

Public awareness leaflets

At O2 we are well aware that despite the immense popularity of mobile phones there are public concerns about a number of issues connected with mobiles such as health effects of handsets and masts; street crime and mobile theft; children accessing inappropriate content; nuisance calls and text

bullying; mis-use of camera phones; and the use of phones when driving. Whilst we don't have all the answers we work hard alongside many stakeholders – including the police, children's charities, and the government – to address these challenging issues. O2 has produced leaflets on all of these issues and we

have found them to be an effective means of improving public awareness.

If you would like copies to distribute locally please email Steven Bartholomew at steven.bartholomew@o2.com

Advice on appropriate use of camera phones

Mobile phones with camera and video capability are becoming more and more popular and have many potential benefits. There is, though, rising public concern about the mis-use of camera phones. So we have recently provided our customers with a short reminder of the law and what they can do if they experience problems.

Using a mobile phone network to send recordings or photos of a violent act is an offence. In addition, people who receive such messages and then forward them to others are also acting unlawfully. Under the Communications Act the maximum penalty is a six month prison sentence, a fine of up to £5,000 or possibly both.

We recommend to our customers that they contact the police or O2 if they have received a message with a photo or recording of a violent act, if they have been the victim of a potential offence recorded on a camera phone, or if they have other concerns. Our Nuisance Call Bureau is here to give practical help. We will also help the police by barring customers who are found to have committed an unlawful act or breached our terms and conditions.

Our leaflet on the sensible use of camera phones can be found at www.o2.com/downloads/o2_camera_use.pdf

Contact us

I hope you have found this newsletter helpful.

If you would like any further information please contact Steven Bartholomew, Head of Public Affairs at:

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O₂ News

Welcome...

to the first in a series of newsletters from O2. With nearly 16 million customers, 10,000 employees and over 300 retail stores, O2 has a presence right across the UK. We want to do more to keep key local stakeholders informed about O2 and mobile phone related news.

Mobile phones have changed the way we live and work and for the vast majority of the population the ability to talk, text, and get information on the move is an essential part of everyday life. As well as the convenience and personal safety benefits, mobiles have also delivered significant benefits to the economy, both locally and nationally. Recent research shows that the mobile phone industry accounts for 2.2% of UK GDP – about the same as the off-shore oil & gas industry.

O2 is a responsible company and we recognise that, despite the

considerable benefits, there are public concerns about ways people can misuse mobile phones and concerns about mobile phone masts in communities. At O2 we take these issues seriously and have policies in place to address them. Two of our key values are openness and trust. As such we maintain regular consultations and communications with consumers, communities, and other stakeholders on all of these issues.

We will explore these matters in this and forthcoming editions of the newsletter.

O2 investing in the UK

O2 recently announced a major investment in its UK business. Over the next 18 months we will be significantly expanding our network of O2 retail stores across the UK and we will open our fourth major UK Customer Service Centre in Glasgow. 2,000 new employees will be recruited into these customer facing roles, increasing our proportion of customer facing staff by 10% to 75%. In recent months new stores have been opened in Bradford, Bridgend, Hull, Leicester, London, and Maidstone and more will follow in the coming months. Commenting on the announcement Derek McManus, O2 UK's Head of Operations said *"we believe locating our new customer service centre in the UK is best way to deliver the superior customer experience necessary to attract and retain customers and we are delighted to have found such an excellent site in Glasgow."*

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Mobile phone masts and planning

Planning system for mobile phone masts

We are aware there is some public confusion about the planning process for mobile network development. We thought it would be useful to provide a brief overview.

In England there are currently three types of planning process for base stations, according to the size of the installation.

Permitted development – Most mobile phone base station developments require planning permission or prior approval from the local authority. However, some smaller forms of development such as antennas on buildings that do not exceed the height of the building by 4 metres or cabins that are less than 2.5 cubic metres in volume, do not require planning permission from the local authority. In line with the Code of Best Practice, mobile operators notify the local planning authority of these developments.

