

**Petition to the Governor in Council to refer  
Telecom Decision CRTC 2007-27  
Price cap framework for large incumbent local  
exchange carriers  
back to the Canadian Radio-television and  
Telecommunications Commission for  
reconsideration of pay telephone rates**

**By**

**The Public Interest Advocacy Centre, National Anti-Poverty  
Organization and Union des consommateurs (collectively the  
“Consumer Groups”)**

**July 30, 2007**

## **Introduction**

1. The Petitioners are the following organizations:
  - (a) The Public Interest Advocacy Centre (PIAC), a national non-profit organization that provides legal and research services on behalf of consumer interests, and, in particular, vulnerable consumer interests, concerning the provision of important public services;
  - (b) The National Anti-Poverty Organization (NAPO), is a national non-profit, non-partisan organization that represents the interests of low-income people in Canada;
  - (c) Union des consommateurs is a non-profit organization. Its mission is to promote and defend consumer rights, with particular emphasis on the interests of low-income households. Union des consommateurs works on research and represents the interests of consumers before political, regulatory or legal authorities or in public forums.
  
2. This petition concerns the rates charged for use of payphones operated by Canada's incumbent telephone companies, Aliant Telecom Inc., Bell Canada, Saskatchewan Telecommunications (SaskTel), Manitoba Telephone Service/Allstream (MTS) (collectively "the Companies") which are subject to regulation pursuant to the provisions of the *Telecommunications Act* by way of a cap on the payphone rate under a

posted tariff set by the Canadian Radio Television and Telecommunications Commission (“CRTC” or “Commission”).

3. In Telecom Decision 2007- 27, the Commission approved applications by the Companies to increase the payphone rate subject to the cap from \$0.25 to \$0.50. This petition requests that this part of the Commission’s Decision be rescinded and that the matter be returned to the Commission for reconsideration with directions.

### **Payphone Service Prior to CRTC Telecom Decision 2007-27**

4. The Commission has recognized in the past the important role that payphones play in the delivery of telecommunications services to Canadians. In Telecom Decision 2007-27, the CRTC termed payphones a “necessary and valuable public service”.<sup>1</sup> In its Telecom Decision 2002-47, the CRTC noted the following:

“The Commission recognizes that certain segments of the population rely more heavily on pay telephone service than others. Based on information presented in this proceeding, the Commission considers that low-income Canadians, especially those without access to basic residential service, are more likely to use pay telephone service for important personal and emergency calls. The Commission notes that although wireless service may constitute an alternative for many consumers, it is not an

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<sup>1</sup> CRTC Telecom Decision 2007-27, para 113.

affordable option for all. The Commission considers that access to pay telephone service is particularly crucial in rural and remote communities, where consumers may not have access to basic residential service and where telecommunications service providers may not offer wireless services.”<sup>2</sup>

### **Decision 2007-27 (the “Price Caps Decision”)**

5. Notwithstanding the previous intentions of the Commission to ensure availability and access to payphones, Telecom Decision CRTC 2007-27, approved a 100% increase in payphone rates for Bell Aliant, Bell Canada, MTS Allstream and Sasktel, or up to 50 cents a local call (and up to \$1 for calls charged to a calling or credit card) in these companies’ operating territories.
6. The Commission justified its decision to allow such a substantial increase as follows:

The Commission recognizes that pay telephone rates have not increased for most ILECs for almost 25 years. The Commission considers reasonable the position of the Companies that the costs of providing pay telephone services have increased since the last increase in rates in 1981....

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<sup>2</sup> CRTC Telecom Decision 2004-47, para 32.

The Commission considers that without the flexibility to increase pay telephone rates, the ILECs may remove unprofitable pay telephones which would result in consumers having reduced access to the service.

Accordingly, the Commission approves the flexibility for all ILECs to increase the local call charge for a cash call up to a maximum rate of \$0.50, and to increase collect, third number, Calling Card or commercial credit card charges up to a maximum rate of \$1.00.”

7. The CRTC made this change in the context of a “Price Cap” hearing. The CRTC has held three price cap hearings. In each the CRTC attempts to set rate caps for regulated telecommunications services under a formula designed to foster innovation amongst providers while ensuring just and reasonable rates to consumers.
8. Payphone accessibility and competition decisions have been separate proceedings with significant public participation,<sup>3</sup> not a tiny part of a larger price caps decision.
9. Although all rates for all regulated services are in issue at a price cap hearing, in reality, most of the hearings are devoted to determining the rate formula.

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<sup>3</sup> See, variously, *Access to pay telephone service*, Telecom Public Notice CRTC 2002-6, 5 December 2002, leading to *Access to pay telephone service*, Telecom Decision CRTC 2004-47 (15 July 2004); *Local pay telephone competition*, Telecom Decision CRTC 98-8, 30 June 1998.

10. The decision to double payphone rates was determined by the Commission following the completion of a “price caps” hearing where the method and content of the regulation of a wide range of services offered by the Companies that are subject to approval by the Commission is considered. Payphone service is but one of the services that are subject to the terms of a rate cap imposed by the Commission upon the Companies’ services.

11. When considering the payphone question, the evidence associated with the need for any increase in rates, including the revenues and expenses associated with the payphone operations of the Companies was excluded from review of the interested parties in the proceedings for reasons of commercial confidentiality. The Commission had no empirical evidence before it as to the impact of payphone rate increases upon access and availability by consumers, especially vulnerable consumers. None of the Companies filed evidence concerning rate impacts upon payphone customers.

12. Several of the petitioners in the Price Cap proceeding (known as the “Consumer Groups”) led evidence, who were participants in the hearing giving rise to Telecom Decision 2007-27 made submissions to the effect that payphone rate increases were not justified. As summarized by the CRTC at paras. 110-111 of the Decision:

110. The Consumer Groups submitted that the Companies remained dominant in the local pay telephone markets. The Consumer Groups argued that information related to the cost

and revenues for pay telephone services had not been provided and there had been no opportunity to adequately evaluate the real need for a rate increase.

111. The Consumer Groups pointed out that in *Access to pay telephone service*, Telecom Decision CRTC 2004-47, 15 July 2004 (Decision 2004-47),<sup>4</sup> the Commission considered pay telephone service to be an important public service that wireless services had not rendered obsolete. The Consumer Groups also stated that Decision 2004-47 provided the Companies with a relatively free hand to make decisions concerning removal of unprofitable pay telephones or relocation of pay telephones to more profitable venues.

13. In the view of the Petitioners herein, the record before the CRTC when it made the decision to double payphone rates was incomplete. While the Petitioners cannot make submissions as to the probative value of the confidential information provided by the Companies concerning its payphone operations, it is to be noted that the record lacked the following information:

- (a) A study of payphone users performed by EKOS, filed in proceedings giving rise to Telecom Decision 2004-47 which is attached to this petition as Appendix 1.

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<sup>4</sup> Commenced by *Access to pay telephone service*, Telecom Public Notice CRTC 2002-6, 5 December 2002.

- (b) A report filed by Union des consommateurs (“UC”) with the CRTC in the same proceeding on low-income users of pay telephones, which is attached to this petition as Appendix 2.
- (c) A subsequently performed survey on pay telephone use and pricing undertaken for PIAC and attached to this petition as Appendix 3.

14. The EKOS study established that 92% of Canadians felt payphone service was an important public service and that the large majority of payphone calls were either very or somewhat important to callers. The overwhelming majority of local payphone calls (84%) were made with coins.

15. The Union des consommateurs report established that low-income Canadians rely upon pay telephone service to a much greater degree than wealthier Canadians and that their usage of pay telephones is largely in relation to important calls such as those relating to employment, health care and child care.

