Gaining Provider Led Business Switching

Industry Process

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Authors: | Niall Gillespie (BT)Laura Meakin |
| Authorised: |  |
| Issue: | 1.00 |
| Status: | For industry review |
| Last Update Date: | 31/03/2023 |

**Contents**

1 Introduction 4

1.1 Scope of GPL Business Switching 4

1.2 Version 1.0 4

1.3 Change Log 4

2 Overview of GPL business switching process 5

3 Match requests and responses 6

3.1 BSW1.2 Customer contacts GRCP via sales channel 6

3.2 Match request and response 6

3.3 BSW1.4 Gaining retail provider takes details 7

3.3.1 Identity of the losing retail provider 7

3.4 Business name 7

3.4.1 Customer Address 8

3.4.2 Customer reference with the losing provider 8

3.4.3 Telephone number of an active service 8

3.5 Match of services to be switched 9

3.5.1 Multiple services to be switched 9

3.6 Decision point: does the customer have all the service identifiers they need to switch? 9

3.7 BSW 1.5 Gaining retail provider sends asset list request to LRCP 9

3.8 BSW1.6 Hub logs request and routes to the Gaining or Losing retail provider 10

3.9 BSW1.10 Losing retail provider sends asset list to the customer following successful customer match. 10

3.10 BSW1.18 LRCP creates successful match response to GRCP. 11

3.10.1 BSW1.18 Generation of Switch Order Reference (SOR) by losing retail provider 11

3.11 BSW1.15 LRCP creates an error response to GRCP 11

3.12 BSW1.13 Customer receives asset list and request GRCP to match services 11

3.13 BSW1.14 Gaining retail provider sends (additional) service match request to Hub 12

3.14 BSW1.7 Losing retail provider processes service match request 12

3.15 BSW1.15 Losing retail provider replies with failure to match (service) 12

3.16 BSW1.17 Gaining retail provider receives failed match response 12

3.17 BSW1.18 Losing retail provider finds a service match 13

3.17.1 BSW1.8 Supply chain provision of information to support LRCP 13

3.17.2 BSW1.18 Method of communication to customer of the switching information from the LRCP 13

3.18 BSW1.19 Losing retail provider sends switching information to their customer 14

3.18.1 Rate Limiting 14

3.19 BSW1.23 Gaining retail provider obtains Express Consent 15

3.20 BSW1.26 Gaining retail provider places order 15

3.21 BSW1.27 Customer receives order confirmation from GRCP 15

4 BSW1.30 Raise Switch Order Request 16

4.1 Content of switch order 16

4.2 BSW1.23 Losing retail provider receives switch order and confirms acceptance or rejection 16

4.3 SW1.24 Losing retail provider sends notification to customer 17

4.4 Losing retail provider should not initiate cease on a fixed date 17

4.5 BSW1.70 GRCP handling of rejected switch order 17

4.6 BSW1.29 Gaining supply chain raises number port order(s). 17

4.7 BSW1.60 Gaining supply chain completes order(s) 18

4.8 Receipt of notifications of unsolicited cease(s) by LRCP 18

4.9 BSW1.63 Gaining retail provider receives order(s) completion from supply chain 18

4.10 BSW1.64 Customer receives confirmation of order completion 18

4.11 BSW1.71 Completion of switch order by LRCP 18

4.12 BSW1.72 Cease of service(s) by losing supply chain 19

4.13 BSW1.74 Losing retail provider notifies GRCP that switch is complete 19

4.14 BSW1.76 Gaining retail provider receives notification that the switch is complete 19

5 Cancel Own 20

5.1 Customer wishes to cancel the switch 20

5.2 BSW1.502 GRCP cancels the provision / transfer order(s) and switch order 20

5.3 BSW1.55 Gaining supply chain cancels provision / transfer order(s) 20

5.3.1 Gaining supply chain notifies losing retail provider of cancellation of unsolicited cease 20

5.3.2 LRCP receives notification of cancellation of unsolicited cease(s) 20

5.3.3 GRCP creates a switch order cancellation request 20

5.4 BSW1.55 LRCP receives switch order cancellation request 20

5.4.1 LRCP responds to switch order cancellation 21

6 Appendices 22

6.1 Appendix I: Out of area geographic numbers 22

6.2 Appendix II: Address Quality- Structure of a UK address 22

6.3 Appendix III: SLAs and response times 23

# Introduction

To aid various readers with different levels of background knowledge, there are several documents covering the Gaining Provider Led (GPL) Business Switching process (GPLB process):

* **Switching Principles**: documents the main principles associated with the GPLB process.
* **Introduction to GPLB**: provides a complete introduction to switching under EECC, references to Ofcom consultations and statements, and explanation of concepts.
	+ Readers who are familiar with the consumer One Touch Switch process will be familiar with most of this. However, the Introduction document has a section outlining the key differences between the consumer and business processes, which may be useful to such readers who are new to business switching.
* (This document) **GPLB Industry Process**: this document focuses only on the detail of the Industry Process, and assumes that readers are familiar with relevant terminology and concepts – if you are not familiar, please start with the Introduction document.
* **Industry Process Flows**: diagrams with swim-lanes for customer, GRCP, Hub, LRCP and supply chain. Readers who prefer a visual view of the process will find these diagrams useful.
	+ Each step in the in the process flow is numbered with a “BSW” prefix, followed by process flow number and step number, e.g. “BSW1.2” – the same numbering is used in this this Word document.

FCS (federation of communication services) helpfully host the latest version of all documents relevant to GPLB at <https://www.fcs.org.uk/gaining-provider-led-business-switching>

## Scope of GPL Business Switching

This document covers GPL business switching for all sizes of business customers.

The business switching process outlined within this document covers the process steps to follow where the end user is moving from and to a business service/contract. We recognise that there may be instances where, the end user may wish to switch providers and from a consumer to a business contract, or vice versa. The process has not yet been defined to cover these scenarios.

### Dual running of services

It is recognised that unlike residential switching, there will be a number of scenarios where a customer may need a period of dual running of ‘old’ and ‘new’ services for a period of time, subject to the customer’s request. This may be for example, to support testing. This raises the question of whether this represents a customer switch or a provide and cease. Where a customer recognises at the outset, that they require a period of parallel running greater than 90 days, it is recommended that these requests are not treated as a switch. It is accepted that unexpected delays may occur within the process, which create delays in practice to extend beyond the 90 days.

## Version 1.0

This is version 1.0 of the Gaining Provider Led Business Switching Industry Process as an initial version for industry feedback and consequential design development or clarifications.

The GPLB-SG (GPL Business switching Steering Group) established a Design Drafting Group (with some members from the original consumer OTS-DDG), who have produced this document with input from the Steering Group and OTA2.

