

Customer briefing

EOI – Highway and ISDN conversions update

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This briefing is applicable to all Communications Providers and relates to the Highway and ISDN2 Conversion Process.

Update on the replacement of the existing Highway and ISDN2 conversion process (to WLR and SMPF services) and launch of a new EOI conversion process

The technical problems that have delayed the replacement of the existing Highway and ISDN2 conversion process (to WLR and SMPF services) with a new EOI conversion process have now been resolved. See briefing GEN003/07 of 27th March 2007.

From July 1st 2007 a new EOI conversion process will be launched to Communications Providers (CP) for converting an end user's line with either an ISDN2 or Highway service to WLR and SMPF services, over which CPs can provide telephony and broadband services to their end users.

This process will be used when a line is converted upon end user request and is not intended to be used for the migration of a CP's installed base.

As of June 1st, 2007 CPs have the opportunity to request Openreach to participate in joint testing of the new EOI conversion process. For further information please contact your Openreach Customer Business Management representative.

This briefing provides an overview of the new EOI conversion process. Further information relating to the EMP version of the MPF and SMPF products is provided in the End to End process manual and in the product description on the LLU website.

Conversion Process

The EOI conversion process involves up to three CPs: the losing ISDN/Highway CP, the gaining WLR CP and the gaining SMPF CP.

Orders for the new EOI conversion process must be placed on the Equivalence Management Platform (EMP) by both the WLR and SMPF CPs to convert an existing ISDN2 or Highway installation to WLR and SMPF.

Please note that conversion to MPF is not available through this conversion process.

This EOI conversion process is available for conversion from ISDN2, ISDN2e, Home Highway and Business Highway lines and WLR Digital Access (ISDN2) provided over copper, but excluding lines with TPO-based service (referred to as ISDN2 or Highway in this document). The EOI conversion process to convert ISDN2 and Highway to WLR and SMPF services will not apply to conversions from ISDN30.

The EOI conversion will be from ISDN2 or Highway to WLR, followed by the simultaneous provision of SMPF, to ensure a minimum break in end user service (the break in end user service will typically be in the order of four hours, with either a morning or afternoon Openreach engineering appointment). It is essential that where there is ISDN2 or Highway currently on the line, a simultaneous SMPF provide order is requested by the SMPF CP (at the request of the end user) as ISDN2 and Highway are not compatible with a normal SMPF provide order and it will be rejected.

Conversion will be to a single phone number and end users should usually be able to keep any one of their existing Directory Numbers, however in specific limited circumstances this may not be possible.

Specific ISDN2 or Highway features and other incompatible services will not be retained by the end user once the conversion to WLR and SMPF is completed, although certain telephony compatible services may be retained. WLR and SMPF CPs should discuss the details of the transfer with their end users. The NTE will be changed and hence end users will lose their ISDN Terminal Adapters as part of the conversion process, but end users may choose to keep any extension wiring.

An end user may initially approach either their broadband CP (the SMPF CP) or their narrowband CP (the WLR CP) to ask for the conversion from ISDN/Highway to narrowband and broadband services and to trigger the CPs placing the relevant WLR and SMPF orders with Openreach. The WLR and SMPF CPs will both need to use either the telephone number or the same unique Linked Order Reference (LOR) number to establish a link between their respective Openreach orders (for WLR and SMPF services respectively). Whichever CP (WLR or SMPF) places the first order will select a LOR when placing the order for WLR or SMPF with Openreach; the first CP will need to provide the LOR to the end user, who will provide it to the second CP; and that same LOR should then be used when the second CP places its order for the remaining (WLR or SMPF) service with Openreach. Specifically, the WLR CP will need to request the cessation of the ISDN2 or Highway service and the provision of a narrowband WLR line using an ISDN2 or Highway 'conversion order'. The SMPF CP will need to request the simultaneous provision of an SMPF to match the SMPF provision date to the ISDN2/Highway conversion date.

Limitations to the Conversion process

Openreach cannot guarantee broadband will work after conversion to the SMPF product, as broadband is provided by the broadband CP, not by Openreach. The end user should be fully informed of the risks that the SMPF service may not support broadband and hence there

could be an extended break in service while investigations or an alternative service are provided.

When the SMPF CP performs a line characteristics pre-order check and finds ISDN/Highway on the line, the CP should check that the end user does not have ISDN30 or TPOB-based services. If the end user is moving from an existing long-line technology it is recommended that either the basic broadband service or a variable speed service which selects the best speed for an end user should be offered so that after the conversion to SMPF, the broadband service is more likely to be supported on the line.

The Openreach conversion from ISDN/Highway to narrowband and SMPF is a “wires only” product; this means that the end user and SMPF CP need to agree beforehand how and when the broadband equipment and service will be connected and tested after the Openreach tasks have been completed.

Although the broadband CP will have carried out a line check prior to ordering SMPF which has been successful, there is a small risk that the broadband service will not work. The broadband service will not be checked by the Openreach engineer, and accordingly the end users will be asked to be ready to use their broadband equipment to prove the service is working correctly, or to make arrangements with their broadband CPs for one of their engineers to be present to test the broadband service. When the Openreach engineer is present at the end user’s premise and carrying out the conversion, the broadband service should therefore be tested and if it is found not to be working, there is an option for the end user to decide to revert to their pre-existing service. It is important to note however that once the conversion process has been completed, it is no longer possible for the end-user to revert to their pre-existing service, which is why it is important that the end-user be ready to check the broadband service before the Openreach engineer arrives. It is therefore important that the end users understand this, in particular if it is unclear whether broadband service can successfully be provided by the broadband CP.

If the broadband service is not working after the conversion has taken place, the end users will need to contact their broadband CP to check the service has been activated and to carry out fault investigations. The SMPF CP may request that a Special Fault Investigation (SFI) is carried out on the SMPF line to attempt to improve the ability of the SMPF to support broadband services. This will cause an extended break in service during which the end user will no longer have ISDN/Highway and will not yet have a working broadband service; this will typically last a day or two after the completion of the conversion, while the additional SFI order is placed and completed. If broadband services cannot be supported after the SFI is completed, the broadband CP will need to agree with the end user what alternative products can be provided.

If the broadband CP cancels the SMPF order or if the SMPF order is rejected the narrowband order will continue and a narrowband service only will be provided.

To minimise the risk that the end user will experience a break in service as a result of broadband not being supported on the SMPF line once the conversion is completed (and assuming no testing of the broadband has been done while the Openreach engineer is on site), CPs are strongly urged to carry out the recommended pre-conversion checks and discuss with the end users what the limitations of the conversion process are (i.e. it does not

guarantee that broadband will be provided once the conversion is completed). A list detailing the recommended pre-conversion checks will be made available on the Openreach portal in due course.

Charges

Charges for this service are:

- Cease charge for the existing ISDN2/Highway service (charged to the losing narrowband CP)
- Provision charge for a new narrowband line (charged to the gaining narrowband CP)
- Provision charge for the SMPF service (charged to the gaining broadband CP).

Latest prices are contained in the LLU and WLR products price list on the Openreach portal.

For further information please contact your Openreach Customer Business Management representative.

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