Prior approval – certain forms of permitted development is conditional upon the operator making an application to the local authority for prior approval. This includes a ground based mast of up to and including 15 metres in height; an antenna which exceeds the height of the building or structure by 4 metres or more at the point where it is installed; radio equipment cabinet in excess of 2.5 cubic metres. For such types

of development the operator must apply to the local planning authority for its determination as to whether prior approval will be required to the siting and appearance of the proposed development. The local planning authority will have 56 days, beginning with the date on which it receives the application, in which to make its determination on whether prior approval is required and to notify the applicant of its decision to give or refuse such approval. If the local planning authority fails to issue a decision within 56 days permission is “deemed” to have been given. The public consultation requirements for the local planning authority under the 56-day prior approval procedure are the same requirements as for development requiring applications for planning permission.

Full planning – all masts over 15 metres are subject to the full planning process. These will be determined in line with the local authority development plan and Government policy, and other material considerations. Sites in National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Conservation Areas are also required to go through the full planning process, irrespective of height.

Keeping local authorities informed of network development

As part of the Code of Best Practice on Mobile Phone Network Development each year O2 and the other UK mobile phone network operators provide every local planning authority with information on the location of existing base stations and proposed sites for the coming year. This enables local authorities to discuss the proposals with the operators before formal planning applications are submitted. Local planning officers have welcomed this exercise but have also told us that it can be difficult to co-ordinate the information because they receive a different document from each of the five operators. In response to this feedback the operators agreed to supply the 2005 / 2006 information in a single document with a common format. This was mailed out in October 2005 and O2 is always willing to meet with local authorities to discuss these plans. If you would like to see the plan for your area please contact your local planning authority.

Ten Commitments to best siting practice

Launched in 2001, the aim of the Ten Commitments is to ensure transparency in building mobile phone networks, to provide more information to the public and local planners and to boost the community's role in the siting of radio base stations.

Improved consultations with communities

Develop, with other stakeholders, clear standards and procedures to deliver significantly improved consultation with local communities.

Detailed consultation with planners

Participate in obligatory pre-rollout and pre-application consultation with local planning authorities.

Site sharing

Publish clear, transparent and accountable criteria and cross-industry agreement on site sharing, against which progress will be published regularly.

Workshops for councils

Establish professional development workshops on technological developments within telecommunications for local authority officers and elected members.

Database of base station sites

Deliver, with the Government, a database of information available to the public on radio base stations.

Compliance with ICNIRP public exposure levels guidance

Assess all radio base stations for international (ICNIRP) compliance for public exposure, and produce a programme for ICNIRP compliance for all radio base stations as recommended by the Independent Expert Group on Mobile Phones (IEGMP).

ICNIRP certification

Provide, as part of planning applications for radio base stations, a certification of compliance with ICNIRP public exposure guidelines.

Prompt responses to enquiries

Provide specific staff resources to respond to complaints and enquiries about radio base stations, within ten working days.

Support research into health and mobile phones

Begin financially supporting the Government's independent scientific research programme on mobile communications health issues.

Standard documentation for planning submissions

Develop standard supporting documentation for all planning submissions whether for full planning or prior approval.

For more information see
http://www.mobilemastinfo.com/planning/best_practice.htm

Review recommends end to Birmingham moratorium on masts

In June, Birmingham Council published the report of its review into the siting of mobile phone masts.

The review recommended that the Council lift its moratorium on locating mobile phone masts on Council property as long as stringent conditions are met. In reaching its recommendation the review group recognised that there are hundreds of thousands of mobile phone users in Birmingham

and that the importance of this for the social and business life of Birmingham could not be ignored.

O2 welcomed the recommendation which, if adopted, will enhance the ability of the operators to identify the most appropriate sites for new base stations.

"If this policy is adopted, further masts will only be erected on council land and premises on the council's terms, and we shall not be a soft touch! I believe that this policy represents good sense and is in the best interest of Birmingham as a whole."

Councillor Mick Wilkes, Chairman of the Committee

Mobile phones and health

The biological effects of radio waves have been studied for more than 50 years and the World Health Organisation Research Database contains over 1300 peer-reviewed publications relating to the biological effects of radio waves, including more than 350 studies conducted at frequencies used by mobile phone networks.

