# [GB] Controlled Premium Rate Services Scope Extended

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It is part of Ofcom's duty to protect vulnerable consumers and to regulate inappropriate behaviour by some providers. The regulation of Premium Rate Services falls into this category, as provided for by the Communications Act 2003, Sections 120 - 124. In non-statutory language, PRS "offer consumers some form of content, product or service accessed via fixed or mobile telephones and charged to the user's telephone bill".

The "Premium Rate Services Condition" regulates the provision, content, promotion and marketing of PRS and the providers have to comply with directions made by the code's enforcement authority. The authority is ICSTIS, the Independent Committee for the Supervision of Standards in the Telephone Information Services. The current "Approved Code" contains a subset of services known as "Controlled Premium Rate Services" (CPRS). Up until now, such services did not expressly include Sexual Entertainment Services (SES).

Ofcom published a consultation document during November 2006, entitled "Conditions regulating Sexual Entertainment Services". The main proposal was to extend the definition of CPRS to all SES regardless of price. Importantly, "adult services" has been given the meaning to include "gambling services". The six stakeholder responses were broadly supportive. Consequently, the PRS Condition has been modified from 8 March 2007.

ICSTIS is the UK's premium rate services regulator. It has become more prominent recently because of issues affecting "participation TV". ICSTIS held a "Participation TV Summit" on 8 March and subsequently wrote to all broadcasters to confirm the actions that were agreed in order for broadcasters to restore consumer trust and confidence in the sector.

### *Regulation of premium rate services, Sections 120 - 124 Communications Act 2003*

http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2003/30021--c.htm#120

### *Ofcom Consultation and Statement: "Regulating Sexual Entertainment Services"*

http://www.ofcom.org.uk/consult/condocs/entertainment_services/

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***Industry Notice: Conditions Regulating Sexual Entertainment Services***

http://www.icstis.org.uk/pdfs_news/notice_SES.pdf

***ICSTIS' Code of Practice (11th edition)***

http://www.icstis.org.uk/publications/cop/default.asp

***ICSTIS Letter to broadcasters***

http://www.icstis.org.uk/pdfs_news/prsTV_SAGletter_broadcasters.pdf

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