16. According to the UC report, the number of low-income Canadians who used payphones daily was twenty times more than the rate reported in the EKOS survey and seven times more than the general population. Those with no home phone rely even more heavily upon payphones.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> See Union des consommateurs, “Payphone Use Among Low-Income Canadians” (March 2003) at p. 4 (see Appendix 2).



17. The Petitioners, based on their contacts with low-income Canadians and their general experience note that the circumstances of habits of payphone users, and in particular the needs of low-income payphone users, likely have not changed in the last three years. The CRTC therefore failed to consider the very real impact of a large increase in payphone rates on users and in particular, vulnerable users and allowed consideration of the passage of time between payphone increases to determine the issue.

18. The CRTC may have been led into this error by considering the social policy aspects of payphone use solely in the previous PN 2002-6 proceeding regarding payphone access, rather than in the price caps proceeding in issue in this petition.

19. The Petitioners contend that the CRTC had a duty to consider the social policy aspects of a regulatory decision such as a price rise in payphone rates and the effect upon those social policy goals of a 100% rate increase fully in the proceedings leading to Decision 2007-27.

### **Canadians' Attitudes to Payphones and Pricing**

20. One Petitioner, PIAC, has since Decision 2002-27 undertaken a new survey, performed by POLLARA Inc., that shows two-thirds of Canadians strongly agree that pay telephone service is “a necessary

and important part of the telephone network.” A further 26% agree somewhat, for a total of 93%, unchanged from the EKOS survey.

21. The POLLARA survey further notes that one-third of respondents rated their payphone calls as “very important” and a further 51% rated them as “somewhat important”, a total of 84%.

22. Finally, respondents were asked in the POLLARA survey if they agreed with the following statement about payphone rates:

Q9. “50 cents is too much for a local payphone call.”

Nearly two thirds (63%) “strongly agreed” that 50 cents was too much for a payphone call and a further 12% agreed somewhat with the statement, meaning a full three-quarters of Canadians polled (75%) felt the new 50 cent payphone rate allowed by the CRTC is too high.

23. The POLLARA survey is attached as Appendix 3.

24. The polling evidence therefore shows that the public continues to rely upon public pay telephones for important calls, considers it an important part of the telephone network and feels that payphones should be held at a reasonable, affordable rate, which is less than the price increase granted by the CRTC in Decision 2007-27.

25. The Petitioners note that the circumstances of low-income users of pay telephones likely have not greatly changed since the Union des

consommateurs qualitative study was performed. The Petitioners submit that the impact of price increases upon low-income users was an important consideration that was ignored by the Commission.

26. The Petitioners further contend that attitudes towards and usage of payphones by Canadians have not greatly changed since the CRTC's consideration of payphones in PN 2002-6.

27. Finally, the Petitioners note that the vast majority of Canadians disagree with the new rate set by the CRTC for public pay telephone use of the Companies listed above as being too high.

### **The Protection of the Public Interest**

28. The Petitioners submit that in setting rates for "an important and valuable public service" the CRTC must be governed by the social policy objectives in the *Telecommunications Act* (the "Act").

29. Section 7 of the *Telecommunications Act* provides as follows:

#### *Canadian Telecommunications Policy*

[Objectives]

7. It is hereby affirmed that telecommunications performs an essential role in the maintenance of Canada's identity and

sovereignty and that the Canadian telecommunications policy has as its objectives

(a) to facilitate the orderly development throughout Canada of a telecommunications system that serves to safeguard, enrich and strengthen the social and economic fabric of Canada and its regions;

(b) to render reliable and affordable telecommunications services of high quality accessible to Canadians in both urban and rural areas in all regions of Canada;

(c) to enhance the efficiency and competitiveness, at the national and international levels, of Canadian telecommunications;

(d) to promote the ownership and control of Canadian carriers by Canadians;

(e) to promote the use of Canadian transmission facilities for telecommunications within Canada and between Canada and points outside Canada;

(f) to foster increased reliance on market forces for the provision of telecommunications services and to ensure that regulation, where required, is efficient and effective;

(g) to stimulate research and development in Canada in the field of telecommunications and to encourage innovation in the provision of telecommunications services;

(h) to respond to the economic and social requirements of users of telecommunications services; and

(i) to contribute to the protection of the privacy of persons. [Emphasis added.]

30. Notable among these policy goals set out therein are subsections 7(a), (b) and particularly subsection (h). It is the Petitioners' submissions that the economic and social requirements of those persons requiring use of pay telephone services should have been explicitly considered in the CRTC's decision regarding payphone rates but was not directly addressed.

31. These policy goals have been informed by the recent Cabinet Direction to the CRTC regarding the implementation of the policy objectives.<sup>6</sup> This directive reads, in part:

#### *DIRECTION*

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<sup>6</sup> Order Issuing a Direction to the CRTC on Implementing the Canadian Telecommunications Policy Objectives, P.C. 2006-1534, December 14, 2006, SOR/2006-355. Online: <http://canadagazette.gc.ca/partII/2006/20061227/html/sor355-e.html>

1. In exercising its powers and performing its duties under the *Telecommunications Act*, the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (the "Commission") shall implement the Canadian telecommunications policy objectives set out in section 7 of that Act, in accordance with the following:

(a) the Commission should

(i) rely on market forces to the maximum extent feasible as the means of achieving the telecommunications policy objectives, and

(ii) when relying on regulation, use measures that are efficient and proportionate to their purpose and that interfere with the operation of competitive market forces to the minimum extent necessary to meet the policy objectives;

(b) the Commission, when relying on regulation, should use measures that satisfy the following criteria, namely, those that

(i) specify the telecommunications policy objective that is advanced by those measures and demonstrate their compliance with this Order,

(ii) if they are of an economic nature, neither deter economically efficient competitive entry into the market nor promote economically inefficient entry,

(iii) if they are not of an economic nature, to the greatest extent possible, are implemented in a symmetrical and competitively neutral manner,  
[ . . . ]

32. It is important to note that reliance on market forces is not the goal of the Policy Direction but rather the preferred method of achievement of the policy goals of the *Telecommunications Act*. Telecom Decision 2007-27 neither relies on market forces to set the regulated cap for payphone service rates, nor does it adhere to the policy objectives set out in the *Act*.

33. The Petitioners submit that there was other information that was publicly available in other CRTC proceedings that should have been considered and formed the basis for any consideration by the Commission of increases in payphone rates. The CRTC had ample, recent information on the use of pay telephone services by consumers and in particular low-income and other vulnerable consumers as a result of the 2002 Public Notice with regard to accessibility of pay telephone service.

34. The potential removal of pay telephones that were not profitable by the Companies was relied upon by the Commission in allowing the rate increase in issue.
35. While the Commission apparently believed that an increase in payphone rates might prevent removal of payphones in less profitable locations, the increase was allowed without any assurance from the Companies that the removals would not take place. There was nothing on the public record that disclosed the financial position of payphone operations of the Companies. There was nothing on the public record to rebut an inference that the Companies would continue to remove less profitable payphones and simply pocket additional funds from increased rates.
36. If payphones are, as termed by the Commission, an "important and necessary public service", it is questionable that revenues from increased payphone rates alone and not from all telephone network users should subsidize the maintenance of payphone service in areas where payphone service has proved to be uneconomic. The Commission has chosen to enlist all payphone users in an ill-considered subsidy scheme in which the only result that is certain is the doubling of rates.
37. Nor will the price rise necessarily encourage competition in the payphone market.



