



CONSUMER



A National Communications Authority Publication for Consumer Information

Edition 4

ARE YOU TIRED OF RECEIVING UEC's?

The National Communications Authority (NCA) in 2013 developed guidelines to manage the sending of Unsolicited Electronic Communications (UEC) by service providers.

Some of the actions in the guidelines include:

- i. Availability of a "START" and STOP" option for activation and de-activation of a short code for received and sent messages.
- ii. Invitational messages should be free.
- iii. Messages sent to a consumer who has given his/her consent must allow an "opt out" option from receiving future messages.
- iv. The "opt out" should be to the same short code the message came from.
- v. MNO should have Short code portals for consumers to manage subscriptions.
- vi. Unsolicited Electronic Communication/ unwanted messages should not be sent more than once a day and only three (3) times in a month
- vii. Broadcast should be only on weekdays and between the hours of 8.00 a.m. to 7.00 p.m. daily.

viii. Consumers who do not want to receive a particular or all forms of UEC's can call their service provider and ask to be put on a list for people who do not want to receive UECs.

The Authority as part of its consumer awareness creation has also started monthly consumer outreach programs to educate consumers on their rights and responsibilities regarding UECs.

To protect yourself from receiving unwanted messages, consumers are advised to:

- i. Be careful about giving out their mobile phone numbers or any other personal information.
- ii. Read through Terms and Conditions of promotions before subscribing.
- iii. Find out the policy of a website before giving out any information as some websites also solicit for numbers for commercial purposes.
- iv. Always report any issue on UEC's to your service provider and if not satisfied with the



solution provided, contact NCA.

SAFETY TIPS FOR USING MOBILE PHONES ON THE ROAD

Using any form of communication device on the road could double your risk of being in a fatal accident. Stay in control to be safe and alive and protect others around you by following these simple tips.

For Drivers

1. Make sure your device is within your reach before you move your vehicle.
2. Adjust and test all your device and receivers before you set off.
3. Try to place calls only when your vehicle is not moving or parked safely.
4. Never read while driving, you may run into another vehicle or knock down a person.
5. Suspend calls that would make you emotional while driving
6. Texting while driving is a NO! NO!
7. Carefully watch before pulling over to place or receive a call.
8. Keep volume of device at a minimum level.
9. All video screens should be avoided at the front area of the vehicle
10. Remember, your life is important so always keep your eyes on the road.
11. Cyclists and motor cyclists should avoid

picking or making calls while riding.

12. It will be better to use an ear piece for a call rather than a handset.

For Pedestrians

1. Avoid using ear piece as a pedestrian.
2. Do not text or read when walking on or by

the road.

3. Use the appropriate side of the road meant for pedestrians.
4. Make sure you are off the road before using any form of device.

Let Us Use Our Communication Devices Safely



Experiences from Consumers

As part of efforts to reach telecom consumers of a wide range, the Authority chose a particular day to visit consumers from various walks of life. These visits were used to interact with consumers on issues concerning quality of experience, their patronage of communications services and products. Those visited also took the opportunity to voice their concerns and feelings regarding the quality of service they receive from the service providers.

This visit came a month after the NCA celebrated this year's World Consumer Rights Day –WCRD-17 with a roadshow at the Tema Station in Accra. The Authority again decided to hit the streets of some parts of Accra to obtain from consumers first-hand information about the services they receive from their Communications Network Providers.

“Stop these Promos”

This is what Madam Stella Yankah, a Tutor at the Labone Senior Secondary School in Accra, had to say when the NCA camera man caught her attention; “the regulator should ensure that the MNOs improve their service quality with regards to their promos. The view that the promos and lotteries are putting pressure on the networks’ facilities, is worsening their service quality”.



Madam Stella Yankah,

Madam Stella Yankah mentioned that the MNOs hide behind the numerous so called promotions to deduct credit/airtime from unsuspecting consumers’ accounts without performing any activity on their network to warrant such deductions. “It appears the MNOs are concentrating on the promotions more than delivering quality service to us. I don't understand why my colleagues will always complain that when they call my line it rings and I don't pick up, when in actual fact the call does not come through to me at that time; meanwhile, these promotional text messages just keep on coming”

She specifically, mentioned a promotion called “MA HIITI” promo as one of the most ridiculous promos in the telecom sector because she never believed the operator could redeem its pledge of giving out an amount of GH¢200,000 as claimed.

