

WLR003/14 Called Party Initiated Clearing Procedure Change for WLR3 Analogue lines

10/03/2014 For Information

This briefing is for all WLR3 Communications Providers.

Openreach is issuing this briefing on behalf of BT. It outlines the changes being implemented to reduce the time elapsed between a called party initiating clearing procedures and the network clearing calls made to WLR3 analogue lines.

To reduce the potential impacts of fraud, and after discussions with Ofcom, Communications Providers, Network Operators and the police, BT has taken the decision to reduce the time the connection is held open after the called party replaces their handset in order to end or suspend a call.

Why are we making this change?

There are potential problems and the risk of fraud when the called party replaces their handset to end a call but the calling party does not. Currently, in this situation, the network will wait between 2 and 3 minutes before initiating call clearing. During this time, the calling party is still connected to the called party. If the called party picks up their handset within the timeout period, they will still be connected to the calling party. Such a feature has always been available on analogue lines to allow the called party to hang up and subsequently re-answer the call for instance when moving from one extension to another. However, this feature has of late been exploited by fraudsters who hold the line open.

What does the change involve?

The change applies to both the single line and multi-line service options. This change will reduce the time that the calling party can hold open a call after the called party has replaced the handset to end or suspend the call.

The proposal is to significantly reduce this call clearing delay time, initially to 10 seconds with an option to reduce it further in the near future if required. Network initiated clearing, following a clear signal from the called party will therefore commence sooner and thus reduce the possibility of the called party being defrauded.

Calls made to analogue lines associated with certain services, e.g. freephone, will continue to be subject to first party clearing. Calls made to emergency numbers will remain as last party release. Calls made to WLR3 Digital (ISDN2 and ISDN30 installations) will also remain unaffected and will continue to be subject to first party clearing.

When does this change take place?

It is planned to roll out the proposed changes using a phased approach across the BT network, starting with the AXE10 exchanges which equate to around one third of the local exchanges currently in service or approximately 6 million exchange lines.

It is intended to commence the rollout early April to change the AXE10 configuration for call clearing to 10 seconds with a target completion date of 10 April 2014.

Further information regarding the timeline for implementing the same changes to System X and UXD5 exchanges will be made available in due course.

Further information

A more detailed discussion will take place with Communications Providers at the Copper Products Commercial Group (CPCG) meeting on 12 March 2014.

Issued by MG

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