## Change Log

| **Version****Date****Changed By** | **Reason for change** |
| --- | --- |
| Initial working draftsJan - Mar 2023GPLB-DDG | Initial series of working draft only circulated within the GPLB-DDG. |
| v1.0 First Draft31/03/2023GPLB-DDG | First draft from the GPLB-DDG established by OTA2 and GPLB-SG. This draft will be circulated to industry reps for review and feedback. |

# Overview of GPL business switching process

This section provides an overview of the GPL business switching process, especially for those who may not have read Ofcom’s Consultation and Statement documents, or their General Conditions. (Readers are very strongly encouraged to also read those documents.)

The GPL business switching process includes the following steps. This summary represents a placeholder, whilst the process is reviewed by industry and will be updated to reflect the final process as an executive summary.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Step** | **Description** |
| **Step 1: Customer contacts the gaining provider and provides details** | * The customer contacts their chosen gaining provider (in person, online or by phone) and requests to switch their services.
* The customer shares their:
	+ business name;
	+ service address and postcode;
	+ contact details (where requiring an asset list);
	+ losing provider’s name
	+ account number with losing provider or telephone number.
	+ the services they want to switch or requests asset information
* The customer chooses the new services, confirms if they want to keep their phone number(s) and agrees a switch date. The gaining provider confirms whether any engineer visits are necessary.
* The gaining provider identifies the correct customer and services to switch. If this is unsuccessful (i.e. there is no match against the losing provider’s records), the gaining provider asks the customer for more details (e.g. losing provider account number, phone number or other identifier of a service to be switched).
* GPL business switching process includes an optional “discovery” step, where the GRCP asks the LRCP to send a list of assets / services directly to the customer.
 |
| **Step 2: Losing provider gives customer switching information and customer gives the gaining provider their consent to the switch** | * The losing provider confirms whether they are giving the customer the implications of switching information (e.g. early termination charges, impact on other services) without the need for the customer to request it (recommended). The information is provided, and the losing provider will notify the gaining provider of the method by which the switching information has been sent, so they can tell the customer.
* In some cases, the customer will already have received this information (e.g. during a tender process), and the LRCP will decide not to duplicate the information.
* The gaining provider gives the customer information about their new contract.
* After having the opportunity to consider the information, if the customer is happy to proceed, they give the gaining provider their consent to switch (who retains a record of consent). This can happen in real time during their phone or online conversation.
* The gaining provider confirms the start date and the services being provided.
 |
| **Step 3: Customer’s new services begin on agreed date** | * On the agreed date the new services will start and the old services will end. Business customers will have the option for parallel running (where technically feasible), so the cease of the old services may be delayed. If requested, the customer’s phone number is transferred (possibly on a later date than provision of the new IAS).
* Services and billing to be ceased.
* Note that early termination charges may apply.
 |

# Match requests and responses

When reading this document you will see reference to GRCP (Gaining Retail Communications Provider) and LRCP (Losing Retail Communications Provider). Retail CPs are those directly contracting with the customer (now or in future). Each retail CP will need to register and obtain an ID, known as an RCPID, which will allow messages to be directed correctly across the hub.

Retail CPs will interact (via the Hub) using one or more match requests and corresponding match responses. Each match request has several logical elements:

1. Details to match with a business customer recognised by the LRCP.
2. An optional request for the LRCP to send an asset list directly to the customer.
3. An optional set of one of more services that the customer wishes to switch from the LRCP to GRCP (some services may be ceased with the LRCP in support of a switch of a related service).
4. An optional link to a completed customer letter of authority in support of any porting which would be needed to support switching of NBICS services.
5. An optional previously generated SOR, to which any newly matched services should be associated.

The option to request that an asset list is sent by the LRCP directly to the customer is likely to be of use for customers with multiple sites and/or multiple services at a single site. If the GRCP is aware they are dealing with such a customer, they may choose to send a match request for an asset list at the pre-sales stage. It is also feasible that a customer may have a pre-existing asset list (e.g. from an earlier match request via a different GRCP, or as part of the documentation produced by the LRCP during a tender process triggered by the customer).

Customers at the SOHO end of the business market tend to have simple, often singleton, services, and are much less likely to need as asset list. GRCPs should avoid unnecessary requests for an asset list, as they impose work on the LRCP, and will slow down the sales process for the GRCP.

This document uses the term “customer match” in relation to the LRCP matching a unique business customer. These details must include at least one “customer identifier” which can be any of:

* An LRCP account number.
* An equivalent of account number used by the LRCP, e.g. a unique customer username or similar used on their customer facing portals.
* A DN (directory number) for a voice service with the LRCP – this is required when the customer wishes to retain that number when switching NBICS services, and could be provided as identification even where the customer wants that NBICS service to be ceased when a related IAS is to be switched.

In order to complete a successful match a customer identifier must be provided along with the business name and business address.

This document uses the term “service match” in relation to matching services which the customer wishes to switch. The services can be matched by inference (e.g. the customer match was to a SOHO customer with a single IAS service) or explicitly (i.e. with a matching unique service identifier, e.g. taken from an asset list).

The GRCP may send multiple service match requests, e.g. one per site for a multi-site customer. The LRCP will generate a fresh SOR for the first successful service match request. If the GRCP includes the SOR in subsequent service match requests, the LRCP will add any successful service matches to their record of which services are associated with that SOR.

## BSW1.2 Customer contacts GRCP via sales channel

Capturing the information needed for a match request should **not** be the first step for a gaining retail provider. Retail CPs are encouraged to create sales processes that allow customers to explore the available options when considering switching, and only start the matching process when there is some indication that the customer wants to explore the full impacts of switching. This will minimise the load placed on losing retail providers and reduce concerns of annoying customers by sending them multiple implications of switching information.

## Match request and response

For the SOHO end of the business market, matching may take place in the “checkout” stage of a simple order journey (very similar to the consumer OTS process). Further up the business market, matching may take place during a pre-sales stage.

The overall matching step of the business process is when the customer contacts the gaining retail provider and provides details which can be used to consult the losing retail provider[[1]](#footnote-2) (via the Hub). Matching serves two purposes, either to match the business customer and to request the LRCP send an asset list to the customer or to match the customer and match services at the same time.

Throughout this document we refer to the interactions between the GRCP and LRCP at this overall step as the “match request” and “match response”. This section takes the reader through the steps in sequence, to establish an understanding of the main process flow.

Once a request has been submitted it is expected that the LRCP provides a match response by the end of the second full working day following receipt from the GRCP.

Where an end user wants to switch services from two different providers to one new provider, the gaining provider will need to submit a separate match request to each losing provider.

## BSW1.4 Gaining retail provider takes details

If the customer advises that they wish to switch, the gaining retail provider will need to follow a matching process via the Hub with the losing retail provider. There are several key pieces of information needed to attempt an initial customer match:

* Identity of the losing provider.
* The business name or sole trader name.
* Customer address – which should be linked to a service.
* And at least one of the two following items:
	+ The telephone number (not presentation number) of a service currently active with the LRCP.
	+ A customer reference used with the losing retail provider (§3.4.2 below gives examples of identifiers the LRCP might recognise.