“Stop Sending Me Unsolicited Messages, Calls, Consumer Tells Operators”

Another consumer we encountered expressed concern of annoying and frustrating messages. This particular consumer who introduced herself as Madam Patience Owusu, urged the Mobile Network Operators (MNOs) to put a stop to sending her messages and calls she does not want or need. These messages are called Unsolicited Electronic Communications (UECs). Madam Owusu expressed her annoyance with the constant bombarding of calls and messages from all the MNOs since she uses all the network. She was especially annoyed at the times the MNOs send these messages and calls.



Madam Patience Owusu

“Most times while I am sleeping or busy working or doing something important, a call or UEC would come in, which of course I would have to attend to, thinking it was an important call or message only to discover it's from the Mobile Network Operator advertising one product or the other. This is very annoying and infuriating. They should stop sending me messages, they should stop calling me, is that too much to ask?” she queried.

These messages come at any time of the day and also at night. When you are in church, when you are sleeping and when you are in business meetings or even at work.

Madam Patience Owusu, who is a fashion Designer added that most annoying is the fact that a particular operator would even use mobile phone numbers appearing like normal subscriber ten (10) digits to call you, prompting you to leave whatever you are doing and pick only to discover that it was a programmed call from the MNO. “They should just stop this kind of thing, it disturbs me a lot” she said.

“Stop the exploitation”

According to Mr. Laryea, the most annoying part of it all is when they charge you in addition to

sending messages you do not want in the first place. He angrily asked “how can you charge me for something I did not ask you to send me?” “Haaaah my brother is it fair?”



Mr. Laryea

Continuing, Mr Laryea, advised that “if the MNOs want to do business let them revert to doing business in the normal way, where you first invite or offer to sell to a person and that person agrees to buy and then the business takes place.” “This action by the MNOs amounts to taking people's money from them by force without their consent”.

Meanwhile, when he was alerted that the messages and calls from the MNOs were meant to inform the subscribers about new and latest products which may be of benefit to them, he strongly disagreed and said that if the messages or calls contain information that relates to the network services he will have no problem with that, but not about products and services that has absolutely nothing to do with the network. Mr. Laryea, added for example, that he is not a football fan, yet he keeps on receiving messages relating to football.

To
Complain
call us on
our NEW

Toll Free Number

0800 110 622



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National Communications Authority

Communications for Development

ALL ABOUT THE NCA COMPLAINTS MANagements SYSTEM FOR TELECOM CONSUMERS

In Ghana, the National Communications Authority (NCA) has an online Complaint Management system which is user friendly. The system helps the consumer or a member of the public to submit their complaints and enquiries for the NCA to investigate and resolve the issue.