38. The CRTC did not hear evidence, in the price caps proceeding, that an increase in the payphone rate to 50 cents would either encourage efficient entry into the market or price competition within the market. The Commission thus did not consider if the rate increase would (to quote the Policy Direction): “neither deter economically efficient competitive entry into the market nor promote economically inefficient entry” into the overall pay telephone market.

39. Such competitive market questions, quite apart from the social policy aspects of the *Act*, were not adequately explored in the context of the price caps hearing and thus require further consideration by the Commission.

### **Relief Requested**

40. By this Petition,<sup>7</sup> the Petitioners request that the Governor in Council (GIC) immediately rescind the third Price Caps decision, with respect to rate increases for pay telephone service (and thus rescind the rate increase) and refer the third Price Cap decision, with respect to rate increases for pay telephone service, back to the CRTC for reconsideration.

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<sup>7</sup> Filed pursuant to s. 12(1) of the *Telecommunications Act*, which reads:

12. (1) Within one year after a decision by the Commission, the Governor in Council may, on petition in writing presented to the Governor in Council within ninety days after the decision, or on the Governor in Council's own motion, by order, vary or rescind the decision or refer it back to the Commission for reconsideration of all or a portion of it.

41. This Petition further requests that the GIC direct the CRTC to consider the effect of pay telephone rate increases upon all pay telephone users and in particular, low-income Canadians, as well as the effect of any such increase on the pay telephone market and the effect of any such increase on accessibility and affordability of payphone service as required by s. 7 of the *Telecommunications Act*.

## **Conclusion**

42. For the above reasons, the Consumer Groups submit that the CRTC erred in doubling payphone rates. The CRTC has taken too narrow a view of the policy aspects of the *Telecommunications Act* and concentrated on profitability of pay telephone service for ILECs, while ignoring the very real effects of a 100% price rise in a basic public service, especially for low-income and other vulnerable consumers.

43. The CRTC did not have the benefit of public attitudes to a price rise of the magnitude permitted and should be permitted to consider the public opinion regarding rates for public pay telephones.

44. In the result, the Consumer Groups request that the relief requested, as set out herein, be granted.

Submitted this 30<sup>th</sup> day of July, 2007

John Lawford  
Counsel for the Consumer Groups

## **Appendix 1**

# **Payphone Use in Canada – FINAL REPORT EKOS RESEARCH ASSOCIATES INC. – February 2003**



# Payphone Use in Canada

## FINAL REPORT

Submitted to:

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**EKOS RESEARCH ASSOCIATES INC.**

February 2003

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APPENDIX A: Annotated Questionnaire





# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study was to obtain the views of Canadians, and particularly payphone users, on a number of key behavioural and perceptual issues related to the use of pay telephones. Specifically, the following issues were addressed:

- extent and frequency of use;
- purpose of/circumstances surrounding use;
- method of payment for calls (including preferred method);
- perceptions concerning the personal relevance and general importance of payphones; and
- satisfaction with service (e.g., availability, reliability and convenience).

## 1.2 METHODOLOGY

The findings presented in this report are based on a total of 1,205 interviews conducted with a national random sample of Canadians 16 years of age and older. The telephone survey was conducted between January 20 and January 25, 2003. In order to reflect the demographic composition of the Canadian population, the data has been weighted according to region, age and gender. The margin of error is +/-2.8 percentage points, 19 times out of 20. It is important to note that the margin of error increases when population subgroups are analyzed.

Given that the main purpose of the survey was to obtain the views of pay phone users, the vast majority of the questions was asked only of those who use pay phones a at least a few times a year. The entire sample of respondents, however, were asked three questions at the start of the survey: 1) estimated use of pay phones, 2) ownership of a cellular phone, and 3) perceived importance of pay phone calls received from others. The questionnaire's socio-demographic items were also asked of the entire sample.

It is also important to note that since the survey was conducted by telephone, using home telephone numbers, Canadians who do not have a home telephone could not be included in the sample. It is likely that this relatively small group of the population uses pay telephones to a larger extent (perhaps much more so) than other Canadians (i.e., those surveyed as part of this study).



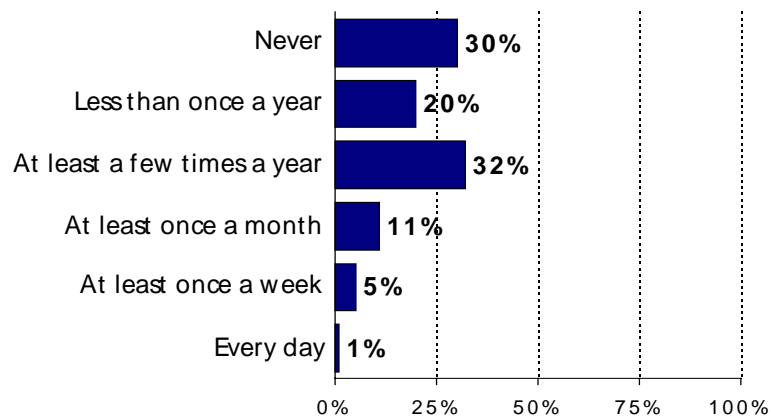
## 2. DETAILED SURVEY RESULTS

### 2.1 FREQUENCY OF PAYPHONE USE

The findings suggest that Canadians can be divided into four segments based on their self-reported use payphones. One group is comprised of relatively frequent payphone users; representing 17 per cent of the population. They indicate that they use payphones once per month, weekly or, in very a few cases, daily. A second group (32 per cent) consists of occasional payphone users; that is, those who use a payphone a few times over the course of a year. One in five Canadians (20 per cent) estimates that they use a payphone less than once per year. A fourth group, which comprises 30 per cent of the population, say that they never use payphones.

#### Exhibit 2.1: Payphone Use

Q: How often do you use payphones?



{Base: All Canadians, n=1,205}

*Payphone Use Survey, January 2003*

Sub-group analysis reveals that younger people (i.e., those under the age of 25 years) are much more likely to be frequent users of payphones (42 per cent compared to an overall average of 17 per cent). Conversely, Canadians 55 years of age and older (43 per cent) are much more likely than other Canadians to say that they have not used a payphone in the past year, as are Quebeckers (35 per cent).

Cell phone owners are about as likely as those who do not own a cell phone to use payphones (46 per cent compared to 52 per cent respectively). Among pay phone users, however, we find that those who do not have a cell phone are close to twice as likely to be frequent users of payphones (21 per cent compared to 13 per cent of those who have a cell phone).

## 2.2 NATURE OF CALLS

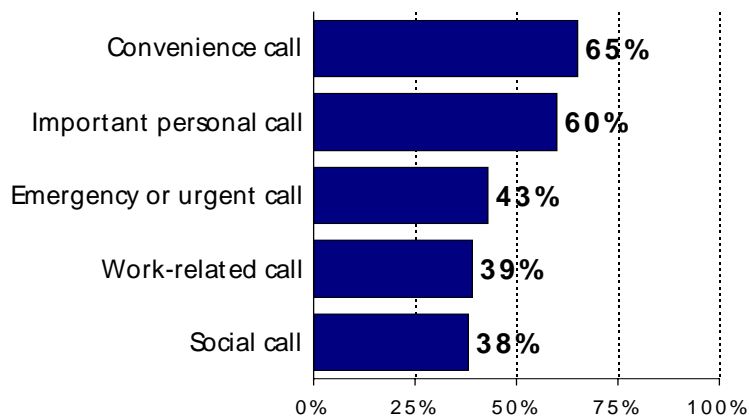
This section examines the reasons for payphone use, the types of calls made, as well as the method of payment used. It is important to note that the survey questions discussed below were asked only of those who report using a payphone at least a few times a year (i.e., occasional and frequent users), representing half of the total sample of 1,205 completed interviews.

