

Principles for Use of IOM Numbers

Introduction

Isle of Man fixed telephone numbers, which are a finite resource, are allocated by Ofcom under the UK National Numbering Scheme. Policy for the use of IOM numbers is the responsibility of the Communications Commission. The Commission is concerned to clarify who should have access to IOM numbers, and what rules should govern the use of IOM numbers. This concern is prompted by differences between the UK and the IOM in their approach to the link between a “fixed” number and its geographic location, and by technological developments which mean that previously “fixed” numbers are no longer necessarily physically fixed to a location. It is the Commission’s view that 01624 numbers should be associated as clearly as possible with use by IOM business and residential customers. This differs from the situation in the UK, where the area code no longer reliably signifies a geographic location.

In particular, operators should be mindful that under the Financial Services Act 2008 and the Regulated Activities Order 2011 there is a holding out provision. Any person wishing to undertake a “regulated activity” in or from the Isle of Man by way of business must first be licensed by the Isle of Man Financial Services Authority. “Regulated activity” is defined in the Financial Services Act 2008 and the Regulated Activities Order 2011. No person may hold themselves out as carrying on a regulated activity in or from the Isle of Man without a licence for that activity. “Holding out” includes the use of an Isle of Man address, fax number, telephone number, website or email address.

Having Isle of Man numbers associated with services provided by Isle of Man licensed operators to customers who can demonstrate a physical presence in the Island will make it more difficult for businesses to ‘hold-out’ that they are from the Isle of Man when they are not.

This document sets out principles for how operators may access 01624 numbers, and how the use of these numbers should be managed.

Access to 01624 numbers

Only holders of a full IOM telecoms licence can apply to and receive 01624 numbers from Ofcom. An ISP which wants to obtain IOM numbers would therefore have to access these from a full IOM licensed telecom operator. It is the responsibility of the full IOM licensed telecom operator to ensure that it follows the principles set out, and also it is the responsibility of the full IOM licensed telecom operator to ensure that any organisation to which it provides numbers follows the principles which are set out in this document. If the full IOM licensed telecom operator decides to provide numbers to an ISP, it should require the ISP to make the same commitments which are set out in this document, and this should

form part of the telecom operator's contract with the ISP. All of the following principles therefore apply to the full IOM operator providing numbers to its retail customers, and to any ISP to which the IOM operator provides numbers.

Attaching a number to a service

It is recognised that the number is attached to a service, not necessarily to a physical location. This means that a retail customer may use a service provided in the IOM and using IOM numbers when off-island, but the customer must be able to demonstrate their relationship with the IOM.

IOM numbers should not be associated (spoofed) with another number or service, and so IOM operators must be able to provide appropriate assurance of the validity (directly or indirectly) of the Calling Line Identification (CLI) information¹.

Demonstration of end customer location

The full IOM telecoms operator or ISP should only provide numbers to a retail customer which can demonstrate that it has a physical presence in the IOM. The operator should take reasonable steps to require proof of the customer's physical address in the IOM. For example, the operator/ISP should maintain records that demonstrate that the customer has an address in the IOM.

Operators should be able to provide adequate emergency call routing (in respect of the user's location) and presentation of accurate CLI and customer address information should it be required by the emergency services.

Requirements for legal intercept

There is a duty imposed on persons operating public telecommunications systems to supply information to the Interception Commissioner (Interception of Communications Act 1988). The IOM telecoms operator must take all reasonable steps to ensure that it can comply with any requests for legal intercept.

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Agreed with Manx Telecom, Sure and Wi-Manx



¹ This would be met by being compliant with Ofcom's 'Guidelines for the provision of Calling Line Identification Facilities and other related services over Electronic Communications Networks'.