

Upgrading the Access Network

The withdrawal of Wholesale Line Rental (WLR) products and the transition to IP Voice services

Public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN) closure and what it means

We're modernising the way we deliver telephone services to the UK. The PSTN is ageing and will reach the end of its life in December 2025. New digital technologies are taking its place, which means over 16 million lines and channels will need to move to alternative products before the network is switched off.

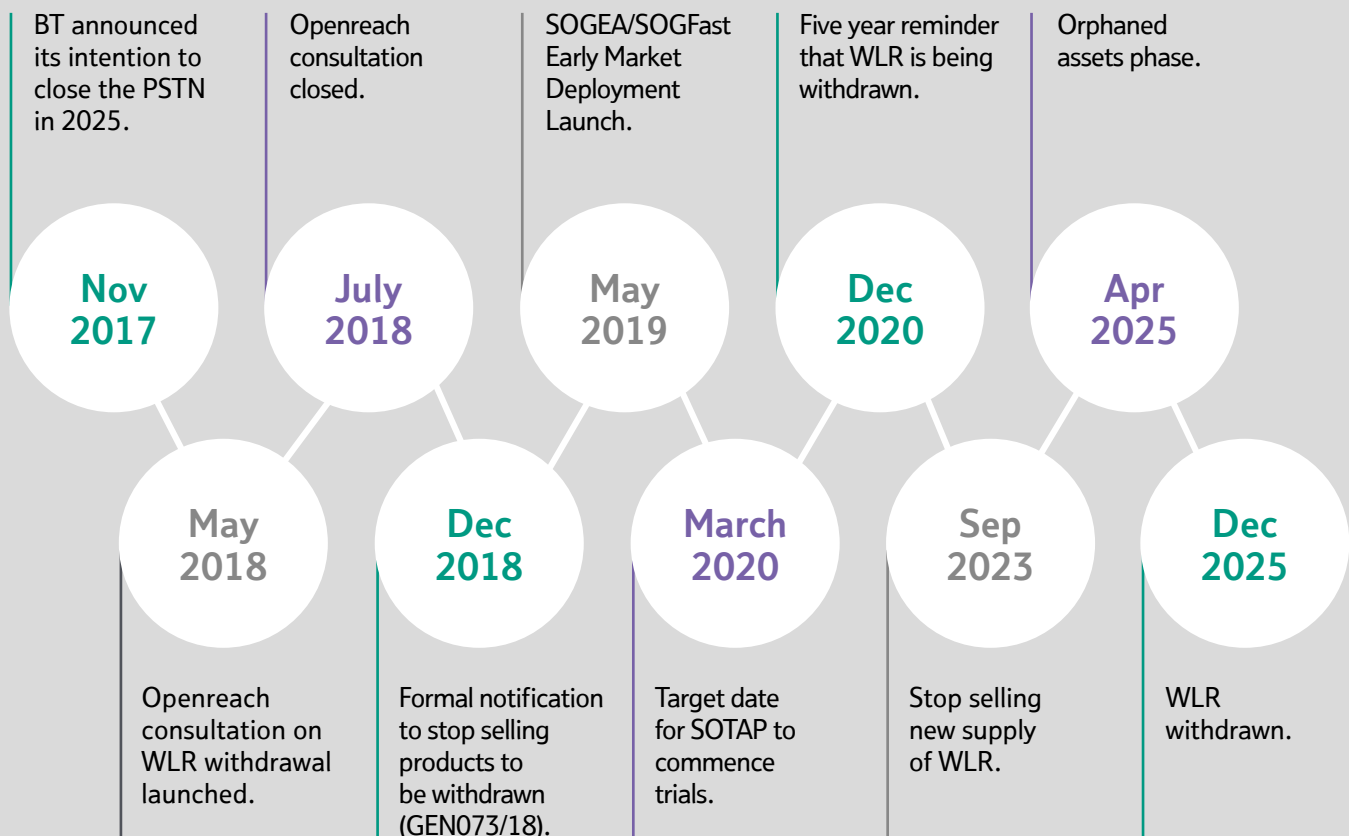
Moving to new technologies will open the door to exciting opportunities to develop more reliable and future proof products and services for decades to come.

Why are Wholesale Line Rental products being withdrawn?

The PSTN currently supports wholesale products like WLR3 analogue, ISDN 2, ISDN 30, LLU SMPF, SLU SMPF, Narrowband Line Share and Classic products.

These products, collectively referred to as WLR products in the industry consultation, deliver analogue voice and broadband communications for home and businesses. When the PSTN closes, these products will no longer be available.

Timeline of WLR product withdrawal



How will we do this?

We're working with the industry to build a CP inventory of line connections to determine the impact on end customers and we've started discussions with industry regarding trialling the WLR withdrawal process. Openreach sales and relationship managers will in parallel be working with you to develop your migrations plan.

We've started the withdrawal process with industry in May 2018

WLR covers a number of voice & broadband products

WLR 3

ISDN2
ISDN30

LLU
SMPF

SLU
SMPF

Classic

Dec
2018

Five year stop selling
to CPs notification
(Gen073/18 refers)

Sep
2023

Restriction of WLR3
new supply

Dec
2025

WLR
withdrawal

7
5
6 years

Significant
programme
and the clock
is ticking

16m
lines

& channels to be
moved by 2025

400+
CPs

Residential,
business
and resellers

Special
Services

Lifts, alarms,
traffic lights



We can't do this
alone...

Goodbye old telephone network, hello new opportunities!

We're working with Ofcom, Communications Providers (CPs), the OTA2 (Office of the Telecommunications Adjudicator), the NICC (Network Interoperability Consultative Committee) and trade bodies to make sure things go as smoothly as possible.

For more information about the withdrawal of WLR products and to discuss your individual migration plans, please contact your Openreach sales and relationship manager.

As we upgrade we'll pay particular attention to lines that:

- underpin Critical National Infrastructure
- keep the vulnerable connected
- and support special services like alarms and monitoring devices

*PSTN (Public switched telephone network) is the familiar landline telephone system which allows for analogue voice and broadband communications for home and businesses.

**ISDN (integrated services digital network) is newer arrival that allows the digital transmissions of voice, video and other services simultaneous, and is typically used for business connections.