### a) Reasons for Use

Canadians who report making payphone calls at a few times a year or more were asked whether or not they recalled making five types of calls during the past year. We find that two-thirds say that they have used a payphone for making convenience calls (e.g., to obtain directions or to call for a taxi). The second most cited reason for having used a payphone is to make an important personal call (e.g., to make an appointment or call a school). Approximately four in ten report using a payphone to make an emergency or urgent call, while similar proportions say that they have used a payphone to make a work-related or social call in the past year.

#### Exhibit 2.2: Reasons for Use

Q: Please tell me whether or not you have made the following types of calls from a payphone during the past year?



{Base: Those who said use a few times a year and over, n=598} Payphone Use Survey, January 2003

There are a number of notable differences in the nature of payphone use according to socio-demographic characteristics.

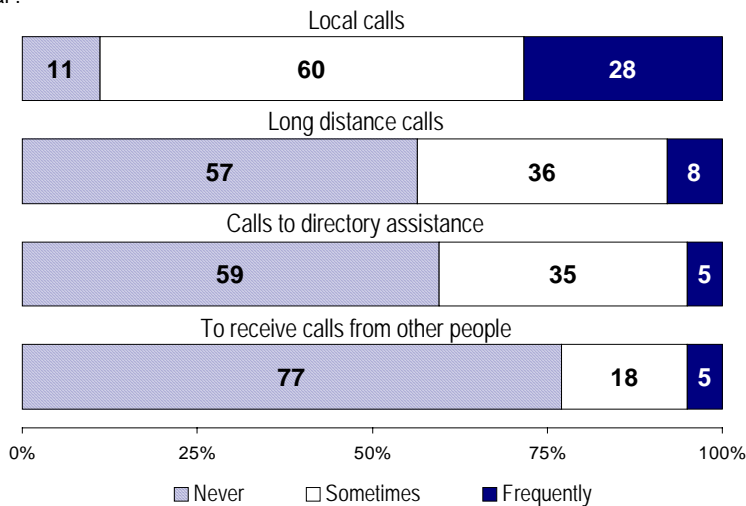
- Those 55 years of age and older (30 per cent) are significantly less likely to have used a payphone to make an emergency/urgent call.
- Men (45 per cent), particularly those between 25 to 34 years of age, are much more likely than women to have made a work-related call in the past year.
- Those under the age of 25 years, particularly men, are more likely than other Canadians to have used a payphone in order to make a social call (52 per cent), as well as calling for the sake of convenience (72 per cent).
- People in the low-middle income range (i.e., \$20,000 to \$40,000, with <\$20,000 being the lowest of the five income categories) are somewhat more likely to have made an important personal call.
- As could be expected, frequent payphone users are much more likely than occasional users to have made all five types of calls.

## b) Types of Use

Almost nine in ten respondents who use payphones at least a few times a year report sometimes, or frequently, making a local call from a payphone in the past year. Long-distance calls were made at least sometimes in the past year by 44 per cent of payphone users, while 40 per cent of them say that they called directory assistance at least sometimes in the past year. About one-quarter indicates that they have sometimes or frequently received calls at a payphone from other people during the last 12 months.

### Exhibit 2.3: Types of Use

Q: How often have you used a payphone to make the following types of calls in the past year?



{Base: Those who said use a few times a year and over, n=597} *Payphone Use Survey, January 2003*

An analysis of payphone use to make long distance calls is interesting. While younger people are the heaviest users of payphones overall, they are least likely compared to other age groups to have made a long distance call from a payphone in the past year. We also find that payphone users who live in a rural part of Canada (19 per cent) are more than twice as likely as other Canadians to indicate having frequently made long-distance calls from a payphone.

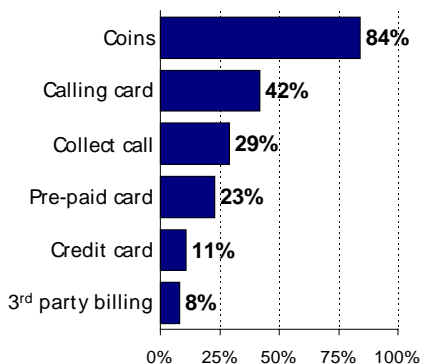
## c) Methods of Payment

Coins continue to be the most popular way of paying for payphone calls, followed by calling cards. Collect calls and pre-paid cards have been used as a method of payment by about one in four payphone users, while about one in 10 have used a credit card or third-party billing in the past year.

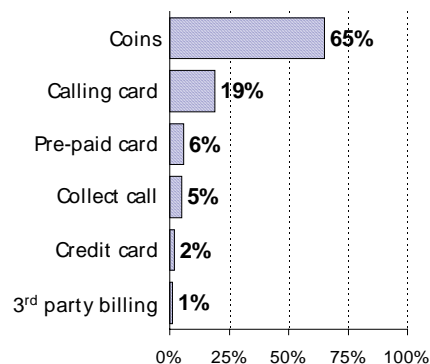
Similarly, we find that coins are by far the most often used method of payment, distantly followed by calling cards. Very few payphone users identify the other potential methods of payment as their primary way of paying for payphone calls.

### Exhibit 2.4: Methods of Payment

**Q:** Please tell me whether or not you have used the following methods of payment when making payphone calls during the last year?



**Q:** And which of these methods of payment do you use most often?



{Base: Those who said use a few times a year and over, n=597} *Payphone Use Survey, January 2003*

The most significant demographic variations pertaining to method of payment are as follows:

- Collect calls are much more likely to have been made by those under 25 years of age (46 per cent). This group is also much more likely to have used a pre-paid card (32 per cent).
- Calling card users are more likely to be found in the two uppermost income groups (>\$60,000) (52 per cent) and among rural residents (57 per cent).

## 2.3 IMPORTANCE OF PAYPHONES

The survey included two questions aimed at obtaining a measure of the importance of payphone calls to users, as well as non-users (who were asked about the importance of the calls they *receive* from people using a payphone). Payphone users were also asked about the extent to which they view payphones as constituting an important public service.

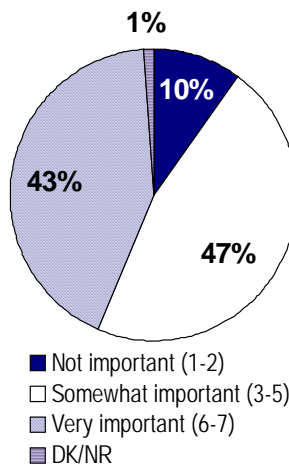
### a) Importance of Payphone Calls Made

The vast majority of payphone users describe the calls they make from payphones as being at least somewhat important, with 43 per cent judging these calls to be very important. We find that women (48 per cent), residents of BC (54 per cent) and those living in towns of less than 5,000 in population (57 per cent) are more likely than others to describe their payphone calls as being very important.

#### Exhibit 2.5: Importance of Payphone Calls

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Q: How important are the calls you make from a payphone?



