

IP Migration / Withdrawal of WLR products – Industry Round-Up

Introduction

Following the previous IP migration guide circulated last year, we have produced a round-up of all the current industry actions relating to IP migration.

1 Openreach

As you may be aware, in the summer of 2019 Openreach chose Salisbury and Mildenhall to be the trial sites for the first mass migration to IP. On 11 December, Openreach published their first 'Stop Sell Notice' with reference to the copper products for these two trial areas. This briefing is to notify all ITSPA members of the start of the formal trials and the products 'Stop Sell' will apply to in the Salisbury and Mildenhall exchange area trials.

The first notice is to give CPs formal notice that the Full Fibre and Single Order Exchange (WLR Withdrawal) trials in Salisbury and Mildenhall will start on the 6th January 2020.

1.1 Notification - Trials Start Date / Product Stop Sell for the Salisbury and Mildenhall Trials – Published 11 December 2019

The trials are part of the national WLR Withdrawal and Fibre Exchange Upgrade programmes and the proposed trials' closure date of 16 December 2022 will be before the national WLR Stop Sell takes effect in September 2023 in order to maximise learning.

The schedule for the trials is:

Milestone	Date
Trials start – voluntary migrations	6 January 2020
Salisbury Products Stop Sell	1 December 2020
Mildenhall Products Stop Sell	4 May 2021
Salisbury Products withdrawal	5 December 2022
Mildenhall Products withdrawal	5 December 2022
Trials Closure	16 December 2022

All orders (including Modify orders to existing services) for the products set out in the sections below placed by CPs on or after 6 January 2020 will be subject to the scope of the trial and to the Stop Sell restrictions.

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In the Salisbury exchange area, Openreach are building a full fibre network (FTTP) to as many properties as possible. Where it is not possible to deliver FTTP, then Openreach will offer SOGFast or SOGEA. By December 2022, all services will have to be migrated away from copper-based services.

From 1 December 2020, the following products will be unavailable for the vast majority of order journeys, subject to the availability of FTTP.

- WLR3 analogue, ISDN 2 / ISDN 30, Narrowband Line Share, Classic
- SMPF and SLU SMPF
- MPF and SLU-MPF
- FTTC, SOGEA and SOGFast

For the above products, Stop Sell will apply only where FTTP is available to order at a premises level.

1.1.2 Mildenhall

In the Mildenhall exchange area, Openreach will be switching off WLR services. This means that all properties will have to move to FTTP, SOGFast, SOGEA, or SOADSL* (currently in development). The access product used will be based on availability and the customer's requirement. All migrations have to be completed by December 2022.

From 4 May 2021, the following products will be unavailable for the vast majority of order journeys.

- WLR3 analogue, ISDN 2 / ISDN 30, Narrowband Line Share, Classic
- SMPF and SLU SMPF
- MPF and SLU-MPF (only applies within the fibre footprint available at that time)

In both trial areas, the traditional voice service will be switched off at the end of the trial period meaning that properties in these areas will need an IP Voice service, if they wish to continue with a fixed voice line service.

1.1.3 Stop Sell Order Restrictions

The Stop Sell order restrictions have been developed with industry and the principles summarised at the working group of 6 November 2019 as documented [here](#) but requires access to the Openreach website.

In both trial areas, there may be exemptions to the Stop Sell but this is still being defined and will only operate on a case by case basis.

1.1.4 Openreach Industry Working Groups

For further information about Upgrading the Access Network, the withdrawal of WLR products and the smooth transition to IP voice services, please refer [here](#).

Openreach and CPs have various working groups regarding the WLR withdrawal and fibre exchange upgrade programmes through industry working groups that run every month. CPs are encouraged to attend these sessions and engage fully with the programme.

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The next WLR withdrawal industry working group session will be held on 27 January 2020 between 10am and 4pm at The BT Tower in London. For any parties that have no Openreach portal access but are interested in attending, please contact atwlr.consultation.feedback@openreach.co.uk

1.1.5 Further Information

If you are unable to access any of the links above or wish to contact WBC Product Line, please email contactfibrebroadband@bt.com.

Dates for your Diary**16 March 2020: WLR withdrawal main working group**

Objective: This session will provide a general programme update, with specific 'more focused' session to address key issues. The full schedule of forthcoming sessions is available on the Openreach website or the mail addresses above. Please note that you'll need your Openreach portal ID and password.

2 Code of Practice

At the Openreach workshop in November, it was announced that Openreach are working on a Code of Practice with members of industry in order that there is a consistent approach to migrations.

It is expected that a draft document will be available prior to the meeting on 27 January. This document is expected to be continually updated as lessons are learnt and products and processes developed, especially as the trial sites develop.

3 Ofcom

Ofcom has advised they expect BT Wholesale to announce their IP migration plans early in 2020 and do not anticipate having to put pressure on them. Until such time as Ofcom have any plans from BT Wholesale or any further updates, they do not intend holding any further IP Steering group meetings.

4 Broadband Stakeholder Group (BSG)

The BSG has taken the lead with respect to how and what communications to the public will look like.

While all CPs will manage their own communications program to end users, the BSG is trying to ensure that common simple language will be used to help end users understand how the migration from TDM to IP may affect them. For example, how 999/112 calls will work over IP and how health pendants may be affected.

To date the BSG has produced a [draft] website which is not intended to be branded however there will be links to any and all CP and SP websites with information on their individual IP plans.

If you wish your IP web page to be displayed on the BSG site, please contact the ITSPA Secretariat on team@itspa.org.uk

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The intention is that the BSG hosted website and Ofcom will provide independent information where end users can verify what the IP migration is about versus, currently, only hearing of the change from their current provider. There is a concern that end users who do not understand the technology change could be forced to buy new equipment or lose their service and need an independent place to check what is actually happening and when.

Currently the BSG work has focused on impacts and information for consumers and during this spring will expand this to cover business requirements. It has been suggested there should be two or three landing pages which will forward to the same information: Consumers, businesses and other organisations.

There is still no plan for a CP coordinated or national communications program.