

Press Release

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Panel says improved relay services will mean increased choice for users

Welcoming Ofcom's plans to improve relay services, Panel Chair Bob Warner said:

"The Panel is pleased that Ofcom proposes to improve relay services, including upgrading text relay provision and introducing a Next Generation service through mainstream equipment such as PCs and laptops. Users will no longer be limited to accessing the service through specialist equipment, which should give them an increased level of choice.

"We also asked Ofcom to look at how to introduce a video relay service - while recognising that the costs are potentially substantial. The current proposal is to make video relay available on a restricted basis. The Panel would encourage Ofcom and users to learn from this proposed implementation, so that an informed decision can be made about how to extend the service in time, once usage has been established."

Ends

CONTACT

Consumer Panel Media Adviser Siân Evans on 07713997510 or 020 7981 3898

NOTES TO EDITORS

The Communications Consumer Panel was established to advise Ofcom on the consumer interest in the markets it regulates. The Panel is independent and sets its own agenda. Visit www.communicationsconsumerpanel.org.uk for more information.

Approximately 11,000 people in the UK use text relay services to contact businesses and services, family and friends.

In February this year, the Communications Consumer Panel called on Ofcom to look at how to introduce a video relay service, and improve access to the existing text relay services for deaf, partially deaf or speech impaired people.