Association
Human Resource Background Checks (DBS)
ICE: The Facilities Company
Indepth Cleaning
Low Level Access Hire
Mosaic Online Systems (IT Systems provider for the Mail Industry)
ParkWood Document Solutions
Pinnacle Cost & Claims Solutions
Qualatis - automotive training
Reliance High-Tech
Soccerena
The Access Group UK | Business software
United Pallet Network
Vogel & Noot

# Conclusion

Whilst some of these cases may be notable in themselves, this rag-bag of foolish organisations surely cannot represent a sound reason for not eliminating the 084 and 087 ranges from use.