If the customer already knows what services are to be switched and is ready to proceed, details of the service to be switched should also be captured to allow for a service match. If such details are not known to the customer, then a match request for an asset list would be appropriate.

There is other optional information that can be provided, such as contact details of the requestor of an asset list – these are covered in detail in relevant sub-sections below.

At this point the GRCP is also gaining the customer’s consent to interact with the LRCP (via the Hub) to either request an asset list or to attempt a match of one or more services with the LRCP

### Identity of the losing retail provider

This is a key piece of information to attempt a match – without this, the Hub would not know where to route the match request. The end user should be asked for the Communication Provider’s name on the bill. Where the customer has services from two providers both should be captured and the process followed for each provider.

The Hub will publish a regularly updated list of RCPIDs and corresponding RCP brand name(s) (“name on the bill”). RCPs will download this list on e.g. a daily basis, and will then cache that download for use in their sales systems.

Many RCPs have both consumer and business brands, but consumer customers are not necessarily aware of the business brand. Some RCPs share a brand name between business and consumer, and other RCPs have more distinct brand names.

 When the gaining provider captures and attempts to match information about the current provider, care should be taken to select the correct RCPID.

## Business name

The gaining provider must capture the business name as held by the losing provider. This field is mandatory.

Note that the business name held by the losing provider may differ from the current business name. For example, a company may have been bought out by another company. The GRCP is expected to interact with the customer to capture the business name as held by the LRCP.

Fuzzy matching logic is also expected to be applied on the business name. For example, if ‘Ben’s Bread Limited’ is on the LRCP’s system but a match request is raised for ‘Bens Bread Ltd’, this should not be rejected. Equally, If Mr C Hip is listed on the current provider’s system but a match is requested for Mr Charlie Adam Hip on the match request this would be considered an acceptable match.

In general, business name matching should be based on the “legal entity” name. E.g. for a sole trader, the legal entity is the individual, even if they also use a “trading as” name. Where the GRCP captures and the LRCP holds the name of the sole trader, this should be a successful match, even if one or other have also captured / also hold the “trading as” name.

### Customer Address

The gaining retail provider will need to capture the customer address as held with the losing retail provider. In most cases, this should be the same address as where the gaining retail provider is expecting to provide service. Where services provided have no fixed location, for example VoIP, it may be appropriate to provide the head office address if that address is associated with the service.

The customer address is mandatory to complete a successful match. The LRCP should match the address if it only differs in formatting, but will reject the match if the address is substantially different.

In order to support successful matches, the gaining retail provider should submit the address of a good quality, with full post town and post code, and other address lines formatted as per Royal Mail’s PAF guidelines. (Refer to Appendix III).

### Customer reference with the losing provider

For GPL business switching, the provision of the customer reference is only mandatory where a telephone number (being taken as a service) is not provided.

It is assumed that all RCPs have the concept of an account number or customer reference[[2]](#footnote-3) (even if they use terms such as “customer id”). Most RCPs ask customers to treat this value with some confidence, and use it as one element of their caller validation processes.Some RCPs do not have the concept of an account number, and instead have concepts such as a username or similar used in a customer online portal – as long as such values uniquely identify a single business customer, they are valid to be used as a customer reference for matching.

Customer reference details are particularly needed in instances where the customer has data only Internet Access Services such as FTTP. In these instances, the customer reference will provide a second strong data point to support the match and accurate customer verification.

In a business context, there is sometimes a hierarchy of accounts, e.g. accounts for individual services or sites feeding into a master account. Each LRCP will decide its own policy as to which account number is needed for a successful match, e.g. they may support matching using both the low-level account number and the master account number, if their customers are aware of both account numbers and could reasonably quote either. LRCPs should not impose a policy that Ofcom might view as unnecessarily restrictive.

Where a match is being undertaken to match the customer and request an asset list only, you will need to request allaccount references directly associated with those services or all addresses which the asset list relates to.

### Telephone number of an active service

For GPL business switching, the provision of the telephone number is only mandatory where a customer reference is not provided. It is recognised that many business customers may not have their account details to hand when taking to the GRCP. By providing a telephone number associated with a service, it provides a simple alternative to enable a match. This telephone number does not need to be the service which will be subject to the switch and is for verification only.

In this context the telephone number is a number which has been assigned to the customer for their use of Number-based Interpersonal Communications Services. The telephone number should not be a mobile number nor a presentation number.

## Match of services to be switched

Within this stage of the match request, the customer may also know which services they wish to be subject to a switch request. If known, the service details can be provided as part of the match request. If these details are not yet known, a match against the services can subsequently be completed, following a successful match of the business customer.

The Ofcom documents (and the original industry submissions) mostly refer to the “services to be switched”. However, this Industry Process more accurately acknowledges that voice might be ceased instead of being switched.

The general switching rules in the revised General Conditions apply only to Internet Access Service (IAS) and Number-based Interpersonal Communications Service (NBICS) (more commonly referred to as “broadband”[[3]](#footnote-4) and “voice”).

In many networks, the broadband and voice are technically linked. Even where not technically linked, they are often strongly linked by contracts and bundles.

To Perform a Service match the following information is required:

* The service identifier (e.g. The telephone number or other Asset ID that the losing provider will recognise). This field is optional for IAS but is mandatory for NBICS.
* The type of service (NBICS or IAS) Mandatory. Some legacy products have both data and voice (e.g. FTTC) in this instance the line is directly linked to the CLI (voice) element and this should be used for matching purposes.
* The address associated with the service. This field may be required to locate a service where no service identifier has been provided, no NBICS or in a multisite scenario.

Where a port is involved, it is also possible to provide an optional link to a customer letter of authority (CLOA). By providing the porting CLOA through this process, it is expected that this will support a more efficient porting journey.

### Multiple services to be switched

In business switching it is not uncommon for more than one service to be switched at the same time. Once the customer match has been confirmed multiple services can be matched during the switching process. The service matches can be completed in one go, or over time, up to 6 months from the date that the customer Switch order reference is generated following a successful Customer match.

Where a customer wishes to switch a continuous range of telephone numbers for example 0161123456 to 0161123476 these can be completed in one match by entering into the service identifier field the start of the last in the number range with a hyphen between e.g. 0161123456-0161123476. A range should only be used if all numbers are consecutive. For efficiency purposes these should be raised as one request rather than individually.

## Decision point: does the customer have all the service identifiers they need to switch?

The GPL business switching process thus have an **optional** step to request the LRCP to send the customer a list of all of their services to support switching. The list would contain the service identifiers needed for a subsequent match request to specify the services to be switched / ceased, but should also contain information on each service recognisable to the customer (e.g. identification information that the customer sees on their bill) and importantly what an LRCP would recognise when a service match request is submitted.

## BSW 1.5 Gaining retail provider sends asset list request to LRCP

This is an **optional** step as described above.

