



Press Release

Bonn, 28 May 2013
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Special service number call queues free of charge from 1 June 2013

Homann: "We will follow up any breaches of the regulations"

The final regulations on free call queues take effect on 1 June. As from this date, call queues for special service numbers (eg 0180 and 0900 numbers) can only be used if a fixed price applies to the call or the call queue is free of charge for the caller. Subsequent queues, for example wait times when a call is passed on, must also be free of charge. Call queues can still be used for geographic numbers, mobile numbers and freephone numbers, however.

"Now that the nine-month transitional period has expired, the final call queue regulations can take effect. They will make sure that consumers are protected from high costs that have nothing to do with the actual telephone service they are using. We will follow up any instances of businesses not implementing the rules", Jochen Homann, Bundesnetzagentur President, stressed.

The Bundesnetzagentur has provided two new subranges for service numbers in preparation for the new rules. The new numbers in the subranges 0180-6 and 0180-7 meet the requirements for the introduction of free call queues.

"Provision of these new numbers will help businesses in their implementation. Some are using the new numbers already, while others have switched to geographic numbers", Homann reported.

A queue is present when a call is taken or is in line without the caller's business actually being attended to. Business can be attended to by means of an automated dialogue or a human operator. The first time a call to a special service number is put in line it is the responsibility of the called party to make sure that the calling party is informed of the estimated wait time as soon as the queue is set up. Also, the caller must be told whether a fixed price is chargeable for the call or whether the call is free of charge during the wait time. The announcement can be cut short if the caller's business is attended to before the announcement ends.



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The Bundesnetzagentur will investigate breaches of the law. However, it will have to rely on the help of the consumers to uncover unlawful call queues. Parties affected can contact the Bundesnetzagentur in any of the ways given below:

Bundesnetzagentur
Nördeltstraße 5
59872 Meschede

Tel +49 291 9955-206
Mondays to Wednesdays 9:00 – 17:00
Thursdays 9:00 – 18:00
Fridays 9:00 – 16:00

Fax +49 6321 934-111

Email: rufnummernmissbrauch@bnetza.de

Further details on free call queues, including information for businesses, can be found on the Bundesnetzagentur's website.