{Those who said use a few times a year and over, n=599 }

*Payphone Use Survey, January 2003*

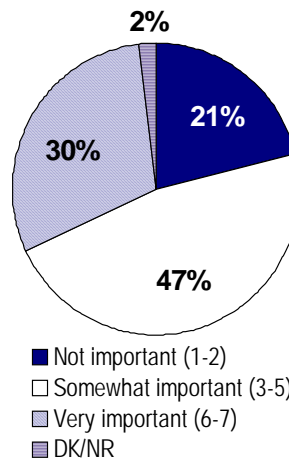


## b) Importance of Payphone Calls Received

All respondents to the survey, including those who reported never or very rarely using a payphone themselves, were asked to rate the importance they accorded to others' ability to access a payphone to call them. As shown in Exhibit 2.6, a strong majority say that this is at least somewhat important, with close to a third saying that it is very important. We also find that women (34 per cent), Quebecers (36 per cent) and single parents (45 per cent) are more likely than other Canadians to say that it is very important for others to have access to a payphone in order to call them.

### Exhibit 2.6: Importance of Accessibility

Q: How important is it that others, such as your children, friends and business colleagues, can access a payphone to call you when they are away from their home or office?



{Base: All Canadians, n=1,205}

*Payphone Use Survey, January 2003*

### c) Payphones as a Public Service

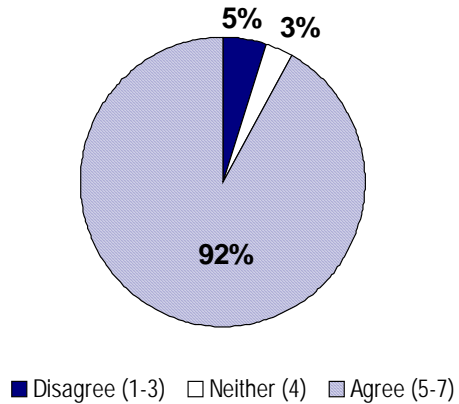
Almost all respondents who use a payphone at least a few times a year believe that payphones are an important public service. Again, we find that women (96 per cent) are most likely to value the existence of payphones.

#### **Exhibit 2.7: Payphones as a Public Service**

---

Q: Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statement...

**Payphones are an important public service**



{Base: Those who said use a few times a year and over, n=597} *Payphone Use Survey, January 2003*

---

## 2.4 SERVICE

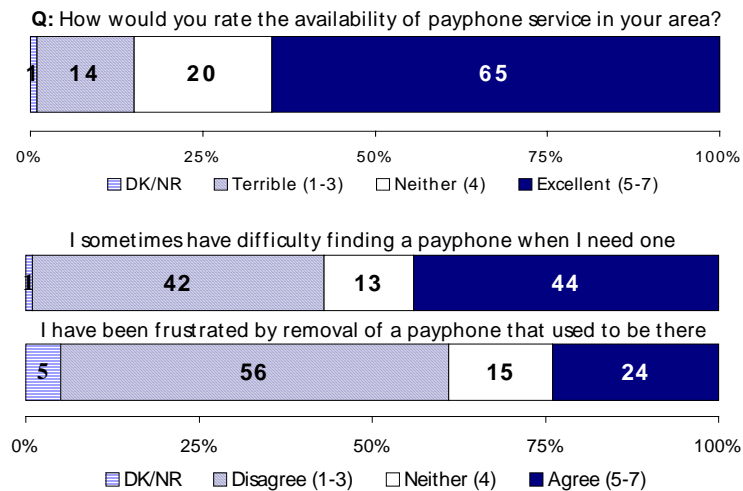
This section examines the views of payphone users on a number of service-related issues, including availability, reliability and convenience.

### a) Availability of Payphone Service

A strong majority of payphone users rate the availability of payphones in their area as good, while 14 per cent describe availability as poor. Exhibit 2.8 also shows that a significant proportion of payphone users sometimes have difficulty finding a payphone when they need one. About one in four payphone users say that they have been frustrated by the removal of a payphone.

#### Exhibit 2.8: Availability of Payphone Service

Q: Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statement...



{Base: Those who said use a few times a year and over, n=597} *Payphone Use Survey, January 2003*

Sub-group analysis reveals only a few noteworthy differences. Payphone users living in a rural location (57 per cent) are somewhat less likely than other users to rate the availability of payphone service in their area as good. Similarly, we find that a significantly higher proportion of payphone users living in small towns (41 per cent) have been frustrated by the removal of a payphone. Quebec residents have less difficulty than Canadians living in other parts of the country finding payphones.

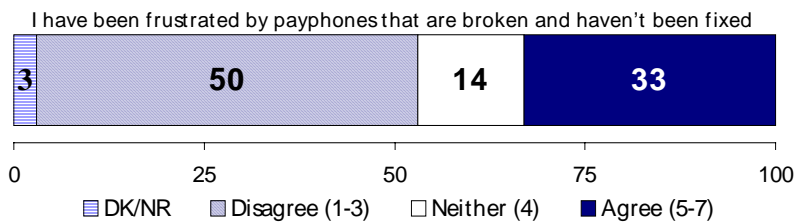
## b) Reliability of Payphone Service

One-third of payphone users say that they have been frustrated by payphones that are broken or have not been fixed, while one in two say that they at least sometimes have tried to use a payphone and found that it was out of order.

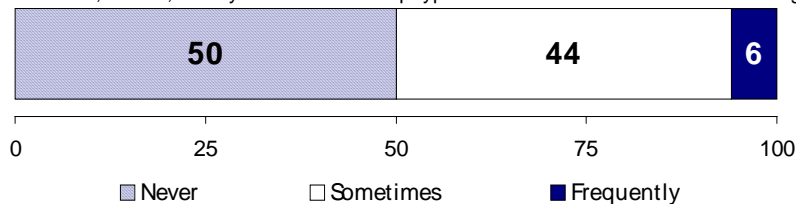
There are few differences in experiences across key sub-groups, although we do find that payphone users in BC and Atlantic Canada are more likely than those living in other parts of Canadian to have tried to use a payphone that did not work. As could be expected, frequent users of payphones are more likely than occasional users to have experienced both types of service problems.

### Exhibit 2.9: Reliability of Payphone Service

Q: Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statement...



Q: How often, if ever, have you tried to use a payphone and found that it is not working?



{Base: Those who said use a few times a year and over, n=597} *Payphone Use Survey, January 2003*

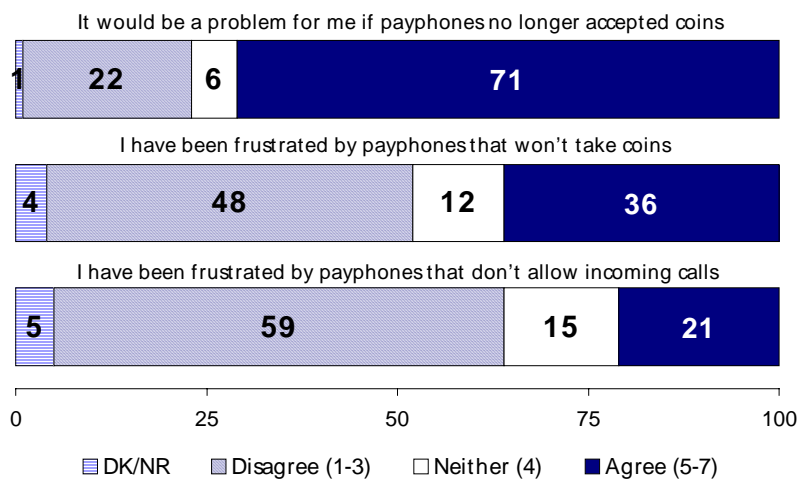
## c) Features of Payphone Service

The acceptance of coins and incoming calls have been historic features of payphones in Canada. The advent of calling cards and other alternative methods of payment, however, has meant that not all payphones today accept coins. It may also be the case that fewer payphones than before are programmed to accept incoming calls.