GRCPs should only send this type of request if **absolutely necessary**. E.g. for a SOHO customer with only one IAS service, or a small customer with several services wanting to switch them, or a customer with knowledge of their service identifiers, requesting an asset list would be an unnecessary step, creating extra work for the LRCP, and delaying the sales process for the GRCP.

When requesting an asset list the GRCP should indicate within the match request whether the asset list is only for services linked to the associated account contained within the match, or all assets linked to the customer.

The requestor name must be included in any asset list request. It is also good practice to capture the role of requestor to support with potential queries.

## Hub logs request and routes to the Gaining or Losing retail provider

The Hub will log the messages (for audit trail purposes) and route the request to an end point as defined by the RCP that owns the losing retail provider RCPID. This step is repeated through out the process, we have listed once for awareness.

## BSW1.10 Losing retail provider sends asset list to the customer following successful customer match.

If the LRCP finds a single matching customer, they will send an asset list to the customer. The asset list should be sent using the registered contact details the LRCP holds. As Retail CPs assign and capture contacts differently e.g. some record primary contacts, some people are listed as billing contacts, others as commercial contracts, it will down to the LRCP to determine which is the appropriate contact to send the asset list across to. If the requestor is both a recorded and appropriate contact, it will help the LRCP determine more quickly where the asset list should be sent, for large organisations with multiple contacts.

We are not prescribing what format the asset list should take. As a minimum the asset list should include:

* An Asset Identifier (something the losing provider will recognise for a specific service)
* Service description (Something the customer should recognise related to the service)

The LRCP must state who requested the asset list when sending the list out. This will help to ensure that the asset list is issued to the correct party. This will also help to prevent queries where a Business Customer contact did not expect to receive a list.

The LRCP may choose to provide other information (whether the service is in a fixed contract period, or where services are linked and where the removal of 1 service impacts another). Any additional information needs to be fact based and neutral and should not create any disincentives to switch. An example is provided below.

**Asset List \*\*\*ILLUSTRATION PURPOSES ONLY\*\*\*\*\*\***

Account Name Ben's Bread Factory Ltd.

Account Number ABC12345/AAS

Requestor: Mr B Bee

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Service Type | Our Reference | Site Address | Other Information  |
| Voice  | 01234 699123 | 35 The Avenue, Southampton, SO99 9XX |  |
| Voice  | 01234 654000 to 01234 654999 | 35 The Avenue, Southampton, SO99 9XX | DDI Number range |
| Voice | 03661 256500 |  | Non geographic (presentation number) |
| Voice  | 01234 699123 | 35 The Avenue, Southampton, SO99 9XX | Main Billing Number |
| Internet Access | FB16549 | 123 Highstreet, ManchesterM12 3ZZ | 1GB Internet Access Service |
| Internet Access | BK68943 | 123 Highstreet, ManchesterM12 3ZZ | 4G Backup Service |
| Internet Access | XX13595 | 123 Highstreet, ManchesterM12 3ZZ | Network Reference ONT ABC13246RT4560 Port 1 |
| Internet Access | 12A6DA4F650E | 123 Highstreet, ManchesterM12 3ZZ | MAC Address/Serial Number 12:A6:DA:4F:65:0E |

If the LRCP receives repeat requests for asset lists, these should be assessed and a decision made by the LRCP as to whether a new asset list is required or the last one generated can be resent if needed, i.e. there has been no changes to the customers assets to warrant a new one or in instance of rate limiting.

???The LRCP has a maximum of 2 complete working days to issue the asset list. For example, where received on lunchtime on Monday this would need to be issued by close of business Wednesday. Further details have been provided within the Appendix regarding both SLAs and

## BSW1.18 LRCP creates successful match response to GRCP.

If the LRCP finds a single matching customer, they will also create a success response for the GRCP, including information on how the asset list will be sent to the customer (e.g. email / letter), if requested.

| **Method** | **Additional information** |
| --- | --- |
| Email | Masked email address: first few characters of “username” element and full “domain” element, all other characters replaced with \*. The number of unmasked characters should be no more than 50% of the entire username or 3, whichever is smaller, e.g: nia\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*@gmail.com da\*\*@daves-domain.com |
| 1st Class Post | A first class letter will be sent to the contact/billing address as held by the LRCP and there is no need for any additional information to be included in the response. |
| 2nd class post  | A second class letter will be sent to the contact/billing address as held by the LRCP and there is no need for any additional information to be included in the response. |

### BSW1.18 Generation of Switch Order Reference (SOR) by losing retail provider

If the LRCP finds a match, they need to generate and include a Switch Order Reference (SOR) in the response. The SOR will be a UUID as defined by IETF RFC4122 [draft-ietf-uuidrev-rfc4122bis-02 - A Universally Unique IDentifier (UUID) URN Namespace](https://datatracker.ietf.org/doc/draft-ietf-uuidrev-rfc4122bis/).

Note that an SOR will expire after 6 months from the date of generation.

## BSW1.15 LRCP creates an error response to GRCP

If the LRCP does not find a matching customer, they will return a match failure-response with an indication of failure. The failures (and possible GRCP responses) could be:

* Customer reference numb er not found (or found as closed account, or with no IAS or NBICS).
	+ The GRCP could check that the customer has provided the correct LRCP and account number.
* Telephone number does not match.
	+ The GRCP could check that the customer has provided the correct telephone number.
* No match on business name.
	+ The GRCP could check that the customer has provided the business name as held by the LRCP.
* Location not found or does not match.
	+ E.g. the address does not match.

The full list of error codes will be provided within the developer’s document.

Note that if the request includes information to match to find customer services, but the address is not a close enough match, this would be considered an unsuccessful match.

## BSW1.13 Customer receives asset list and request GRCP to match services

When the customer receives the asset list, they will contact the GRCP, who can attempt to match services to be switched against using the details passed on by the customer.

## BSW1.14 Gaining retail provider sends (additional) service match request to Hub

Following the successful customer match the gaining retail provider will be able to make additional service match requests against the SOR. Each time a Service match request is made the following information is required:

* The service identifier (e.g. The telephone number or other Asset ID that the losing provider will recognise). This field is optional for IAS but is mandatory for NBICS.
* The type of service (NBICS or IAS) Mandatory. Some legacy products have both data and voice (e.g. FTTC) in this instance the line is directly linked to the CLI (voice) element and this should be used for matching purposes.
* The address associated with the service. This field may be required to locate a service where no service identifier has been provided, no NBICS or in a multisite scenario. -

## BSW1.7 Losing retail provider processes service match request

The losing retail provider will receive the match request from the Hub and will attempt to find a match. The algorithm adopted by the losing retail provider will have the following elements:

* Are the services linked to the quoted address?
* Are the services associated with the customer matched?
* Are the services live?

Note that the LRCP does not need to search for any former customers with former services at that location.

