

Department for Work and Pensions' Progress Report on Customer Service Lines

March 2015

Summary of Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) Numbering Policy

1. Comments regarding how the department complies with the guidance, including whether the department feels they have already implemented the guidance for its lines:

DWP's numbering policy is in line with the guidance. National helplines provide 0800 free to call services on a number of its claim helplines where call durations are typically longer; and dual 0345/0845 numbers for enquiry helplines. DWP introduced dual 0345/0845 numbers in early 2014 following the publication of the HMG Guidance and has now decided to remove 0845 numbers during the course of 2015. This process is expected to commence in late Spring and continue through Summer. DWP will continue to provide a call back to any caller if they have concerns over the charges their provider will make for the call whether they are calling an 0345 or an 0845 number.

2. Call volume data against customer service lines:

The customer service line within DWP that receives the highest volume of calls is the Primary Benefit Enquiry Line for customers of working age. This line is currently accessed via 0845 and 0345 numbers. In December 2014, it received 1,502,016 calls in total, 83.5% of which were made via the 0345 number. During February 2015, 1,564,846 calls were made to this line, 83.8% via the 0345 number. The proportion of calls received on this line via the 0345 number has exceeded 80% since April 2014.

The Pension Service Enquiry Line provides an enquiry service to customers of pension age. In December 2014, 328,788 calls were made to this line, 42.7% of which were made via the 0345 number. During February 2015, 421,793 calls were received, 53.1% being via the 0345 number. The proportion of calls made to The Pension Service Enquiry Line using the 0345 number has risen from 3.7% in April 2014 to 53.1% in February 2015.

3. Details of any revenue generation (any value add service):

In line with Cabinet Office guidance published in December 2013, DWP has negotiated a rebate against the cost of providing 0845 services. This arrangement is effective from 1st April 2014 and will be available to offset the Direct Spend of other services provided by the same supplier.

Departmental Customer Service Lines: Telephone Number Prefixes

[illegible]

[Name of public body, e.g. Student Loans Company]									
Total at November 2014									
Total at February 2015									

Revenue Generation

Does DWP comply with the principles set out on revenue generation in the HMG Guidance on Customer Service Lines?

Yes