# [***Hello, wrong call, IDA***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:47K7-F9J0-0058-X2XT-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Body**

I REFER to the decision by the Infocomm Deve-lopment Authority (IDA) of Singapore to continue the practice of making mobile-phone call receivers subsidise half the cost of mobile-phone callers ('No free incoming ***cell-phone*** calls'; ST, Dec 24).

This practice is clearly contrary to continuous government exhortations not to subsidise expenditure of a consumption nature.

The total cost of making a call from a mobile phone must be borne by the caller, and the caller alone. It is both morally wrong and against natural justice to charge expenses to a consumer for something which he did not initiate, nor has control over.

Why should one pay for calls from wrong-number callers, tele-marketers and even associates and friends?

IDA's reply that the existing system had 'served Singapore well, with competitive and attractive pricing packages' exposes an unthinking mentality which clings stubbornly to present practices, with little courage to put right what is morally wrong.

This despite discovering that 33 out of 40 countries, which presumably include many in the Third World, make callers pay for their calls.

As a First World country with one of the highest mobile penetration rates, what justifications do we have to make call receivers subsidise mobile-phone callers?

The IDA also did not produce any evidence to support its assertion that many mobile-phone users were under the mistaken impression that changing the format would mean lower telephone bills.

It is, however, irrelevant and immaterial whether making only callers pay will increase one's telephone bills.

One should only have to pay for one's outgoing calls, instead of subsidising incoming calls. Such a 'pay-as-you-call' approach would be the fairest system.

As an agency tasked with gearing Singapore up to meet the information-technology challenge, the IDA should review its archaic and obsolete position of subsidising mobile-phone callers.

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