

Andy Burnham MP

Working Hard for the Leigh area

10 Market Street
Leigh WN7 1DS



Press release

Friday, 28th July 2006

For immediate use

New measures to combat mobile phone robbery welcomed by Andy Burnham MP

Eighty per cent of stolen handsets will be blocked on all five UK networks within 48 hours of being reported stolen to their home network, the government and mobile phone industry leaders have announced today.

Working in partnership with the Government and police, the Mobile Industry Crime Action Forum (MICAF) and mobile phone industry leaders launched an industry charter detailing objectives and initiatives to help reduce mobile phone crime.

Andy Burnham MP has welcomed the charter, and a government pledge of £1.35 million funding for a national centre of excellence - the National Mobile Phone Crime Unit (NMPCU) - to bolster local and national action to disrupt stolen phone markets.

The charter represents a major improvement in the process of blocking stolen mobile phones, making them less attractive to criminals. The blocking target represents a world first in using this type of process, and shows industry leaders' commitment to play their part in helping to reduce mobile phone theft in the UK.

Andy Burnham MP said:

"I welcome this commitment by the mobile phone industry to make mobile phones less attractive to thieves and demonstrate their clear commitment to their customers' safety.

"The public should be free to carry valuable items, such as mobile phones and MP3 players, on the streets without fear of becoming a target for robbers. Today there are 21,000 fewer robberies on the streets than five years ago and any measure that can drive down robbery levels further still, such as this have my full support."

"The police service is committed to making our streets safer. We are getting to grips with street crime, but with the support of the mobile phone

industry and the public we can achieve even more. To help them I would advise local people to register their mobile phones free of charge on <http://www.Immobilise.com> so as to give police the best chance of recovering stolen phones and arresting those who commit mobile phone crime."

END

Notes to Editors

1. The five UK networks are Vodafone, O2, T Mobile, Orange, and 3.
2. The NMPCU is a national centre of excellence in disrupting the markets of stolen mobile phones. Based in London, it is an intelligence unit that advises forces on suitable disruption tactics and how to apply the legislation.