

Reference: 02009597

Information Requests
information.requests@ofcom.org.uk

19 June 2025

Freedom of Information request: Right to know request

Thank you for your request for information concerning contingency plans following the switch-off of the copper wire phone system.

We received this request on 9 June 2025 and we have considered your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ("the FOI Act").

Your request & our response

With the planned switch-off of the copper wire phone system in Jan 27, what contingency plans will be emplaced to provide phone services when the mobile networks go down? Outages may be caused by hackers, climate interference, accident and other events and may result in long delays before the system is restored. How will those subscribers affected be protected during such an event?

Contingency planning in this area is the responsibility of the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT). Ofcom does not hold information in relation to contingency plans.

We have provided guidance to the telecoms operators on measures they should consider taking to ensure their public networks and services are resilient. The guidance, published in September 2024, can be found here: [Statement on Network and Service Resilience Guidance](#).

We are examining further the issue of power resilience in mobile Radio Access Network (RAN). In December 2023, we published a Call for Input (CFI) on this subject, which can be found here: [Resilience guidance consultation and Call for Input on mobile RAN power back up](#).

In February 2025, we published a report into the resilience of mobile networks, specifically in light of power outages, which can be found here: [Mobile RAN power resilience: Technical report and CFI update](#).

In terms of landline phone calls, these have traditionally been delivered over a network known as the public switched telephone network (PSTN). This network is old, and becoming harder and more expensive to maintain, so it needs to be replaced. In the future, landline calls will be delivered over digital technology referred to as 'digital phone' or 'digital voice'. Further information regarding the migration to digital voice technology can be found on our website here: [Moving landline phones to digital technology: what you need to know](#).

If you have any further queries, then please send them to information.requests@ofcom.org.uk – quoting the reference number above in any future communications.

Yours sincerely,

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Request an internal review

If you are unhappy with the response you have received to your request for information, or think that your request was refused without a reason valid under the law, you may ask for an internal review. If you do, it will be subject to an independent review within Ofcom. We will either uphold the original decision, or reverse or modify it.

If you would like to ask us to carry out an internal review, you should get in touch within two months of the date of this letter. There is no statutory deadline for us to complete our internal review, and the time it takes will depend on the complexity of the request. But we will try to complete the review within 20 working days (or no more than 40 working days in exceptional cases) and keep you informed of our progress.

Please email the Information Requests team (information.requests@ofcom.org.uk) to request an internal review.

Taking it further

If you are unhappy with the outcome of our internal review, then you have the right to [complain to the Information Commissioner's Office](#).