

2<sup>nd</sup> November 2016

Ref: Let's not let the networks stamp out better coverage for the people of the UK

**We were delighted when you and your colleagues called for the introduction of UK national roaming, to improve mobile reception for millions. As a telecoms company, we understand the importance of developing technology that will benefit consumers. Like you, we identified national roaming as something which is severely underdeveloped and overlooked in the UK.**

National roaming is something we've tried to encourage the industry to progress. In 2014 we [launched our own Jump SIM](#) card as a solution for our business customers, becoming the first UK company to release a national roaming device. At this time, we were active in making representations to DCMS, making the case that the technological issues the wider industry had identified as a blocker to National Roaming, in fact – didn't exist. Since then little further progression has been made by other providers.

Of course, as an MVNO we were frustrated when the [then Secretary of State](#) discounted national roaming as a solution, but at the same time, welcomed infrastructure development that the mobile network operators did agree to. We also pressed ahead with our own plans to roll-out Jump.

Therefore, we were unsurprised to see [those same networks](#) once again reject national roaming, upon publication of your report. At a time when it looks like their promises to invest billions in infrastructure will fall well short, this is precisely the time to address the issue in full, and we applaud your efforts in tackling what can be a frustration for individuals and businesses the length of the country.

We launched a UK national roaming SIM two years ago, since when we have delivered solutions to countless happy customers, delivering in key areas of safety, security, commerce and peace of mind.

The technology for national roaming already exists in the UK and actually is considerably well developed. Now's the time to capitalise on the head start we've made, the excuse of a lack of technological development is no longer feasible.

After the renewed calls to implement national roaming, the big networks have displayed resistance, which is of no surprise. [Mobile UK](#), who represent mobile operators, attributed this to it being “technically difficult to do in a localised way” as well as stating that it will increase costs and remove the incentive for competitive network investment. Our experience shows that these fears are redundant. The technology actually, in many cases, works better. For example, where some claimed it would reduce battery life, it actually has the opposite effect, as once a phone has roamed, it’s no longer searching. Let’s not let tech jargon, and inaccurate jargon at that, get in the way of progress.

In 2014, the networks pledged to jointly [allocate £5bn](#) to increasing coverage to 90% of the country. This was evidently an empty promise as your [report highlights](#) that a third of people still receive poor coverage at home, and 28% of rural areas still do not have coverage. After the previous calls for action, the situation remains very much the same, with providers doing little, if anything, to improve connectivity. More needs to be done to ensure change will actually occur.

In our view, mobile users cannot be held back because of the refusal of the big businesses to ‘play-ball’. It’s unfair to deprive the country of a technology that it has long since required, yet the big companies continue to do so despite such a strong need for improvement.

Now is the time that action must be taken. After previous demands have remained fruitless, something more effective must be done by those in power to stand up for the many who are dissatisfied with their current coverage. In our view, the key to achieving this, is through smaller telecoms pioneers and MVNOs taking a lead, where big-business has failed to innovate.

24 Seven have been committed to providing an [improved service](#) and product for our customers in any way we can, which is what led us to the development of our national roaming SIM. We pledge to share our expertise and knowledge with you and your peers, in order to provide a fairer and more progressive industry, and hope that the larger providers who are the key to unlocking progression, will start to listen to the voice of your constituents.

Yours Sincerely,

David Samuel  
MD and Founder  
24 Seven Communications Ltd