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ITU Conference – Setting the Scene for Effective Quality of Service Regulation

Ofcom's experience with QoS indicators

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Content

- Balancing consumer empowerment with consumer protection

- Implementing the regulatory framework: self or co-regulation?

- Choosing what to measure and how to measure it

- Demonstration of fixed and mobile comparator websites

- Using end user feedback to drive the initiative

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Consumer Policy – Balancing consumer protection with consumer empowerment

- The development of modern communications systems and competitive markets continues to raise new challenges for consumer protection

- Ofcom's approach is to integrate consumer policy with competition policy

  – Empower consumers by equipping them to get the best deal they can

  – Protect consumers against various kinds of harm

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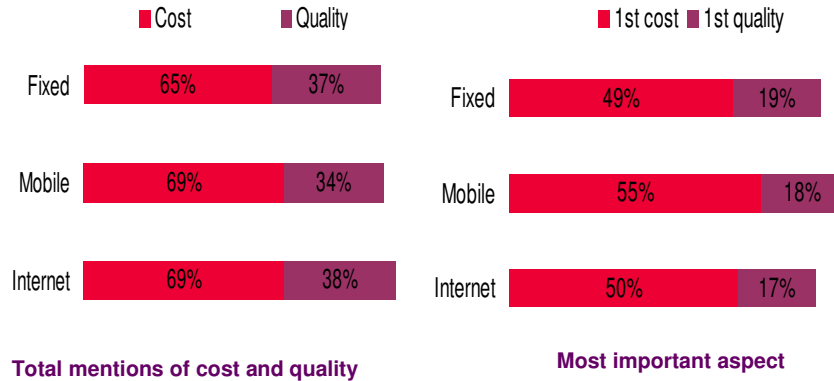

Consumer empowerment

The provision of comparable Quality of Service information is beneficial to consumers and Ofcom is committed to ensuring it is supplied

| Awareness of alternative suppliers and services | Access to comparative information on services | Awareness of and access to switching |

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Independent research shows quality of service as second most important factor when choosing a new supplier

■ Cost   ■ Quality   ■ 1st cost ■ 1st quality

	Cost	Quality
Fixed	65%	37%
Mobile	69%	34%
Internet	69%	38%

	1st cost	1st quality
Fixed	49%	19%
Mobile	55%	18%
Internet	50%	17%

Total mentions of cost and quality

Most important aspect

Regulatory framework – EU Universal Service and Users' Rights Directive 2002

- **Art 11**: requires NRAs to specify obligations requiring universal service providers to publish comparable and up to date information for end users on the quality of their services.

- **Art 22:** empowers NRAs to specify obligations requiring publicly available electronic communications services providers (PECS) to publish comprehensive, comparable and user friendly information

- NRAs may specify the QoS parameters to be measured, and the content, form and manner of information to be published

- ETSI Guide EG 201 769 QoS parameters (Annex III) USD may be used where appropriate

- No uniform approach to implementation - but most NRAs adopted USD requirements

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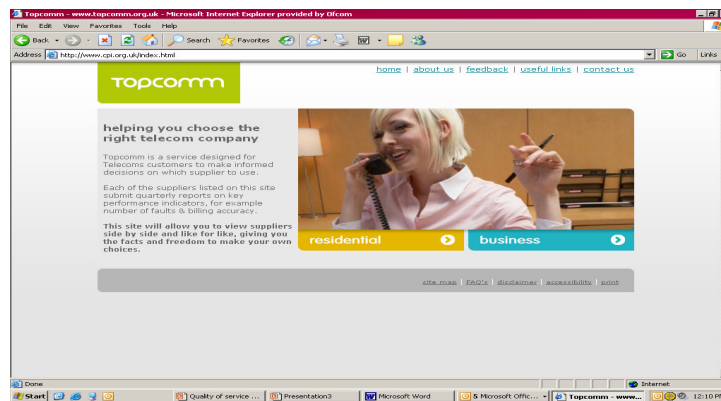OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS

UK Implementation of QoS requirements

- S45 of Communications Act gives Ofcom powers to set general conditions to protect end users

- G.C. 21 provides that "Communications Providers shall, on the Direction of Ofcom, publish comparable, adequate and up-to-date information for end users on the quality of its service."

- Ofcom published QoS Direction in January 2005 requiring certain fixed voice service providers to publish comparable, adequate and up to date information for end users on QoS

- Direction applied to fixed providers only as mobile operators demonstrated a willingness to self provide the information

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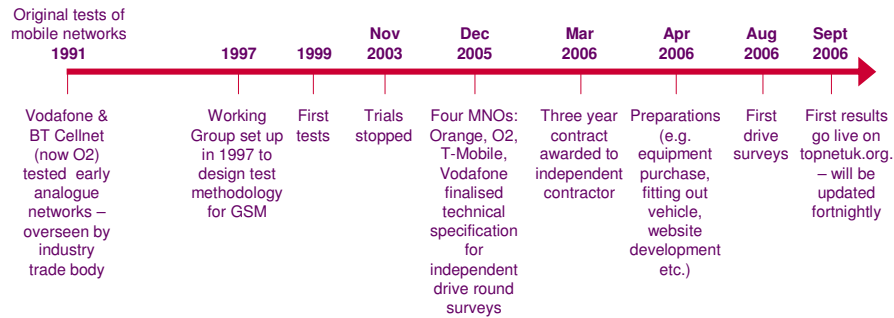### Determining the QoS parameters to be measured

- Co-regulatory group established March 2005

- Industry forum designed and agreed definitions including additional parameter on complaints handling

- Includes CPS/WLR/LLU service providers

- Challenge was to resist temptation to provide consumers with the maximum amount of data possible

- First results published in July 2006

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QoS parameters - Topcomm	ETSI Guide 201 769
Percentage of orders completed on or before the commitment date	Supply time for initial connection
End user reported faults per 100 direct end user lines/100 indirect CLIs per quarter	Fault rate per access line
Percentage of faults relating to line faults restored within time promised	Fault repair time
Number of upheld bill inaccuracy complaints processed per 1000 bills issued	Billing correctness complaints
Percentage of complaints processed within 28 calendar days	
	Call set up time
	Response times for operator services
	Response times for directory enquiry services
	Proportion of coin and card operated public pay telephones in working order

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QoS indicators for fixed voice providers - www.topcomm.org.uk

Mobile QoS initiative – chronology

Original tests of mobile networks 1991	1997	1999	Nov 2003	Dec 2005	Mar 2006	Apr 2006	Aug 2006	Sept 2006
Vodafone & BT Cellnet (now O2) tested early analogue networks – overseen by industry trade body	Working Group set up in 1997 to design test methodology for GSM	First tests	Trials stopped	Four MNOs: Orange, O2, T-Mobile, Vodafone finalised technical specification for independent drive round surveys	Three year contract awarded to independent contractor	Preparations (e.g. equipment purchase, fitting out vehicle, website development etc.)	First drive surveys	First results go live on topnetuk.org. – will be updated fortnightly

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Test methodology

Independent third party measurement

Unknown trial schedule

All UK motorways
All major A roads
All major urban areas

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Test methodology independent of test equipment and supplier

Built in customer handsets

SIM card rotation

Automated voice test equipment

90 second call duration

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QoS indicators – Mobile QoS - www.topnetUK.org

Using consumer feedback to drive QoS initiatives

- Promote consumer awareness of the initiatives

- Encourage end user feedback

- Promote accessibility of information

- Ensure participation in schemes using regulation where necessary

- Dynamic market – consumer demands will vary over time

- Use transparency to drive up QoS standards