



28th October 2016

Mobile UK's responds to the British Infrastructure Group's report on mobile coverage in the UK

- Mobile operators fully accepts the report's underlying point - that customers want improvements in mobile coverage, capacity and capability, to sustain their ever increasing use of mobile devices. The UK's mobile network operators' have invested and will continue to invest, many billions of pounds in their networks to meet this demand.
- In the immediate future, the mobile operators are working competitively to meet the commitment of 90% geographic voice coverage by the end of 2017 and thus meet their new licence condition (which will also increase substantially 4G data coverage).
- The Government is delivering on its commitment to reform planning law in England and the Electronic Communications Code, measures that will make it more straightforward and viable to invest in the expansion of network coverage. These delayed reforms will now provided limited benefit in terms of the 2017 target but will be vital for continuing network development thereafter.
- The mobile market in the UK is highly competitive; Ofcom's annual market reports regularly demonstrate that UK customers get among the best prices in the developed world. Consumers get a very good deal from our competitive market but it remains essential that the UK has the right incentives in place to promote continuing investment in network coverage, as we move towards 5G and the mobile 'internet of things'.
- For this reason, Mobile UK does not support the use of 'national roaming'; it is not only technically difficult to do in a localised way, can deliver a poor customer experience and increases operational costs, but also is a significant disincentive to competitive network investment*.

(*i.e. avoid a situation whereby it is better to hang back from investing in unprofitable coverage (and most remote sites are unprofitable) and pay a competitor on a 'per use basis'. If all hang back, network expansion is impaired)

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