## BSW1.15 Losing retail provider replies with failure to match (service)

A response will be provided for each service match request. Any services which cannot be matched will return a match response with an indication of failure (1.8). The failures (and possible GRCP responses) could be:

* SOR not found or expired.
	+ The GRCP could recomplete a customer match and generate a new SOR.
* No services on the account at that location.
* A switch is currently in progress (i.e. LRCP has an open switch order).
	+ Note that this could arise when a customer has cancelled another switch order with another GRCP[[4]](#footnote-5), but the cancellation has not yet reached / been processed by the LRCP.
* Range error
	+ The telephone number range provided includes additional numbers, for services that the customer is not responsible for.
* Customer is not responsible for the services within the match request.

Where multiple service match requests have been made, a response will be individually provided for each service match requested. It is therefore possible that where multiple services matches are submitted at the same time, some matche**s** could be unsuccessful and some successful . The switch can still be progressed for individual services, which were successfully matched.

## BSW1.17 Gaining retail provider receives failed match response

The gaining retail provider will inform the customer of the failed response and may attempt to resolve the non-match. Resolutions could include:

* Correction to information already provided, such as correction of spelling of business name to match the variant held by the LRCP.
* Addition of extra information, such as additional service identifiers.

If the GRCP is able to correct or add information, they would send a fresh match request to the Hub using the SOR from the customer match.

## BSW1.18 Losing retail provider finds a service match

If the losing retail provider finds the customer service listed within the match, associated with the correct business, and where provided at the correct address the losing retail provider should return a positive match response to the gaining retail provider (via the Hub). There are several key pieces of information that the losing retail CP must include in the response message that it generates to be sent to the GRCP:

* List of impacted services (this will include every service that have been queries in the match. In addition, where a strongly related service is directly impacted but did not form part of the service match, this must also be returned in the match response.
* Whether or not switching information has been sent to the customer from the LRCP – mandatory.

If sent, method of communication to customer of the switching information – mandatory.

RCPs who consume Openreach services are expected to be aware of the interdependencies, especially between copper-based services, such as WLR, MPF, ADSL and FTTC.

### BSW1.8 Supply chain provision of information to support LRCP

The LRCP may need to invoke query services[[5]](#footnote-6) provided by their supply chain. Notable examples include:

* Mapping from a supply chain service identifier (e.g. the identifier used by a wholesaler CP and known to the LRCP) to a service identifier used by the underlying network provider (and an indication of the network provider in supply chains where the LRCP does already know this information).
* The CUPID of the current Voice Communications Provider should be provided where available to support porting.
* WLR operators with no record of broadband service will need to invoke Openreach’s EMLC service to check if there is broadband on the line, perhaps with a different CP[[6]](#footnote-7).

It is also open to RCPs to work with their supply chains to do bulk updates to their service asset information to add (or refresh) the above information, so that they do not need to rely on real-time responses from their supply chain. Refer also to rate limiting,

### BSW1.18 Method of communication to customer of the switching information from the LRCP

Under Ofcom General Conditions of Entitlement the Gaining and Losing Providers must keep the customer informed throughout the switching process. For consumer like business customers, the implications of switching are likely to be needed to support informed consent to proceed with a sale.

The LRCP may choose to send the switching information by multiple methods and should indicate durable mediums used. E.g. if the full information is sent by letter, and the LRCP chooses to also send an SMS message advising only that an important letter is on its way (but the SMS does not replicate all the switching information), then letter is the only means which should be reported.

Additional information must be provided alongside each method as follows:

| **Method** | **Additional information** |
| --- | --- |
| Email | Masked email address: first few characters of “username” element and full “domain” element, all other characters replaced with \*. The number of unmasked characters should be no more than 50% of the entire username or 3, whichever is smaller, e.g: nia\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*@gmail.com da\*\*@daves-domain.com |
| SMS | Masked mobile number:If the LRCP stores the SMS number in UK format, first and last three digits, all other digits replaced with \*, e.g:078\*\*\*\*\*713If the LRCP supports SMS numbers in international format, the country code and first two significant digits after country code should not be masked, e.g:UK example: +4478\*\*\*\*\*713ROI example: +35387\*\*\*\*915 or (an alternative is +3538\*\*\*\*\*915 if easier to implement)US example: +160\*\*\*\*\*576The masked number may optionally include spaces (which should not be replaced with \*) and (0)[[7]](#footnote-8), e.g. +44 (0) 78\*\* \*\*\*713 |
| 2nd class post or 1st Class Post | Note that the method will not be just “Letter” – instead it will indicate the type of delivery method (helping the GRCP / customer to understand the likely arrival date). The letter will be sent to the contact/billing address as held by the LRCP and there is no need for any additional information to be included in the response. |
| Not Issued | This is to be used if, for whatever reason, the impacts of switching were not issued. |

GRCPs must be able to handle a potential list and advise the customer which methods have been used.

## BSW1.19 Losing retail provider sends switching information to their customer

Where Switching information is sent to the customer, it should include as a minimum; that a switching match has been made, which services are to being matched which if progressed, will be switched away and any early terminations charges. It is also considered best practice to highlight where other associated services may be impacted; for example, static IPs, linked software, or battery back-up.

The losing retail provider will send the switching information directly to their customer. If the provider holds an email address for the customer (and the customer has not previously asked for all future communications by letter), the provider will send an email communication to their customers. The losing provider should ensure that this email is sent without any un-necessary delay.

If the provider does not hold an email address (or the customer has previously opted out of email communication), the provider will send a letter using their print and dispatch mechanisms.

If the customer doesn’t receive their switching information from the losing retail provider, the customer can contact the losing retail provider to update their contact details, and ask for the switching information to be re-sent to the new contact details.

### Rate Limiting

There is a legitimate worry about whether a malicious actor could use (maybe multiple) GRCP sales journeys to trigger dispatch of multiple switching information, or asset list requests, with the intent of causing nuisance to an individual, or of causing embarrassment to the UK telecoms industry (including Ofcom).

This industry process permits LRCP to “rate limit” their dispatch of notifications with switching information, triggered by successful match requests. This may be applied when the switching information would not be materially different from previously sent information within a 31-day period.

If a RCP decides to implement a rate limit, in their match response, they should indicate the date of last dispatch of switching information, where the current request will be suppressed by the rate limiting.

The principle of rate limiting also applied to asset list production.

## BSW1.23 Gaining retail provider obtains Express Consent

After getting a successful match response, the gaining retail provider can proceed with the rest of their sales process. They must obtain the customer’s express consent before they can submit a switch order to the Hub (and corresponding processes with their supply chain).

 In the General Conditions, Ofcom define express consent as:

‘**Express Consent**’ means the express agreement of a **Customer** to contract with a **Communications Provider**, or to transfer their **Public Electronic Communications Service(s)** or port their **Telephone Number(s)**, where the **Communications Provider** has obtained such consent in a manner which has enabled the **Customer** to make an informed choice;

Supply chain orders should not be submitted until express consent is obtained.