The results presented in Exhibit 2.10 reveal that about one-third of payphone users have found themselves frustrated by payphones that do not accept coins, while about one in five payphone users, particularly those with yearly household incomes of less than \$20,000 (36 per cent) and Quebecers (27 per cent), say that they have been frustrated by payphones that do not accept incoming calls. We also note that fully 71 per cent of payphone users feel that it would be a problem for them if payphones no longer accept coins. This result is consistent with an earlier finding that points to coins as the most popular way for Canadian payphone users to pay for calls.

### Exhibit 2.10: Convenience of Payphones

Q: Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statement...



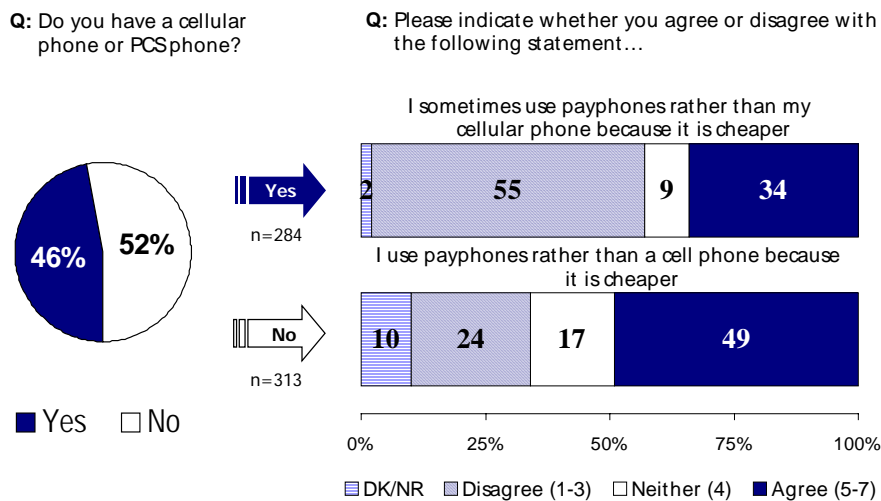
{Base: Those who said use a few times a year and over, n=597} *Payphone Use Survey, January 2003*

## 2.5 A COMPARISON OF PAYPHONE USE AMONG CELL PHONE USERS AND NON-USERS

Half of those surveyed, based on the full 1,205 sample, have a cell phone. As expected, we find a strong positive correlation between household income and cell phone ownership. Among payphone users, 46 per cent have a cell phone, while 52 per cent do not. Members of this latter group, however, are close to twice as likely to be frequent users of payphones (21 per cent compared to 13 per cent of those who have a cell phone). Thus, cell phone owners are about as likely to use pay phone as those who do not own a cell phone, but they use them much less frequently.

Payphone users who also have a cell phone were asked if they sometimes used a payphone rather than their cell phone because it is cheaper. As shown in Exhibit 2.11, one-third said that they did. Payphone users who do not have a cell phone were asked if they use payphones rather than a cell phone because it is cheaper. The result presented in the exhibit below indicates that about one in two does.

**Exhibit 2.11: Cell Phone Comparison**



{Base: Those who said use a few times a year and over, n=597}

*Payphone Use Survey, January 2003*

# 3. CONCLUSIONS

The key conclusions flowing from the survey are presented below.

## **a) About half of Canadians use payphones, including most young people**

- Canadians can be divided into four segments based on their use of payphones: 1) Non-users (30 per cent), 2) Very Infrequent Users (20 per cent), 3) Occasional users (32 per cent), and 4) Frequent Users (17 per cent).
  - ◇ Younger people (i.e., under the age of 25 years) are the most frequent users of payphone, while those of 55 years of age and older are less likely to use payphones.
  - ◇ While there is a relationship between cell phone ownership and payphone use, it pertains to intensity of use: Cell phone owners are about as likely as non-owners to use payphones, but they are much less likely to be frequent users.

## **b) Payphones are convenient, but also often used to make important/urgent calls, and, seen by almost all users as an important public service**

- Payphones are used to make a wide array of calls, however, convenience calls and important personal calls are the most prevalent. It is important to note that 43 per cent of payphone users say that they have used a payphone to make an emergency or urgent call in the past year.
  - ◇ The majority of payphone calls are local. Close to half of payphone users, however, have used a payphone to make at least one long-distance call in the past year. Four in 10 have called directory assistance. Payphone users who live in a rural part of Canada are more than twice as likely as other Canadians to indicate having frequently made long-distance calls from a payphone.

- ◇ Payphone users feel that the calls they make from payphones are important, while a strong majority of Canadians, including payphone non-users and very infrequent users, say that it is important for others to be able to access a payphone to call them, particularly women and single parents. Almost all payphone users see payphones as an important public service.

### c) Coins remain key

- The vast majority of payphone users have used coins to pay for calls, and this method is by far the most popular way of paying for calls. Calling cards are also fairly popular, particularly among rural residents.
  - ◇ About one in three payphone users have been frustrated by payphones that will not accept coins and a strong majority agree that it would be a problem for them if payphones no longer accepted coins.

### d) Access/availability of payphones is good, but some frustration encountered with respect to service quality

- Most payphone users feel that the availability of payphone service in their area is good, although sizable minorities report having been frustrated by their inability to find a payphone or by payphones that are out of order.



APPENDIX A  
ANNOTATED QUESTIONNAIRE



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**1:****INTRO**

Hello, my name is. . . . . and I work for EKOS Research Associates. We are conducting a short survey on issues of importance to households with Canadians 16 years of age and older. The interview will take approximately 5 minutes. All responses will be kept completely confidential. May I begin?

---

---

**2:****SEX**

*DO NOT ASK*

Record gender of respondent

N=.....	1205	100%
Male.....	566	47%
Female.....	639	53%

---

---

**3:****Q1**

*READ LIST, SELECT ONE:*

The questions in this survey pertain to the use of payphones within Canada.  
How often do you use payphones?

N=.....	1205	100%
Never.....	363	30%
Less than once a year.....	246	20%
At least a few times a year.....	387	32%
At least once a month.....	135	11%
At least once a week.....	63	5%
Every day.....	11	1%
DK/NR.....	0	0%

---

---

**4:****Q3**

Do you have a cellular or PCS phone?

N=.....	1205	100%
YES.....	612	51%
NO.....	592	49%
DK/NR.....	1	0%

---

---

**5:**

**Q2**

How important is it that others, such as your children, friends and business colleagues, can access a payphone to call you when they are away from their home or office? Please respond using a 7-point scale where 1 means not at all important, 7 means extremely important and the mid-point 4 means somewhat important.

N=.....	1205	100%
1. Not at all important.....	180	15%
2.....	74	6%
3.....	92	8%
4. Somewhat important.....	303	25%
5.....	171	14%
6.....	115	10%
7. Extremely important.....	249	21%
DK/NR .....	21	2%

**6:**

**Q8**

Using the same scale, in general, how important are the calls you make from a payphone?

N=.....	599	100%
1. Not at all important.....	26	4%
2.....	31	5%
3.....	40	7%
4. Somewhat important.....	135	23%
5.....	108	18%
6.....	96	16%
7. Extremely important.....	160	27%
DK/NR .....	3	1%

**7:**

**P4**

Now, turning to your own payphone use within Canada. . . Please tell me whether or not you have made the following types of calls from a payphone during the past year?

