



NASSTAR  
CHANNEL

# BIG SWITCH OFF FAQs.

## WHAT IS THE BIG SWITCH OFF?

The 'big switch off' refers to the switching off of PSTN and ISDN, and the withdrawal of Wholesale Line Rental (WLR), scheduled for 2025 and announced by OpenReach in 2015. From 2025, these networks will no longer be in use and all businesses will need to have implemented alternative solutions for their telephone systems to ensure they can continue to collaborate, communicate, and connect following the switch off.

## WHAT IS PSTN?

PSTN stands for Public Switched Telephone Network, and it is the landline telephone system many of us are familiar with. It has been in operation since the 1800s and is now deemed to be a legacy network.

## WHAT IS ISDN?

ISDN stands for Integrated Services Digital Network, and this is the technology that came after PSTN in 1985, enabling the digital transmission of voice, video and other services simultaneously while using the PSTN network.

## WHY ARE PSTN AND ISDN BEING PHASED OUT?

PSTN and ISDN are being phased out and ultimately switched off because they are both deemed to be legacy networks that utilise outdated technology. With more of us using smartphones, apps, the cloud and other online collaboration tools via the internet, there is less of a need for these network technologies.

## DOES THE SWITCH OFF EFFECT MY CUSTOMERS?

It's highly likely that the switch off will affect you and your customers. The switch off affects every individual or business that still uses fixed line services such as analogue or ISDN lines. Any phone service, or data broadband connectivity services that run on a phone line using either PSTN or ISDN will stop working in 2025 and therefore need to be changed.

## WHAT IS THE TIMELINE FOR THE SWITCH OFF?

The PSTN network will be ceased in 2025, meaning all businesses still using fixed line services such as analogue or ISDN lines will no longer be available. Your customers will need to evolve their current telecoms before 2025 in order to collaborate, communicate and connect following the switch off.

Leading up to 2025, exchanges will become 'stop sell'. This means you will be unable to order any new analogue or ISDN phone lines or add new phone lines or channels to existing installations. This also means you will be unable to order any new ADSL, FTTC or GFast broadband data connectivity services, or make changes to existing installations. The timeline available on our [Switch Off Hub](#) will be regularly updated to reflect any changes so please keep an eye on this.



## HOW DO I KNOW WHICH EXCHANGE MY CUSTOMER'S SERVICES COME FROM?

This is something we can help you with if you contact us for more information. Your account manager will be able to provide you with full circuit details and the name of the exchange used by your customer's business.

## HOW DO I KNOW WHEN MY CUSTOMER'S EXCHANGE IS GOING STOP-SELL?

We will be keeping an up-to-date list of the exchanges going stop-sell in our [Switch Off Hub](#). We'd recommend you keep an eye on this for regular updates to the stop-sell timeline.

## WHAT SERVICES ARE AFFECTED?

At the moment, broadband services are reliant on WLR to deliver the service, with separate voice and broadband services delivered to a property. This means if the WLR is ceased, the broadband is also ceased.

We have a full list of affected services alongside their alternative options on the [Switch Off Hub](#) here.

## WHAT ARE THE ALTERNATIVES?

The two main alternatives to PSTN and ISDN are Single order Generic Ethernet Access (SoGEA) and Fibre to the Premises (FTTP) with SIP and VoIP technology. Each can be used as individual replacements or both together.

## WHAT IS SOGEA?

SoGEA is a data-only broadband solution that is provisioned on a single order. It does not include voice services or a WLR line, although voice can be provided as an over the top (OTT) service.

## WHAT IS FTTP?

FTTP uses a full fibre connection and infrastructure, offering speeds reaching 1Gbps. While FTTC was a part-fibre, part-copper connection, FTTP delivers a full fibre connection from the exchange into a business. It is a far more stable solution than current copper broadband services.

## WHAT IS VOIP?

VoIP, sometimes referred to as IP telephony, is a general term encompassing cloud-based telephony solutions that deliver voice and multimedia sessions over the internet. It enables users to make voice and video calls via any computer or mobile device with an internet connection, instead of using traditional copper lines.

## WHAT IS SIP?

Session Initiation Protocol (SIP) is a protocol used in Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) whereby your existing on-premise PBX equipment is connected to the internet. SIP enables businesses to mobilise their communications without being tied down to a fixed line at a fixed location, as they would be with a traditional ISDN.



## WHAT IS HOSTED VOICE?

Hosted voice, or hosted PBX, is another type of VoIP designed for business use. This solution relies on VoIP technology and enables call routing via the internet, but has all the features and capabilities associated with traditional on-site PBX systems, including auto attendant, call forwarding, custom greetings etc.

## WHAT DO I NEED TO DO?

With the switch off deadline fast approaching, you need to develop a migration plan to move your customer's communications to the cloud by either adopting hosted telephony solutions or implementing a VoIP phone system. It's imperative that you think about this now, as opposed to waiting for the deadline to edge even closer when other businesses will be in the same position and trying to migrate their solutions at the last minute.

## HOW DO I KNOW WHICH OPTION IS RIGHT FOR MY CUSTOMERS?

We know that every business is different, so a solution that works for one may not work for your customers. It's a good idea to take stock of their current systems and solutions before speaking with your account manager to determine which migration route would work best.

## HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE TO SWITCH?

The length of time it takes to switch between services will depend on several factors, so it can be difficult to give exact timescales. However, we are on hand to work with you through the entire

switching process and will work around timescales that best suit you and your customers. If you require work to take place during quieter times, that's fine; if your customer has a specific switching date in mind, that's fine too.

Your account manager will be able to best advise on the timescales for the project once you've finalised the best route for your switch.

## WILL DIGITAL BE BETTER?

Moving to an IP solution will provide your customer's business with more features, more flexibility and less restrictions to physical hardware and infrastructure, which can also reduce average costs. Digital will enable them to make and take calls from any location on any device, link business apps and systems with video, chat and calls for better collaboration, and bring them closer to your customers and colleagues. Additionally, IP can bring much lower costs than traditional lines, so it makes sense to make the change sooner rather than later!

## WHO DO I SPEAK TO ABOUT A MIGRATION PLAN?

Your account manager is on hand to help guide you through the switch off and all the options available to you and your customers, so reach out to them today and get a migration plan developed asap.

