



## ***BIG BROTHER***

### **A statement from ICSTIS, the premium rate services regulator**

ICSTIS has received almost 2,500 complaints to date about the premium rate *Big Brother* voting service since it was announced that contestants who had previously been evicted were being given the chance to return to the house and potentially win the cash prize. 2,000 of these complaints are being referred to ICSTIS by Ofcom.

The majority of the complainants believe that they have been misled as they were under the impression that they had voted to evict the contestants permanently.

ICSTIS regulates premium rate service providers – defined under ICSTIS' Code of Practice as "...any person engaged in the provision of premium rate services who contracts with, or enters into arrangements with, a network operator for facilities enabling the provision of premium rate services...".

Channel 4 and Endemol are not the service providers in this case. The service providers are Minick Ltd and ITouch UK, both based in London. Minick Ltd is providing the mobile shortcode text vote option and ITouch UK is providing the 090 numbers for telephone voting.

ICSTIS is currently considering all of the complaints received. At the same time, ICSTIS has been working closely with Minick Ltd, ITouch UK and Channel 4 to discuss a potential resolution. ICSTIS is urging all of the parties involved to continue working towards a speedy resolution. However, ICSTIS is reviewing the situation on an hourly basis and reserves the right to conduct a full, formal investigation.

ICSTIS will not be conducting further media interviews at this stage as there is nothing to add to the statement.

**9 August 2006**