Scientific based guidelines have been developed by the International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP). The ICNIRP guidelines, which apply to both mobile phones and base stations, limit the level of exposure of the general public and workers to radio waves. They incorporate wide safety margins to protect against all established health effects of radio wave exposure. Today's scientific opinion states that there are no known adverse health effects at exposure levels below these guideline levels but research is ongoing to fill any gaps in knowledge. All of O2's systems, including handsets and masts, operate within ICNIRP limits.

In May 2000 the UK's Independent Expert Group on Mobile Phones (IEGMP, often referred to as the 'Stewart Report') reported: *"The balance of evidence to date suggests that exposures to Radio Frequency (RF) radiation below NRPB (National Radiological Protection Board) and*

ICNIRP guidelines do not cause adverse health effects to the general population."

A follow up report published in January 2005 by the NRPB (which was recently merged with other health advisory groups to form the UK's Health Protection Agency) reviewed the recommendations of the IEGMP (Stewart Report). It concluded that *"... in the UK there is a lack of hard information showing that the mobile systems in use are damaging to health. It is important to emphasise this crucial point. The main conclusions reached in the Stewart Report in 2000 still apply today ..."*

So, although there is no evidence that mobile phone technology is harmful to humans, it is widely recognised that more research needs to be done. The UK's Mobile Telecommunications and Health Research Programme (MTHR), was set up following the Stewart Report to look into the possible health impact of mobile telecommunications. Funds of around £7 million allocated by industry and Government have funded twenty nine independent projects. The Programme has concentrated on studies of possible effects of radio waves on people. O2 has agreed to fund a second phase of the MTHR Programme.

For more information see

Department of Health – www.doh.gov.uk

The Radiation Protection Division of the Health Protection Agency (previously the National Radiological Protection Board) – www.hpa.org.uk

NRPB report on mobile phones and health 2004
www.hpa.org.uk/radiation/publications/documents_of_nrp/abstracts/absd15-5.htm

The Independent Expert Group on Mobile Phones (IEGMP) or Stewart Report – www.iegmp.org.uk

Mobile Telecommunications and Health Research Programme – www.mthr.org.uk

World Health Organisation – www.who.int/peh-emf/en/

International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection – www.icnirp.de

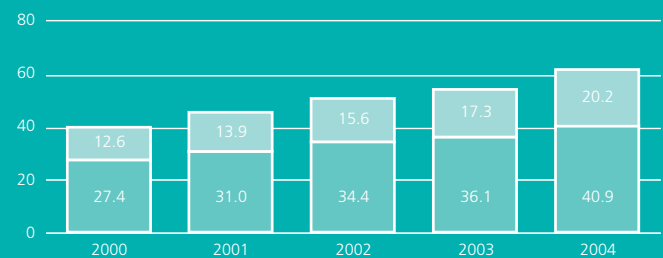
Increasing demand for mobile phone services

More people using mobiles more often

Research published by Ofcom in July 2005 showed that the phenomenal popularity of mobile phones continues to grow in the UK.

Between 2000 and 2004, the total number of minutes spent making mobile calls in the UK almost doubled from 34 billion to 62 billion. During the same period the number of mobile phone subscribers increased by 50% from 40 million to 61.1 million.

Total active subscribers



Source: Ofcom/operators

Notes: based on network operator reported figures; likely to overstate activity in reference includes estimates where Ofcom does not receive data from operators

Mobile technology frees up Barnet social workers

Barnet Council's Children and Families Service has mobilised its entire frontline to improve services and allow social workers to spend more face-to-face time with children and families.

This has been made possible through the deployment of over 200 O2 Xda IIs handheld PCs and Intellisync software. Mobile working has significantly freed up staff time by providing instant e-mail, diary access and information sharing facilities, and reduced the need for staff to return to the office to access information or update colleagues. Previously, most information sharing was paper-based, relying on social workers returning to the office every time they needed to access or update records.

"Already we have seen significant improvement in productivity and information sharing within the service. Social workers now have better access to information they need to be able to make decisions and do their job properly. This has allowed us not just to be more efficient as a service, but has also freed up the time social workers spend on administration, allowing them to get on with their job. We are already looking to expand its use into other areas."

