

News from Brussels about reduction in roaming charges

✘ MOBILE PHONE CHARGES FOR TRAVELLERS SET TO FALL

EU AGREEMENT REACHED TO CAP ROAMING PRICES

Alyn Smith, SNP MEP, today welcomed the vote in the European Parliament which will hopefully see the end of extortionate charges for using your mobile phone when you are abroad.

With effect from July 1st, EU mobile operators will again be obliged to lower retail prices for roaming calls – a cut in the cap that was first introduced in 2007. The maximum call charge to consumers will be lowered from 35 eurocents per min to 29 cents, and be cut by another 10 cents by July 2014.

The big victory, though, is on data charging. With a growing increase in smart phones data is becoming more and more important in everyday life.

Mobile operators can currently charge whatever they like for data roaming which means that unsuspecting travellers are often hit with extortionately high bills. This will however change with a cap of 70 cents per megabyte from July 1st, lowering to 45 cents next year, and down to 20 cents in 2014.

The price of text messages will also drop from 11 cents as it is now to 6 cents by 2014.

Alyn Smith said:-

“These new roaming prices will be of benefit to the thousands of Scots holidaymakers and business travellers when they come into force this summer. As someone who has to use my mobile abroad on a regular basis, I’ll confess this is good news for me too.

“Previous caps were also limited to phone calls and text messages but this landmark agreement for the first time caps the amount operators can charge for the use of data whilst roaming. With a continual increase of data use for emails, facebook, twitter and everything else, this will be a huge benefit to smart phone users and save them from the extortionate phone bills which have, unfortunately, become common when travelling.

“I am delighted that Scots holidaymakers will be able to take full advantage of these cheaper prices during this summer holiday season.”