fair telecoms campaign **news release**

KPMG misled into being "greedy and foolish" by a telephone company, as are many

We note the story about **KPMG** offering a premium rate number for **Monarch** staff to discuss their dismissal. We accept the explanation that it was misled into using the **BT Conferencing facility.**

We are quoted in The Sun commenting on this specific case –

"***David Hickson, from the Fair Telecoms campaign, told The Sun: "I think KPMG were being utterly stupid. Premium rate telephone numbers have their place, but to think they have a place for people that have just been made redundant is utterly sick and stupid.***"

Calls to the number used - 0844 335 1195 – incur a "Service Charge" of 6p per minute, to the benefit of the conference call provider - **BT**.

Calls to all "service" (premium rate) numbers also incur an "Access Charge" set by, and to the benefit of, the caller's telephone service provider. These are typically around 12p per minute for landlines and typically around 50p (up to 55p) per minute from mobiles.

All of these rates include VAT.

The example of £38.90 for a 75 minute call, suggests calling using a mobile operator with an Access Charge of 45p per minute. The maximum will have been £46.53.

A breakdown of that £38.90, with the VAT separated, shows who was profiting from this cost:

Conference Call Service Provider - **BT**	£3.82	10%
Mobile operator with an Access Charge of 45p per minute	£28.60	73%
Government (VAT)	£6.48	17%
TOTAL	£38.90	

This helps to demonstrate why we call all those who use 084 / 087 numbers

GREEDY and FOOLISH!

Whilst there are undoubtedly some who realise what they are doing by using 084 / 087 numbers, many (like **KPMG**) will have been misled into this error by their telephone service provider.

Whilst **BT** has not been directly named in public as the provider of this conference facility, it as named as such when one calls the number.

BT is obviously deeply into this scam, because calls for its own customers, to the two ranges (0845 and 0870) on which it owns the majority of numbers, are inclusive in their Call Plans.

It seems that **BT** is able to do this because, as mentioned in relation to this case, it charges the users of these numbers, rather than passing on the benefit of the Service Charge.

Offering premium rate calls as inclusive may provide a benefit to some customers, but it is an ugly business. It serves to disguise the nature of these numbers and enables more service providers to be misled into using them - foolishly.

We call on all those using 084 / 087 numbers, without a clear justification, to cease the practice. Many have done so already, removing the justification for these calls ever being inclusive.

David Hickson

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