

Press Release

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Panel calls for close monitoring to stop silent call companies

Communications Consumer Panel Chair Bob Warner has backed Ofcom's decision to exercise its new powers to fine a company £750,000 for making persistent silent calls, and called for continued close monitoring to stop others.

"This is the first time that Ofcom has flexed its muscles to use the new enforcement powers. The Panel has long lobbied for tougher action to protect consumers, and we are now urging Ofcom to monitor closely the numbers of silent call complaints - and take further action where persistent silent calls remain a problem."

The Panel advised Government in 2010 that silent and abandoned calls continued to cause significant harm to consumers, and called on Government to raise the maximum penalty for persistent misuse of automated calling systems and services to £2 million. The Department of Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) agreed with the Panel and gave Ofcom the powers to impose higher fines up to £2m.

"Silent calls cause a great deal of anxiety, particularly for older people living alone. The higher fines mean that consumers should now be better protected," Bob Warner concluded.

Ends

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NOTES TO EDITORS

The Communications Consumer Panel encourages Ofcom, Government, industry and others to look at issues through the eyes of consumers and citizens and protects and promotes their interests. The Panel is independent and sets its own agenda.

Visit www.communicationsconsumerpanel.org.uk for more information.

For more information about the silent calls fine go to <http://consumers.ofcom.org.uk/2012/04/homeserve-fined-750000-for-silent-and-abandoned-calls/>