Tony Nakhimoff, Divisional Manager in Barnet Council's Children and Families Service

Communication when you need it most

How O2 responded on 7th July

Following the explosions on 7th July call volumes far exceeded normal levels, and the O2 network carried 67% more voice traffic in central London than normal, while text message volumes increased by 20% on the day across the whole country.

The O2 network was not damaged by the attacks and we took steps to manage the demand. The large number of calls did mean that there was network congestion in parts of London, but most customers were able to make calls.

Mobile network operators have a number of call traffic management options open to them. For example we can make network changes in the immediate area of an incident which will normally quickly remove localised congestion, and we can restrict additional call traffic from entering the system which reduces the load on the network. These controls were used on the 7th July to preserve the integrity of the networks while still allowing as much traffic to flow as possible, but the situation was complicated by having four major incidents confined in a fairly small geographical area.

Around noon on 7th July the City of London Police requested that O2 apply network access restrictions known as Access Overload Control in a 1 kilometre area around Aldgate. This facility makes the network in the immediate area unavailable to the public at large, but permits a pre-agreed list of emergency responders to use

the network. The facility was removed later in the afternoon, but during that time, the O2 network was unavailable for all normal calls within in a kilometre or so of Aldgate station (with the exception of emergency calls to 112 and 999).

Should events be repeated, there are a number of steps which individuals and businesses can take in order to improve the situation.

- Keep calls as short as possible – once you have established that an individual is safe, clear the call so that others can do the same.
- Encourage staff and individuals who might be in the affected area to call from their mobiles to a fixed line number rather than calling from fixed lines to mobiles – this is less onerous on the networks and relieves congestion.
- Arrange a central 0800 number to which members of staff can call which will provide information regarding the incident and advice or instructions to staff.

O2 and the other mobile network operators are currently producing an information pack on emergency planning and will ensure that all Local Resilience Forums receive a copy.



Airwave emergency communication system

O2 Airwave is the secure and resilient digital radio network dedicated for the exclusive use of the emergency services and public safety agencies across England, Scotland and Wales.

For the first time ever, emergency services can have radio coverage whenever and wherever they need it. Airwave enables the emergency services to communicate seamlessly regardless of location and because all Airwave communications are encrypted, they cannot be scanned or monitored by outsiders.

The Airwave network has been rolled out and now provides service to each of the 51 police forces across England, Scotland and Wales. In July 2005, O2 Airwave won the contract to provide the communication service to all Ambulance Trusts in England. Airwave will help NHS staff to provide a better response to every day

emergencies as well as major incidents through improved response times and interoperability between emergency services. And in November 2005 it was confirmed that O2 Airwave has been successful in its bid to equip all fire and rescue services across England with a new resilient and secure voice and data communications service.

Over and above the core emergency services O2 Airwave is available to a broad range of public safety agencies, including a number of local authority users such as emergency planners, CCTV operators, Community Safety Officers and Investigating Officers. Airwave is also available to utilities and others who now have obligations to plan and respond in partnership with the emergency services and local authorities under the Civil Contingencies Act. Effective communications within and between all agencies in responding to civil emergencies is directly helping to make our communities safer.

For more information on O2 Airwave contact Ann Casson on 0113 272 2000 or email ann.casson@o2.com

What's new at O2

O2 & Weston Spirit launch charity partnership

In Summer of 2005, after a successful one year trial, youth charity Weston Spirit and O2 launched their partnership at a special reception at the House of Commons. Over the next three years O2 aims to raise up to £1m for Weston Spirit through a combination of project funding, O2 employee fundraising and customer initiatives. The event showcased the joint peer mentoring project which is at the heart of the partnership. JAM – or Just Ask Me, a name designed by the young people themselves – is an innovative peer mentoring project that brings together Weston Spirit, O2 employees and mobile phone technology to support young people's personal development within UK schools. The scheme provides

young people with the training and skills to become peer mentors, supporting younger pupils in their own school. In turn, trained O2 employees support the young peer mentors through regular face-to-face meetings and by staying in touch by text. The peer mentoring project's pilot has already worked with seven schools from four locations – Bury, Merseyside, Leeds and Slough – matching more than 70 young people with employees from four O2 business centres. Following the pilot's success, O2 and Weston Spirit is extending the peer mentoring scheme, enabling even more young people and O2 employees to get involved.