



INQUIRY INTO THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION'S PROPOSED CAPS ON MOBILE TELEPHONE ROAMING CHARGES

CALL FOR EVIDENCE

1. The Internal Market Sub-Committee (Sub-Committee B) of the House of Lords Select Committee on the European Union is undertaking an inquiry into issues raised by the European Commission's proposal for a Regulation on roaming on public mobile networks within the Community (11724/06 COM(2006) 382 final).
2. The objective of the draft Regulation is to ensure that users of public mobile telephone networks when travelling within the Community do not pay excessive prices for international roaming services when making and receiving calls, thereby achieving a high level of consumer protection while safeguarding competition between mobile operators.
3. Sub-Committee B's inquiry will address the following issues:
 - i. Do you consider charges for making and receiving calls on mobile phones when in a different EU Member State to be appropriate or excessive as some have argued? Do you think there is currently sufficient competition in the market?
 - ii. Is it appropriate for the Commission to introduce legislation to cap the cost of roaming?
 - iii. Do you think that the mobile telecoms industry has done enough in the last two years to address, through self-regulation, concerns expressed by the Commission? Are National Regulatory Authorities in a co-regulated environment able to address these concerns on their own?
 - iv. Does the proposed Regulation risk narrowing down the space for competition and thereby harming innovation and investment in the sector?
 - v. Do you think that the pressure for lower roaming charges could potentially spill-over into higher prices for other mobile telephony services? Would you anticipate any other unintended consequences that may affect consumers?
 - vi. Do you think that the proposed regulation will allow non-EU operators to take advantage of lower wholesale roaming prices in the EU through international trade agreements and arbitrage opportunities?
 - vii. Is the Commission's estimate that 147 million EU citizens are affected by excessively high international mobile roaming charges accurate? Do you have any other figures to offer?
 - viii. Do you think that the UK and French proposal for a sunrise clause during the initial period after the Regulation comes into force can better achieve the desired effect? Should legislation apply solely to wholesale fees rather than retail tariffs?

- ix. Do you believe that separate sub caps for making and receiving calls should be applied or a single average cap? Should the linkage between Mobile Termination Rates and wholesale prices, and percentage mark-ups for determining retail prices, be retained or should target prices simply be included in the regulation?

INSTRUCTIONS TO WITNESSES

Evidence - including supplementary evidence - should if possible be emailed as an attachment (preferably in Word format) to the Clerk of Sub-Committee B, Duncan Sagar, sagard@parliament.uk or fassoulasp@parliament.uk and can also be sent to Duncan Sagar, Committee Office, House of Lords, London SW1A 0PW. **Evidence must arrive by Friday 23 February at 5pm.**

Short submissions of no more than 4-sides of A4 paper are preferred. Submissions longer than 4 pages should include a summary.

Evidence must be clearly printed or typed on single sides of A4 paper, unstapled. Paragraphs should be numbered and all acronyms defined at first mention. If drawings or charts are included, these must be black-and-white and of camera-ready quality. Evidence should be signed and dated, with a note of the author's name and status, and of whether the evidence is submitted on an individual or corporate basis. Only one copy is required. All submissions will be acknowledged.

Evidence becomes the property of the Committee, and may be published or circulated by the Committee at any stage.

Persons who submit written evidence, and others, may be invited to give oral evidence. Oral evidence is usually given in public at Westminster, and transcripts are published. Persons invited to give oral evidence will be notified separately of the procedure to be followed and the topics likely to be discussed.

You may follow the progress of the inquiry from the Weekly Bulletin of House of Lords Select Committees. This is free, and may be ordered from Stephen Noble, Committee Office, House of Lords, London SW1A 0PW, telephone 020 7219 2940. Alternatively, consult the UK Parliament web site, at <http://www.parliament.uk>.

Oral Evidence sessions will be web-cast, to listen to a session, please visit <http://www.parliamentlive.tv>.