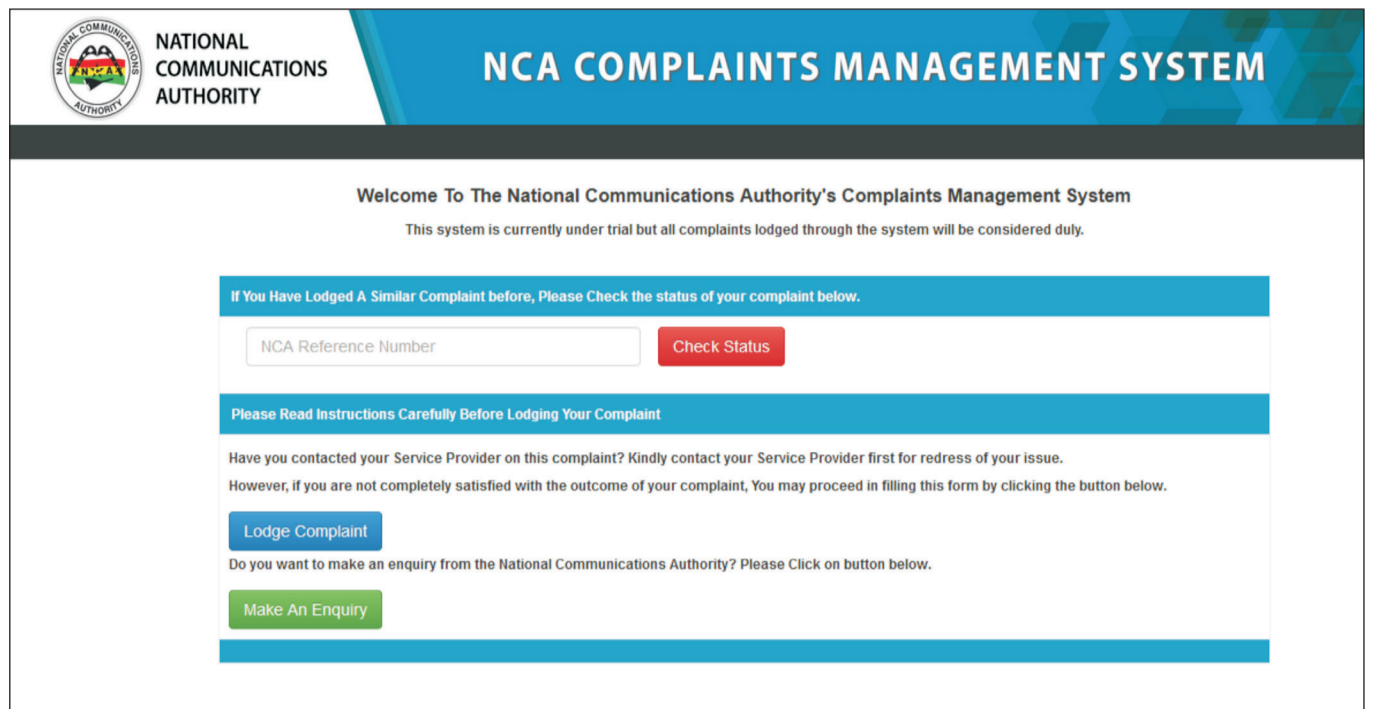
One important objective of the NCA was to take advantage of advances in technology to provide better service and support for consumers. The Complaints Management System (CMS) replaces the Authority's previous complaint handling with an easier-to-use portal for filing of complaints and enquiries and monitoring. It also has the feature of sending automated acknowledgements or feedback.

Staff of the Authority use the CMS to assess, investigate and respond to complaints received via phone, walk-in, post and through e-mails. The complaints received via the various channels are logged into the CMS. The CMS became operational in 2016 for complainants to lodge their complaints and make enquiries. After a year, we can confidently say that it has enhanced the Authority's complaint management.

The CMS has two main sections;

1. The first section is basically for lodging

Procedures for Filing a Complaint



complaints and enquiries. It also gives users the opportunity to provide their details.

2. The second section provides the user with an option to check and track the status of their previously lodged complaints with the NCA by providing their reference numbers.

Here is a snapshot of the home page of the Complaints Management System.

Users who wish to submit complaints should

note that all complaints should first be sent to their service providers. If they are not satisfied, then they can forward the issue to the NCA.

Complainants can also contact the Authority if they are unable to reach customer care centers of their Service Providers or if there are issues with Quality of Service and therefore cannot reach the Service Provider accordingly.

Consumers now have multiple options for filing their complaint with the Authority:

- Filing a complaint online on the NCA's website, www.nca.org.gh, click on consumer center and then make a Complaint/Enquiry.
- By calling the NCA on the:
 - o Hot line - 030-7011-419 or
 - o Toll Free Number - 0800-110-622.
- By email (complaints@nca.org.gh)
- Walk in to any of NCA's offices across the country, we are in eight regions; Accra, Bolgatanga, Ho, Koforidua, Kumasi, Sunyani, Takoradi and Tamale.

KNOW THE HARMONISED SHORT CODES FOR ALL NETWORKS

| SERVICES | SHORT CODE |
|----------------------------------|------------|
| Call Centre | 100 |
| Credit Recharge | 134 |
| Check Balance | 124 |
| Verification of SIM Registration | 400 |
| Voice Mail Deposit | 108 |
| Voice Mail Retrieval | 109 |

KNOW YOUR TELECOMMUNICATIONS SERVICE TARIFFS

We publish for the information of the general public, the tariffs for Mobile telephony services as at May, 2017. This is to allow consumers compare prices and help them make informed decisions.

