



Press Release

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Panel urges swift action on harmonising switching processes

The Communications Consumer Panel's advice that switching communications providers needs to become easier for consumers and small businesses has been reflected in Ofcom's new switching proposals, published today.

Panel Chair, Bob Warner, said he welcomed the new proposals "which should make changing broadband and landline suppliers simpler and more reliable. As society becomes ever more reliant on internet services, it is unacceptable that one in five consumers switching broadband provider lost their service for about a week.

"If consumers are more aware of the benefits of switching, and can move between providers quickly and easily they will benefit from the enhanced competition in communications markets."

The Panel has also advised Ofcom to develop unified switching processes for all communications services such as mobile, pay TV and cable services, and is urging providers to work with Ofcom to design a unified system as quickly as possible.

"This will give consumers confidence to switch and improve the service for those that do", Bob Warner explained. "If consumers are discouraged from switching bundles because of the complexity of the processes, this risks reduced competition and a worse deal for consumers.

"We are particularly concerned that current switching processes will not keep pace with the trend towards increased bundling of services, including pay TV services. This will become more of an issue as convergence continues and competition intensifies. We will be monitoring this issue carefully."

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.