

Response R.A.Walden

Dear Sir,

I wish to express my opinion on the telephone numbering consultation in respect of 0870 chargeable numbers.

I find it disgraceful that I am charged to use these allegedly national numbers at a rate that is higher than it costs me to call a normal number in any part of the UK. The abuse of the 0870 series by so called customer service and helplines which make customers pay to complain about their services at effectively premium rates is a scandal and I am appalled that OFCOM is allowing this abuse to continue. It should be the case that no organisation should be allowed to use the misleading euphemism 'national rate call' when they mean 'premium rate call' and that any service claiming to apply a national rate should cost the same as the maximum it costs to call any normal number in the UK.

In addition it should be illegal to charge premium rates for calling any customer service line unless the line is providing some additional service beyond that one might reasonably expect from the service you have already paid to receive. For example it is reasonable to pay a premium rate to receive advice on a service you have not already paid for or participate in a competition but not to correct faults with a service you are paying for already or pay bills.

Yours sincerely,

R A Walden