## BSW1.26 Gaining retail provider places order

After gaining and recording express consent from the customer, the gaining retail provider will complete any steps required for their own order that have not yet been completed. This includes agreeing a migration date with the customer:

* The customer may want a delay, e.g. to line up with the end of a commitment period with the LRCP.
* The provision of service via the GRCP’s supply chain may have a lead time.
* The provision of service may require an engineering appointment, and if this is for a customer facing visit, the customer will need to pick an available slot when they can arrange to be at home.
* The gaining supply chain may use a model where they reply with a committed date[[8]](#footnote-9), and any date quoted to the customer at the point of sale is aspirational.

For many RCPs, at this point the sales order is “submitted”.

## BSW1.27 Customer receives order confirmation from GRCP

The step represents the receipt by the customer of all the information sent by the GRCP after the customer gives their express consent to the switch, and the GRCP starts processing their “customer order”.

# BSW1.30 Raise Switch Order Request

In the previous section a customer order has been captured and submitted. For many RCPs this represents a transition from order capture to order processing.

A “customer order” in a typical RCP’s systems will result in multiple “supplier orders”, including:

* One or more orders into the RCP’s supply chain. in order for delivery of equipment, such any hub/router needed for broadband access.
* An order to set up the customer and their services on the RCP’s billing systems.

In order to progress the switch from the LRCP, the GRCP will send a “switch order” request to the Hub for onward routing to the LRCP. For many RCPs, the Business switch order will be considered as another “supplier order” to be managed alongside all the other supplier orders.

The switch order effectively allows the GRCP to tell the LRCP that the customer has given express consent to the switch. It informs the LRCP of the proposed migration date), and which LRCP services must be ceased (either because they are being switched, or e.g. the customer no longer wants any voice service and is taking a broadband only service from the GRCP). Note that is in addition to any of the following existing order types:

* Number porting request (from voice provider in gaining supply chain to voice provider in losing supply chain).
* Order for intra network transfers (e.g. “transfer orders” into Openreach).

## Content of switch order

The switch order should include the following information:

* Identity of the losing retail provider.
* SOR and the type of match request that the SOR was returned against, e.g. Business
* List of services to be ceased. This list should match the services which were successfully matched in the match response that included the SOR.

E.g. if the match request was to cease IAS and retain NBICS, but the match response indicated that voice could not be retained, the GRCP can gain the customer’s acceptance that voice must also be ceased. The switch order must then include cessation of both IAS and NBICS.

For each service to be ceased:

* + An indication of whether the GRCP is requesting an intra-network transfer (e.g. an intra-network transfer of a copper line or a fibre service)
	+ For voice service, an indication of whether the GRCP is requesting a port (or other intra-network retention) of the number.
* Note that where the match response indicated that a service could be retained, the switch order should omit that service – the switch order will only list the services that the LRCP should cease.
* Intended migration date.

The indication of intra-network transfer or number port may assist the LRCP in correlating the switch order with any unsolicited cease that their supply chain may send for the transfer or number port. This correlation will help the LRCP to understand that the unsolicited cease is associated with the switch order, and thus Cancel Other of those unsolicited ceases is prohibited.

## BSW1.33 & BSW1.36 Losing retail provider receives switch order and confirms acceptance or rejection

This step represents the receipt of the switch order by the LRCP. The LRCP must respond to the switch order with either an acceptance or a rejection.

If the LRCP already has an open switch order against some or all of the services requested for cessation (whether from another GRCP or the same GRCP), they would reject the switch order for that particular service.

However, if their customer has placed a cease order, the LRCP should make every effort to accept the switch order, taking the migration date in the switch order as higher priority. RCPs may choose to cancel the customer’s pending cease order, and replace it completely with the details from the switch order[[9]](#footnote-10), but they must inform the customer of the impacts.

Other possible reasons for rejection include:

* Invalid switch order reference.
* Switch order reference has expired.
* SOR value does not match to the combination of services being ceased.
* Services already ceased.

## Losing retail provider sends notification to customer

If the LRCP accepts the switch order, they must send a notification to the customer:

* If all of the customer’s services are being ceased this will be a “sorry to see you go” (STSYG) notification.
* If any services are being retained or changed, the notification may be partly STSYG and partly notification of the impacts on the other services.

## Losing retail provider should not initiate cease on a fixed date

It is important to note that the switch order will contain an intended migration date:

* The GRCP will have asked a customer to agree an intended migration date.
* The customer may have requested a delayed migration date, e.g. to fall after expiry of a minimum commitment period (to avoid ETCs) or to a date for engineering visit that suited them.
* Delays can be encountered, e.g. a difficulty encountered during an engineering visit, which delays completion past the original commitment date.

The LRCP should await confirmation that the cease should be triggered.

## BSW1.70 GRCP handling of rejected switch order

If the LRCP sends a rejection of the switch order, the GRCP will be responsible for resolution of this rejection. The GRCP may need to consult with the customer, and will need to cancel their order with their supply chain if they cannot fix the issue with the switch order.

E.g. if the LRCP rejects a switch order as it has another open switch order, the possible resolutions include:

* Full cancellation of the GRCP’s “customer order” if the customer advises that they are proceeding with another GRCP. In this case, the GRCP must cancel their order with their supply chain.
* If the customer advises that they have cancelled the order with another GRCP, this could be a timing issue, and a re-submission of the switch may be accepted (once the LRCP has received and processed the cancellation of the first switch order). In this case, the order with the supply chain would not be cancelled.

## BSW1.29 Gaining supply chain raises number port order(s).

If the switch contains a number port, the GRCP via their supply chain[[10]](#footnote-11) will raise a port order with the losing voice provider, and also with the range holder if different, using the most efficient method available as identified during the matching process.

The porting process itself remains unchanged, with the possible exception of the gaining retail provider proactively deciding to share a letter of authority within hub messaging.

It should be noted that even though a switch order may be accepted, it does not prevent a port request from being subsequently rejected for other reasons. Where a port is rejected and the issue cannot be resolved, then the customer may decide to cancel the switch.

## BSW1.60 Gaining supply chain completes order(s)

The supply chain will complete provision or transfer of service(s) and inform the GRCP of completion.

If the voice order involves number porting, that may be a separate supply chain, and the completion for the porting may come from a different source and at a different time.

## BSW1.62 Receipt of notifications of unsolicited cease(s) by LRCP

The LRCP may receive various notifications around the unsolicited cease(s), from initial notification to final completion. The supply chain may generate separate unsolicited ceases for the voice and broadband, and number port may result in a separate unsolicited cease.[[11]](#footnote-12)

Openreach have advised that they are not changing their managed cease notifications, and they will continue unchanged for an intra network switch or a number export from WLR (e.g. KCI1, KCI2, KCI3)

## BSW1.63 Gaining retail provider receives order(s) completion from supply chain

The GRCP will receive notification from their supply chain of completion of their provision or transfer order(s). There may be several notifications, e.g. if their supply chain has separate orders for voice and broadband, or the order involves number porting via a different supply chain (e.g. for a VoIP service).

The GRCP will send confirmation to the customer of completion of the switch and activation of their new service(s).