**8:**

**Q4A**

*Made from a payphone over past year?*

Emergency or urgent call

N=.....	598	100%
YES .....	255	43%
NO .....	341	57%
DK/NR .....	2	0%

**9:**

**Q4B**

*Made from a payphone over past year?*

Work-related call (e.g., traveling on business, checking messages)

N=.....	598	100%
YES .....	235	39%
NO .....	360	60%
DK/NR .....	3	1%

**10:**

**Q4C**

*Made from a payphone over past year?*

Social call (e.g., just to chat)

N=.....	597	100%
YES .....	229	38%
NO .....	367	61%
DK/NR .....	1	0%

**11:**

**Q4D**

*Made from a payphone over past year?*

Convenience call (e.g., to get directions, call a taxi)

N=.....	597	100%
YES .....	386	65%
NO .....	211	35%
DK/NR .....	0	0%

**12:**

**Q4E**

*Made from a payphone over past year?*

Important personal call (e.g., to arranging appointments, call school)

N=.....	598	100%
YES .....	357	60%
NO .....	240	40%
DK/NR .....	1	0%

**13:**

**P5**

How often have you used a payphone to make the following types of calls in the past year?

**14:**

**Q5A**

*Would that be Never, Sometimes or Frequently*

Local calls.

N=.....	597	100%
Never.....	64	11%
Sometimes.....	360	60%
Frequently.....	170	28%
DK/NR.....	3	1%

**15:**

**Q5B**

*Would that be Never, Sometimes or Frequently*

Long Distance calls.

N=.....	597	100%
Never.....	339	57%
Sometimes.....	212	36%
Frequently.....	46	8%
DK/NR.....	0	0%

**16:**

**Q5D**

*Would that be Never, Sometimes or Frequently*

Calls to directory assistance

N=.....	597	100%
Never.....	355	59%
Sometimes.....	210	35%
Frequently.....	30	5%
DK/NR.....	2	0%

**17:**

**Q5E**

*Would that be Never, Sometimes or Frequently*

To receive calls from other people

N=.....	597	100%
Never.....	459	77%
Sometimes.....	108	18%
Frequently.....	27	5%
DK/NR.....	3	1%

**18:**

**Q6A**

**READ LIST**

Please tell me whether or not you have used the following methods of payment when making payphone calls during the last year?

N=.....	597	100%
Coins .....	502	84%
Pre-paid card .....	136	23%
Credit card.....	63	11%
Calling card .....	252	42%
Collect call .....	175	29%
Third party billing .....	49	8%
DK/NR .....	10	2%

**19:**

**Q6B**

And which of these methods of payment do you use most often?

**PROMPT IF NECESSARY, ACCEPT ONLY ONE RESPONSE**

N=.....	597	100%
Coins .....	386	65%
Pre-paid card .....	34	6%
Credit card.....	12	2%
Calling card .....	116	19%
Collect call .....	28	5%
Third party billing .....	5	1%
DK/NR .....	16	3%

**20:**

**Q7**

How often, if ever, have you tried to use a payphone and found that it is not working? Would that be. . . Never, Sometimes or Frequently

N=.....	597	100%
Never .....	300	50%
Sometimes .....	260	44%
Frequently .....	36	6%
DK/NR .....	1	0%

**21:**

**P9**

Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements using a scale from 1 strongly disagree to 7 strongly agree, with the mid-point 4 meaning neither?

**22:****Q9A**

I use payphones rather than a cellular phone because it is cheaper.

N=.....	313	100%
1. Strongly disagree.....	43	14%
2.....	17	5%
3.....	15	5%
4. Neither.....	54	17%
5.....	19	6%
6.....	28	9%
7. Strongly agree .....	107	34%
DK/NR .....	30	10%

**23:****Q9B**

I sometimes use payphones rather than my cellular phone because it is cheaper.

N=.....	284	100%
1. Strongly disagree.....	109	38%
2.....	26	9%
3.....	21	7%
4. Neither.....	25	9%
5.....	21	7%
6.....	21	7%
7. Strongly agree .....	55	19%
DK/NR .....	6	2%

**24:****Q9D**

I sometimes have difficulty finding a payphone when I need one.

N=.....	597	100%
1. Strongly disagree.....	135	23%
2.....	70	12%
3.....	44	7%
4. Neither.....	80	13%
5.....	110	18%
6.....	63	11%
7. Strongly agree .....	89	15%
DK/NR .....	6	1%



**25:****Q9E**

I have been frustrated by payphones that won't take coins.

N=.....	597	100%
1. Strongly disagree.....	196	33%
2.....	49	8%
3.....	41	7%
4. Neither.....	73	12%
5.....	42	7%
6.....	42	7%
7. Strongly agree .....	132	22%
DK/NR .....	22	4%

**26:****Q9F**

I have been frustrated by payphones that are broken and haven't been fixed.

N=.....	597	100%
1. Strongly disagree.....	181	30%
2.....	64	11%
3.....	51	9%
4. Neither.....	85	14%
5.....	52	9%
6.....	40	7%
7. Strongly agree .....	107	18%
DK/NR .....	17	3%

**27:****Q9G**

I have been frustrated by removal of a payphone that used to be there.

N=.....	597	100%
1. Strongly disagree.....	232	39%
2.....	59	10%
3.....	41	7%
4. Neither.....	88	15%
5.....	36	6%
6.....	26	4%
7. Strongly agree .....	84	14%
DK/NR .....	31	5%

**28:**

**Q9H**

I have been frustrated by payphones that don't allow incoming calls.

N=.....	597	100%
1. Strongly disagree.....	264	44%
2.....	54	9%
3.....	33	6%
4. Neither.....	88	15%
5.....	47	8%
6.....	14	2%
7. Strongly agree .....	65	11%
DK/NR .....	32	5%

**29:**

**Q9I**

It would be a problem for me if payphones no longer accepted coins

N=.....	597	100%
1. Strongly disagree.....	82	14%
2.....	24	4%
3.....	26	4%
4. Neither.....	38	6%
5.....	57	10%
6.....	58	10%
7. Strongly agree .....	309	52%
DK/NR .....	3	1%

**30:**

**Q9J**

Payphones are an important public service

N=.....	597	100%
1. Strongly disagree.....	9	2%
2.....	11	2%
3.....	10	2%
4. Neither.....	19	3%
5.....	61	10%
6.....	104	17%
7. Strongly agree .....	383	64%
DK/NR .....	0	0%

**31:****Q10**

How would you rate the availability of payphone service in your area on a scale from 1 terrible to 7 excellent, with the mid-point 4 meaning neither?

N=.....	597	100%
1. Terrible.....	31	5%
2.....	21	4%
3.....	29	5%
4. Neither.....	122	20%
5.....	137	23%
6.....	121	20%
7. Excellent.....	128	21%
DK/NR .....	8	1%

**32:****DEMO**

These last questions are for statistical purposes only, and I remind you that all of your answers are completely confidential.

**33:****Q11**

How would you describe the area in which you live?

N=.....	1205	100%
City.....	585	49%
Suburb .....	142	12%
Town over 5,000 .....	143	12%
A small town of less than 5,000 people close to an urban area .....	105	9%
A small community of less than 5,000 far from urban area .....	79	7%
Rural.....	139	12%
DK/NR .....	12	1%

**34:****HOUS**

Which of the following describe your household status...

N=.....	1205	100%
One person, living alone.....	225	19%
A married/common law couple with children .....	444	37%
A married/common law couple without children .....	284	24%
One adult with children .....	71	6%
Two or more unrelated persons .....	52	4%
Living with parents.....	75	6%
Other.....	39	3%
DK/NR .....	15	1%

**35:**

**AGE**

*READ CATEGORIES IF NECESSARY*

What is your age, please?

