

All-IP Working Group

Monday 26 April 2021



Agenda

- Welcome & introductions – Huw Saunders, Ofcom
- Updates on Ofcom workstreams on migration to IP and copper retirement – Huw Saunders, Ofcom
- Industry stakeholder engagement and communications – Matthew Evans, Tech UK
- Government stakeholder engagement – Tom Raynsford, DCMS
- AOB and Questions

Welcome & introductions

Updates on Ofcom workstreams on migration to IP and copper retirement

Recap – Ofcom work on migration to IP and copper retirement

We first set out our approach to the PSTN switch off and migration to IP in our 2016 Connected Nations report. Since then, we have:

- Set up the All-IP working group in 2017 to identify areas of concern, review progress of workstreams and facilitate collaboration between stakeholders and CPs.
- Published policy statements setting our expectations:

- Ofcom [guidance](#) (Oct 2018) on obligation to ensure uninterrupted access to emergency services
- Ofcom [policy statement](#) (Feb 2019) on the future of fixed telephone services and expectations on CPs as they migrate customers to VoIP.

- Established quarterly data reporting and meetings with CPs to monitor progress of the migration.
- Engaged with a wide range of stakeholders in a number of sectors to raise awareness of PSTN switch-off and its implications.
- Published our WFTMR Statement (March 2021) in which we set out our decisions on the regulatory transition from copper service to fibre services. We have decided to take a staged approach to this transition, including the removal of the MPF and FTTC 40/10 charge controls (i.e. the charge control on the anchor copper service) in some exchange areas if certain conditions are met.

Recap – Openreach and Communication Providers’ progress on migration to IP

Migrating customers to VoIP

- As of December 2020, **8%** of fixed voice lines are delivered over broadband. Our monitoring of CPs’ progress indicates that they need to significantly ramp up migrations in order to get all customers off the PSTN by 2025.

Setting up testing facilities

- CPs have set up centres for to allow stakeholders to test equipment compatibility with new voice service platforms (although there have been delays and closures due to Covid restrictions). Openreach plans to open its own testing facility in late spring 2021.

Trials

- Openreach’s Salisbury trial is underway - the copper stop sell began in December 2020. The Mildenhall trial will begin next month (May).

Roll out of fibre

- Openreach is announcing exchanges where it will stop selling copper products. The first of these stop sells will be implemented in June 2021, with further tranches in October 2021 and January 2022.

Recap – Consumer protection

Setting expectations

- Our 2019 policy statement set our expectations of CPs in terms of consumer protection - we will continue to monitor how CPs are meeting these expectations.

Protecting consumers

- Closely monitoring CPs' treatment of vulnerable consumers in the migration– including voice only customers, telecare users and those without alternative means of communication in a power cut.
- In June 2020, we asked the Office of the Telecommunications Adjudicator (OTA) to develop best practice principles and co-ordinate the production of a best practice guide for a well-managed migration that protects consumers. The OTA has already made available those documents in drafts on its website.
- Closely monitor the situation with telecare and engage key stakeholders – e.g. TSA, UK Tele-healthcare, local authorities.
- Research into the consumer experience of migration in the trial areas.

Communications

- Work with consumer groups – Age UK, Which?, Citizens Advice etc
- Considering consumer advice and information pages on Ofcom website

Recap – Downstream services and CNI

Migration to IP presents challenges for critical national infrastructure (CNI) and other downstream services that rely on non-voice use of the PSTN.

- We have worked to ensure widespread awareness of the upcoming change, convene other organisations and prompt them to act. We have worked directly with industry and service providers operating in affected sectors.
- We have focussed on *critical national infrastructure* uses of ‘downstream services’ reliant on the PSTN, as well as telecare.
- We have also been working with CPs to understand their plans for these customers.
- To date, highest risk use cases identified in the **water** and **energy** industries (remote telemetry and monitoring), and **retail** (payment terminals), although this may change and expand. We are also aware of PSTN services being used by a wide range of industries including emergency services.
- We will continue to engage with key stakeholders and monitor CNI progress, with a particular focus on telecare, where there is significant risk of consumer harm.

Migration to IP – next steps for stakeholder management and communication

Ofcom

- Continue work to ensure effective communications between stakeholders
- Monitor CP progress on migration and meeting our expectations
- Work to minimise disruption and any potential harm to consumers

Industry

- Future of Voice website
- BSG/Tech UK All-IP liaison and communications function
- OTA steering group, and best practice guide
- Individual CP stakeholder engagement

Government

- DCMS six monthly stakeholder roundtables

Matthew Evans, Tech UK

Tom Raynsford, DCMS

Any other business