The GRCP will also send the Hub a “trigger message” for the switch order, to trigger the LRCP to cease their service(s) and complete the switch order. As there may be a period of dual running, this may be triggered at a later point in time.

## BSW1.64 Customer receives confirmation of order completion

The customer will receive confirmation from the GRCP, e.g. “welcome to service” messages.

## BSW1.71 Completion of switch order by LRCP

The LRCP will receive the switch order trigger message.

Note that the original switch order will have included an intended migration date, but the provision of service by the GRCP’s supply chain may have been delayed. The LRCP must not trigger any cessation activities until they receive the switch order trigger message, even if the original migration date has passed. The switch order trigger message effectively provides a final migration date.

For an inter network switch, the LRCP must send a cease request(s) to their supply chain.

For an intra network switch, the handling will depend on their supply chain. E.g. Openreach will reject a cease request if their managed cease order is open or complete, so the LRCP should not send a cease request to Openreach.

In both cases, the LRCP will need to cease other services as appropriate and trigger other actions, such as prompting the customer to return equipment.

The LRCP will also need to update their billing systems. If they did not process the switch order trigger message on the day it was sent, they may need to back-dating the cessation date. The correct cease dates will need to be updated on their billing systems The LRCP will then send a final bill to the customer which may include charges for any applicable notice periods

Some terms and conditions of the LRCP contract may continue to apply. E.g. charges for the non-return of equipment.

## BSW1.72 Cease of service(s) by losing supply chain

When the LRCP receives the switch order completion message, for an inter network switch, they will ask their supply chain to cease service(s).

This may be the first notification(s) that the losing supply chain receives for the overall switch process.

## BSW1.74 Losing retail provider notifies GRCP that switch is complete

The losing retail provider will send a response to the switch order trigger message to the GRCP via the Hub – effectively this message represents completion of the switch order by the LRCP.

The sending of this message might be delayed by processing either by the LRCP or their supply chain, e.g. if cessations are only processed on a working day. However, the LRCP must not delay the response until all payments received or return of equipment by the customer.

## BSW1.76 Gaining retail provider receives notification that the switch is complete

The GRCP will receive notification that the LRCP has completed all their steps to cease service(s) and billing.

Note that this response may be delayed by processing either by the LRCP or their supply chain.

GRCP s may choose to close their customer order when they have received completion from their supply chain (e.g. if having an open order prevents the new customer from raising any fresh orders). However, the GRCP should be able to handle the LRCP response as a late update to their customer order.

GRCP s should also monitor for lack of receipt of confirmation from the LRCP, and treat this similar to other order failures.

For example if no notification is received a chase may be necessary.

# Cancel Own

Having successfully placed the switch order and with that switch order being ‘in-flight’ with both GRCP and LRCP, the customer may for whatever reason choose to cancel that order. Where the customer chooses to cancel the switch order via the GRCP with whom they placed the original switch order, this will be referred to in this document as a “Cancel Own”[[12]](#footnote-13). Such cancellations will be subject to the standard PONR restrictions imposed by the gaining supply chain.

## Customer wishes to cancel the switch

After placing their order and providing their express consent to proceed with the process the customer is within their rights to cancel the order with the GRCP. Where the switch order is either complete or has passed the point of no return (PONR) as defined by the GRCP a Cancel Own request would not be processed.

The GRCP should be in a position to understand the PONR timing imposed by their supply chain (e.g. for Openreach, it is typically 4pm on the day before the commitment date), and how much extra safety margin they apply (e.g. many RCPs using Openreach apply a 3pm cut-off for capture of a cancellation request, so that they can get it to Openreach before 4pm).

## BSW1.50 GRCP cancels the provision / transfer order(s) and switch order

Once the customer has requested that the order be cancelled, the GRCP must:

* Notify the LRCP of the switch order cancellation via the Hub
* Send an order cancellation request to the gaining supply chain to initiate cancellation of the provision / transfer order.

## BSW1.55 Gaining supply chain cancels provision / transfer order(s)

Once the switch order cancellation has been initiated the gaining supply chain should cancel down the provision / transfer order(s). It is expected that GRCP’s and their supply chains will follow their existing Cancel Own processes.

### Gaining supply chain notifies losing retail provider of cancellation of unsolicited cease

In an intra network switch, the supply chain will have notified the losing retail provider of unsolicited cease(s) triggered by the GRCP placing transfer order(s) for the switch.

As per the existing cancel own process in place the gaining supply chain will notify the losing retail provider that those unsolicited cease(s) have been cancelled.

### LRCP receives notification of cancellation of unsolicited cease(s)

In an intra network switch, the LRCP will receive the notification of cancellation of the unsolicited cease(s). The LRCP will take the appropriate steps to clean up their records of the unsolicited cease(s)[[13]](#footnote-14).

### GRCP creates a switch order cancellation request

Alongside sending an order cancellation request into the gaining supply chain the GRCP will also need to create a switch order cancellation request message and send it to the LRCP via the Hub. This request message should include:

* The switch order reference
* A cancellation reason code as appropriate (to be defined)

## BSW1.55 LRCP receives switch order cancellation request

Once routed correctly the LRCP will receive the switch order cancellation request from the GRCP.

Note that in an intra network switch, the LRCP will also receive notification of cancellation of the unsolicited cease(s) from their supply chain. The notifications from the Hub and from the supply chain may arrive in either sequence and the LRCP must be able to handle this.

In most cases, the LRCP will not need to cancel with their supply chain:

* For an intra network switch, the LRCP should receive notification from their supply chain of cancellation of the unsolicited cease(s). So the LRCP does not need to initiate cancellation.
* For an inter network switch, the LRCP is very unlikely to have yet told their supply chain about the expectation of a cease on the future migration date, so there would be no pending order with their supply chain to cancel.

But in some scenarios, they may need to inform their supply chain, depending on the processes used by their supply chain.

### LRCP responds to switch order cancellation

When the LRCP received the original switch order request they will have created some record of this.

The LRCP will need to update their record of the switch order (e.g. record it as cancelled), wait for a response from their supply chain and then send a response to the GRCP (via the Hub) to confirm that they have received the switch order cancellation and completed their processing.

# Appendices

## Appendix I: Out of area geographic numbers

Some CPs have missed the recent Ofcom guidance that geographic numbers can be taken out-of-area, notable when a customer moves premises and the voice network can support the retention of their existing number (notably in “All-IP” networks).

GRCPs are reminded that they need to check that their gaining supply chain can support any number that the customer wishes to retain, in addition to checking whether it can be imported. Supply chains may offer a single combined check, or the GRCP may need to invoke separate checks.

The supply chain might not support the number for technical reasons (e.g. older PSTN technology typically restricted the number ranges that could be hosted on an exchange, whereas “All-IP” networks typically have less constraints) or for commercial reasons (e.g. calls from 028 numbers to the Republic of Ireland may have a cheaper rate, so supply chains may constrain 028 number to Northern Ireland only and vice versa).

