

From: webform@ofcom.org.uk
Sent: 22 June 2007 3:33 PM
To: Warwick Izzard
Subject: Responding to Consumer protection test for telephone number allocation
Title:

Mr

Forename:

William

Surname:

Goodall

Name and title under which you would like this response to appear:

FlexTel

Representing:

Organisation

Organisation (if applicable):

FlexTel

Email:

ask@flextel.com

What do you want Ofcom to keep confidential?:

Keep nothing confidential

If you want part of your response kept confidential, which parts?:

Ofcom may publish a response summary:

Yes

I confirm that I have read the declaration:

Yes

Ofcom should only publish this response after the consultation has ended:

You may publish my response on receipt

Question 1: Do you agree that these are the conditions in which it is appropriate for Ofcom to refuse numbers to applicants in order to ensure best use? If not, please explain why not?:

Yes

Question 2: Ofcom has proposed two options for the period of number refusal: a set period of time, such as 12 months, or a period of time to be determined by Ofcom on a case-by-case basis, having regard to the seriousness of the harmful behaviour but with a minimum period, such as 6 months. Which option do you believe is more appropriate?:

FleXtel prefers a period of time to be determined by Ofcom on a case-by-case basis, having regard to the seriousness of the harmful behavior but with a minimum period, such as 6 months.

Question 3: Do you agree that 6 months is an appropriate and effective minimum time period for number refusal or do you think the minimum period should be longer/ shorter? Explain why?:

We agree with six months.

Question 4: Do you agree that the factors set out in the draft guidelines at Annex 6 are appropriate in deciding how long to refuse numbers to an applicant? Are there any other factors that you believe that Ofcom should take into consideration?:

Yes. There are no other factors we wish to suggest at this time.

Question 5: Do you agree with our proposal to place the number refusal list on the publicly accessible part of the Ofcom website or do you think it should be limited to a closed user group, for instance by password protection?:

Yes, very strongly. We believe it is an important part of consumer protection to make such information public.

Question 6: Do you see any reasons why the number refusal list should be restricted to Providers and other number assigners/ sub-allocators? What do you believe are the foreseeable abuses of the list?:

Providing Ofcom carefully avoid false/erroneous entries we see no problem in having an open and transparent list.

Question 7: Do you have any comments on the process proposed by Ofcom?:

We strongly support Ofcom in this activity and believe it will help to reduce scams, restore trust in UK Telecoms and assist bona fide and ethical providers, such as FleXtel, to continue to deliver sound and value for money services.

Question 8: Do you have any comments on Ofcom's proposals regarding implementation?:

We are concerned that Ofcom is not stronger on Number Block Allocation Withdrawal for "serious and repeat contraventions" as provided for under Section 61(3) of the Communications Act 2003.

This would help Ofcom to round up the "rogue horses" out in the marketplace, now that they have decided to bolt the stable door at last. By closing down such abusers, Ofcom would speed up the stabilization of the market.

See our comments below.

However, we mainly only wish to offer our full support and cooperation to Ofcom in this important work.

Comments:

With hindsight this process should have been put into place in 2003, at the time when the 1984 licensing regime was replaced by the 2003 Act class licensing regime. The market free-for-all (without consumer test for number allocation) has significantly damaged some segments e.g. 070 personal numbers, due to persistent abuse at both by CP and SP levels. However, hindsight is cheap and we are delighted Ofcom is now addressing this important issue.