N=.....	1205	100%
Under 18.....	43	4%
18-24 years.....	112	9%
25-29 years.....	87	7%
30-34 years.....	98	8%
35-44 years.....	272	23%
45-54 years.....	208	17%
55-64 years.....	185	15%
65 years or older.....	171	14%
(DONT' READ) DK/NR.....	29	2%

**36:**

**INC**

*READ LIST IF NECESSARY*

What is your annual household income from all sources before taxes?

N=.....	1205	100%
Less than \$10,000.....	53	4%
\$10,000 to \$19,999.....	91	8%
\$20,000 to \$39,999.....	195	16%
\$40,000 to \$59,999.....	245	20%
\$60,000 to \$79,999.....	129	11%
\$80,000 to \$99,999.....	63	5%
\$100,000 or more.....	103	9%
DK/NR.....	326	27%

**37:**

**THNK**

*End of Interview*

Thank you for your cooperation and time!

N=.....	1205	100%
Completion.....	1205	100%

## **Appendix 2**

**Payphone Use Among Low-Income Canadians  
L'Union des consommateurs – March 2003  
[please see separate attachment]**

## **Appendix 3**

### **Payphone Use Survey POLLARA Inc. – July 2007**

# Interview Schedule

---

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this research. Your feedback is very important to us. Please rest assured that your responses will be kept strictly confidential used for research purposes only.

---

I'd like to start out by asking some questions about public payphones.

A. Age Group

18 To 24 .....	( 6%)
25 To 34 .....	(12%)
35 To 44 .....	(19%)
45 To 54 .....	(25%)
55 To 64 .....	(20%)
65 And Over .....	(17%)
Refused .....	(<1%)
Mean: .....	49.68

B. Are you, or is any member of your household a member of the news media or a public opinion polling firm?

No ..... (100%)

1. Would you say you use payphones (READ ALL):

Never (SKIP TO Q6) .....	(46%)
Once Or Twice A Year .....	(36%)
Once Or Twice A Month.....	(13%)
Once Or Twice A Week .....	( 4%)
Daily .....	( 1%)
Other (DO NOT READ - NO SPECIFY) .....	(<1%)
Don't Know/Refused (DO NOT READ) (SKIP TO Q6) .....	(<1%)

2. What do you use payphone calls for (DO NOT READ)?

Important Personal Calls .....	(35%)
Convenience Call .....	(30%)
Urgent Or Emergency Call .....	(28%)
Social Call. ....	(14%)
Work Related Calls .....	( 7%)
Other .....	( 1%)
Don't Know/Refused .....	(<1%)

When using a payphone how often is the call (ROTATE) using a scale of never, sometimes, usually/always?

3A. Local

Never .....	( 8%)
Sometimes .....	(17%)
Usually/Always.....	(27%)
Don't Know (DO NOT READ) .....	(48%)
Refused (DO NOT READ) .....	(<1%)



- 
- 3B. Long distance
- Never ..... (55%)
  - Sometimes ..... (35%)
  - Usually/Always..... ( 5%)
  - Don't Know (DO NOT READ) ..... ( 5%)
  - Refused (DO NOT READ) ..... (<1%)
- 3C. Directory assistance
- Never ..... (59%)
  - Sometimes ..... (36%)
  - Usually/Always..... ( 3%)
  - Don't Know (DO NOT READ) ..... ( 2%)
  - Refused (DO NOT READ) ..... ( 1%)
- 3D. Receiving calls
- Never ..... (90%)
  - Sometimes ..... ( 8%)
  - Usually/Always..... ( 1%)
  - Don't Know (DO NOT READ) ..... ( 1%)
  - Refused (DO NOT READ) ..... (<1%)
4. How do you pay for payphone calls (READ ALL, ACCEPT ALL THAT APPLY)?
- Coins ..... (82%)
  - Calling Card ..... (24%)
  - Collect ..... ( 8%)
  - Prepaid Card ..... ( 4%)
  - Credit Card ..... ( 7%)
  - 3rd Party Billing ..... ( 2%)
5. How important are the calls you make from a payphone?
- Not At All Important ..... ( 7%)
  - Neither Important Nor Unimportant ..... ( 8%)
  - Somewhat Important ..... (51%)
  - Very Important ..... (33%)
  - Don't Know/Refused (DO NOT READ) ..... ( 1%)
6. (ROTATE ORDER WITH Q7) Should the telephone companies be allowed to charge different prices for local calls depending on the location or the amount of use of their payphones?
- Yes ..... (20%)
  - No ..... (71%)
  - Don't Know/Refused ..... ( 9%)
7. (ROTATE ORDER WITH Q6) Should the telephone companies be required to charge one rate for local calls on all of their payphones?
- Yes ..... (88%)
  - No ..... ( 7%)
  - Don't Know/Refused ..... ( 4%)





---

Do you Strongly Agree, Agree Somewhat, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Disagree Somewhat or Strongly Disagree with the following statements...

8. Payphones are a necessary and important part of the telephone network.
- |  |       |
|--|-------|
| Strongly Agree .....                   | (67%) |
| Agree Somewhat .....                   | (26%) |
| Neither Agree Nor Disagree .....       | ( 1%) |
| Disagree Somewhat .....                | ( 4%) |
| Strongly Disagree .....                | ( 2%) |
| Don't Know/Refused (DO NOT READ) ..... | ( 1%) |
9. 50 cents is too much for a local payphone call.
- |  |       |
|--|-------|
| Strongly Agree .....                   | (63%) |
| Agree Somewhat .....                   | (12%) |
| Neither Agree Nor Disagree .....       | ( 3%) |
| Disagree Somewhat .....                | (14%) |
| Strongly Disagree .....                | ( 6%) |
| Don't Know/Refused (DO NOT READ) ..... | ( 2%) |
10. What is the highest level of schooling that you have completed? (READ LIST)
- |                                  |       |
|----------------------------------|-------|
| Elementary School .....          | ( 8%) |
| High School .....                | (32%) |
| Community College .....          | (22%) |
| University .....                 | (27%) |
| Post-Graduate/Professional ..... | (10%) |
| Don't Know/Refused .....         | ( 1%) |
11. What is the total annual household income of your family, before taxes? Is it... (READ LIST)
- |                                      |       |
|--------------------------------------|-------|
| Less Than \$25,000 .....             | (26%) |
| \$25,000 To Less Than \$50,000 ..... | (25%) |
| \$50,000 To Less Than \$75,000 ..... | (20%) |
| \$75,000 And Over .....              | (28%) |
| Don't Know/Refused .....             | ( 1%) |
12. Gender
- |              |       |
|--------------|-------|
| Male .....   | (47%) |
| Female ..... | (53%) |
13. Generation
- |                         |       |
|-------------------------|-------|
| Male - 18 To 34 .....   | ( 8%) |
| Male - 35 To 54 .....   | (21%) |
| Male - 55+ .....        | (18%) |
| Female - 18 To 34 ..... | (10%) |
| Female - 35 To 54 ..... | (24%) |
| Female - 55+ .....      | (20%) |



---

14. Province

Newfoundland .....	( 2%)
Nova Scotia .....	( 3%)
New Brunswick .....	( 2%)
Prince Edward Island .....	(<1%)
Quebec .....	(24%)
Ontario .....	(38%)
Manitoba .....	( 4%)
Saskatchewan .....	( 3%)
Alberta .....	(10%)
British Columbia .....	(13%)
Yukon .....	(<1%)
Northwest Territories .....	(<1%)
Nunavut .....	(<1%)

15. Region

Atlantic .....	( 8%)
Quebec .....	(24%)
Ontario .....	(38%)
Prairies .....	( 7%)
Alberta .....	(10%)
British Columbia/Territories .....	(13%)

16. Language

English .....	(91%)
French .....	( 9%)