Appendix 2:

## Appendix II: Address Quality- Structure of a UK address

It is expected that retail CPs will use authoritative sources of quality address data, such as:

* Ordnance Survey’s AddressBase products, covering addresses in GB.
* Ordnance Survey’s AddressBase Islands products (which includes Northern Ireland).
* Ordnance Survey NI’s Pointer products, covering addresses in Northern Ireland.
* Royal Mail’s PAF products, covering all of the UK.
* Or a commercial provider who aggregates all the above data.

It is also expected that retail CPs will understand the structure of a UK address, including sub building name, building name, building number, dependent thoroughfare, thoroughfare, double dependent locality, dependent locality, post town and postcode (and not just “line 1”, “line 2”). Readers unfamiliar with the structure of a UK address may wish to consult the Royal Mail PAF Programmers’ Guide at <https://www.royalmail.com/marketing-services/address-management-unit/address-data-products/programmers-guide>. (Note that most modern addressing products do not split thoroughfare into name and description – PAF started in the days of Summary of match information to be provided by the LRCP.

The structure of a UK address consists of the following elements:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Element** | **Comments** |
| Sub building name | E.g. ‘Flat 1’, ‘Apartment 1’ |
| Building name | E.g. ‘Rose Cottage’, ‘Mandela House’ |
| Building number | E.g. ‘1’, ‘1A’, ‘101-102’ |
| Dependent thoroughfare |  |
| Thoroughfare | Aka street name |
| Double dependent locality |  |
| Dependent locality |  |
| Post town | Mandatory |
| Postcode | Mandatory |

This structure was initially documented by Royal Mail in their PAF Programmer’s Guide.

Note that the PAF Guide defines some very strict rules:

* PAF building numbers can only be purely numeric, and values such as ‘1A’ and ‘101-103’ are held as building name. Most modern implementations and data sources permit values such as ‘1A’ and ‘101-102’ as the building number.
* The original PAF split thoroughfare and dependent thoroughfare into a separate name and descriptor with a standard list of approximately 200 descriptor words (e.g. ‘Avenue’, ‘Street’). Modern implementations and data sources combine the name and descriptor as a single string.

PO Box number is intentionally omitted from the above list, as it could not be a valid service address.

## Appendix III: SLAs and response times

There are several expected response times, expiry periods, audit trail periods and other SLAs. **The SLAs below are proposed for the purposes of review and comment:**

| **Item** | **SLA and comments** |
| --- | --- |
| Response to a match request | 2 full working days (counting day of receipt as day 0). For example, the close of business, the second full working day following receipt. A request received during Monday would need to be resolved by close of play Wednesday.  |
| Dispatch of impacts of switching by email | To be Determined. |
| Dispatch of impacts of switching by letter | To be Determined. |
| Expiry of an SOR | An SOR is valid for 6 months from date of generation. Both the gaining and losing retailer should store the date in which the SOR was generated.An attempt to place a switch order using an SOR more than 6 months old will be rejected by the LRCP. |
| Retention of SOR by LRCP | The LRCP should retain the SOR for at least another 6 months after expiry (so that the response can be that SOR is expired, rather than invalid if it were already deleted).LRCP’s housekeeping and audit trail policies may mean that they retain expired SORs and other OTS match audit trail information for a much longer period. |
| Acceptance or rejection of switch order | To be Determined. |
| Acceptance or rejection of an amendment or cancellation of a switch order. | To be Determined. |
| Latest date to trigger an open switch order | The GRCP must trigger an open switch order within 31 days of the migration date (counting the migration date as day zero). If the migration date was changed in a switch order amendment, this is relative to the migration date in the last update.This period is intended to account for typical delays, such as engineering issues being encountered on the installation date (which are typically resolved within a few days), or a gaining supply chain which use a “commit on CCD”[[14]](#footnote-15) model.If the switch order is not triggered within 31 days, the LRCP may send a cancellation notification to the GRCP. |
| Confirmation of completion of a request to trigger a switch order. | To be determined, |

1. This document uses the term “losing retail provider” to refer to the RCP who would be the LRCP if a switch order were to be placed, and only uses the term “current retail provider” where it makes linguistic sense (e.g. the phrase “the customer will not know the RCPID of their current retail provider” reads more easily than “… the RCPID of their losing retail provider”). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. The format of account number or reference varies between RCPs. E.g. BT account references are two letters followed by eight numbers, and are commonly termed the “account number” even though they are not purely numeric. The Ofcom consultation and statement exclusively used the term “account number”. References in this document to “account number” do not imply a purely numeric value. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. Or even with the same GRCP – e.g. the GRCP has encountered a failure on its original order and has issued a replacement order on behalf of their customer, but has not allowed enough time for the first order to be fully cancelled at the LRCP. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. Openreach term these as “dialogue services”, but other network/access providers may not use this terminology23 Openreach EMLC service returns the CP who is directly paying for the broadband service (e.g. BT Wholesale), and do not expose the RID of the retail CP. Hence the intentional use of “CP” rather than “RCP” in this paragraph [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. Openreach EMLC service returns the CP who is directly paying for the broadband service (e.g. BT Wholesale), and do not expose the RID of the retail CP. Hence the intentional use of “CP” rather than “RCP” in this paragraph. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
8. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
9. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
10. E.g. for WLR any number port request is included with the “transfer order” raised in Openreach, and Openreach raise any required NPOR/NPAR in the background. In other cases, the GRCP will raised a port request into their voice provider who will raise the NPOR/NPAR. In other cases, the GRCP may raise the NPOR/NPAR themselves. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
11. Openreach will consolidate transfer of WLR and any associated number port into a single managed cease notification for the downstream LP. The network functions of Sky and TalkTalk may do similar for their downstream retail divisions or retail CPs. With the move to VoIP, CPs are increasingly required to handle porting separately from Openreach. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
12. The terminology of “cancel own” and “cancel other” was used in the former NOT+ process and rules, and is thus recognised by many in the industry, and retained in this industry process. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
13. The LRCP may delay creation of a “customer order” until they receive notification of triggering of the switch order. So we’re being careful not to use the term “order” where for some RCPs, there may not be an “order” at this point in time. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
14. For some Openreach order scenarios, the RCP send a Customer Requested Date (CRD) based on minimum lead time (or customer choice of CRD if later), Openreach start “left to right” planning and then provide a Customer Commitment Date (CCD). E.g. “KCI2 Assure” for installation of FTTP in a brownfield location where there may be blocked ducts or other access issues. This is often referred to as “Commit on CCD”.

To ensure that the LRCP can inform their customer that a switch order has been placed, the GRCP cannot delay the sending of the OTS switch order until Openreach provide commitment (which can take days or longer), and thus the GRCP will send their CRD as the migration date in the switch order. If Openreach commit to a date that is close to the CRD, there is no need to send an amendment to the OTS switch order – it is expected that the GRCP will inform the customer of any delays to their provision and the switch.

It is likely that other ACPs and supply chains will have similar engineering related delays. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)