Table 1: TARIFFS OF MOBILE TELEPHONY OPERATORS (PREPAID) AS AT MAY 2017
(All rates are quoted in Ghana Cedis and the billing rate is per minute)

| | MTN | Tigo | Vodafone | Airtel | Glo Mobile | Expresso | Industry Average |
|---|-------|-------|----------|--------|------------|----------|------------------|
| On-net (Calls made to or from same network) | 0.105 | 0.132 | 0.11 | 0.11 | 0.11 | 0.10 | 0.1104 |
| Other Local Networks | 0.13 | 0.132 | 0.13 | 0.12 | 0.11 | 0.15 | 0.1286 |
| UK | 1.40 | 0.354 | 0.32 | 0.12 | 1.60 | 1.60 | 0.8990 |
| USA | 0.12 | 0.18 | 0.16 | 0.14 | 0.14 | 0.21 | 0.1586 |
| Canada | 0.15 | 0.132 | 0.16 | 0.14 | 0.14 | 0.21 | 0.1556 |
| Italy | 1.40 | 0.18 | 1.5 | 1.20 | 1.00 | 2.00 | 1.2133 |
| Nigeria | 0.96 | 0.78 | 0.46 | 0.54 | 0.45 | 0.21 | 0.5670 |
| South Africa | 0.40 | 0.54 | 0.96 | 0.60 | 0.45 | 1.27 | 0.7035 |
| Germany | 0.30 | 0.54 | 0.46 | 0.36 | 0.45 | 1.60 | 0.6183 |
| China | 0.12 | 0.18 | 0.16 | 0.16 | 0.14 | 0.21 | 0.1620 |
| UAE | 0.80 | 0.78 | 0.75 | 0.94 | 1.00 | 1.60 | 0.9783 |
| SMS-On Net | 0.045 | 0.08 | 0.055 | 0.04 | 0.05 | 0.04 | 0.0521 |
| SMS-Other Networks | 0.055 | 0.08 | 0.065 | 0.05 | 0.05 | 0.04 | 0.0573 |
| Data/MB | 0.10 | 0.14 | 0.125 | 0.16 | 0.03 | 0.05 | 0.1008 |

- Local call and SMS rates are default rates of mobile network operators.
- All the international destination rates are calls to Mobile Networks.
- Calls to international destinations are charged per minute

Table 2: SMS - IDD TARIFF RATES

| SMS-IDD | MTN | Airtel | Tigo | Vodafone | Glo Mobile | Expresso | Industry Average |
|--------------|------|--------|------|----------|------------|----------|------------------|
| US | 0.20 | 0.12 | 0.35 | 0.60 | 0.198 | 0.0636 | 0.255 |
| Canada | 0.20 | 0.12 | 0.35 | 0.35 | 0.142 | 0.0636 | 0.204 |
| UK | 0.20 | 0.15 | 0.35 | 0.45 | 0.142 | 0.0636 | 0.226 |
| Germany | 0.20 | 0.15 | 0.35 | 0.60 | 0.182 | 0.0636 | 0.258 |
| Italy | 0.20 | 0.15 | 0.35 | 0.60 | 0.142 | 0.0636 | 0.251 |
| Nigeria | 0.20 | 0.15 | 0.4 | 0.40 | 0.182 | 0.0636 | 0.233 |
| South Africa | 0.20 | 0.15 | 0.35 | 0.45 | 0.182 | 0.0636 | 0.233 |
| China | 0.20 | 0.15 | 0.4 | 0.40 | 0.182 | 0.0636 | 0.233 |
| U.A.E. | 0.20 | 0.15 | 0.35 | 0.40 | 0.198 | 0.0636 | 0.227 |



For Further Information,

Contact the Consumer and Corporate Affairs Division, National Communications Authority,

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- **Ho** - P. O. Box HP1576, Ho, Tel: +233 - (0)36-2026375/2026339
- **Koforidua** - Private Mail Bag, Koforidua, Tel: +233 - (0)03420- 28378/ 28380/ 28382
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- **Sunyani** - P. O. Box SY125, Sunyani, Tel: 233(0)352-027564
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