

The Timico Policy in Respect of the provision of 999/112 access to the Emergency Services.



Background

As a VoIP service provider offering 999 access to the Emergency Services Timico is required to comply with the General Conditions of Entitlement, as notified by Ofcom under Section 48 of the Communications Act 2003.

This document outlines the Timico approach in respect of achieving compliance in respect of this Act. As part of its commitment to the provision of these services Timico undertakes to provide evidence of this compliance within five working days following any written request by Ofcom.

Information provided to customers

A VoIP service differs to a normal fixed line telephone service in that

- a) the service may cease to function in the event of a power cut or failure to the broadband connection,
- b) a caller might be away from their normal location when using the service and therefore any address information that Timico might supply the Emergency Services in respect of a specific telephone number could be wrong.

Timico addresses these issues by providing clear and readily accessible information:

- a) at the point of signature in the Customer Agreement Form,
- b) in its point of sales brochures and marketing material including on its website and
- c) in its Terms and Conditions of Use.

Internal and external salespersons are also trained to know that they need to inform a customer during the sales process be it face to face or over the telephone.

Customers are also offered labels that can either be printed off at the customers' premises or shipped with any telephone handsets that clearly inform the reader of the limitations of the service in respect of access to Emergency Services.

Location information when dialling Emergency Services

Because of the location independent nature of VoIP, when calling the Emergency Services operator the operator will ask the caller to confirm the address of their current location. Timico as standard provide the address supplied by the customer during the initial sign up for the service but the caller may actually be at a different address when making the call.

Reliability of the network

As has been stated, a VoIP call may not function during a power cut or a failure in the broadband service. The reliability of the broadband network is not under the control of Timico as it is provided by another serviced provider.

For the aspects of the network that are directly under the control of Timico great care is taken to engineer stability and operational redundancy to the service. A Risk Assessment in respect of the vulnerabilities of the Timico owned network is performed in a separate document entitled "Reliability Assessment of the Timico VoIP Network" available on request from the Director of Customer Services.



Number Portability

Timico currently offers number portability between itself and BT with the following exceptions: 0203, 0844, 0845, 0870, 0871 and 0800. It is, however, the policy of the company to try and accommodate any porting request made by a customer subject to suitable agreement with the alternative service provider. Any changes to this will be advised in future revisions of this document.

General Conditions – Specific Requirements

GC 3 – Proper and effective functioning of the network.

GC3 states that a Publicly Available Telephony Service (PATS) operator must take reasonably practicable steps to maintain to the greatest extent possible: a) the availability of the PATS offering if there is major network breakdown and b) uninterrupted access to the emergency organisations.

Ofcom also believes that all communication providers should expect to carry out a formal risk assessment for providing 999 access. This risk assessment should include:

- A model of the network elements used to provide that service
- Defining a set of performance parameters.
- Identifying which of the elements are most likely to fail, or suffer a degraded service.
- Determining which elements are critical in relation to the end-to-end service performance.
- Determining and implementing a risk mitigation strategy.

A copy of the Timico version of this risk assessment entitled “Reliability Assessment of the Timico VoIP Network” available on request from the Director of Customer Services.

Timico also uses Service Level Agreements where possible with our VoIP partners to ensure the highest possible levels of service at all times. Copies of these agreements where available can be obtained through the Timico Director of Customer Services.

GC 4.1 – Emergency Call Numbers.

A Timico end user can call 112 or 999 free of charge.

GC 4.2 – Emergency Call Numbers.

To the extent where technically feasible, caller location information is provided for emergency organisations handling the calls.

GC 5 – Emergency Planning.

Nominated staff are available to assist emergency organisations and government bodies during disaster situations. Relevant enquiries should be directed in the first instance to The Director Of Customer Services on 08700949 600.

GC 8 – Operator Assistance, Directories and Directory Enquiry Facilities.



Directory enquiries are accessible via a number of competitive services available in the market place. Timico facilitates connection to these services but does not recommend any one.

All Timico VoIP customers are currently ex directory.

Operator Assistance can be obtained by dialling 100 and is provided by a third party.

GC 10 – Transparency and Publication of Information.

Clear and up-to-date information on prices and tariffs as well as easy read versions of our standard terms and conditions related to the access and use of our services are available on request.

GC 12 – Itemised Bills.

Subscribers are provided with online itemised billing at no extra cost.

GC 13 – Non-Payment of Bills.

Timico takes proportionate and not unduly discriminatory action to subscribers who have not paid their bills. The company provides due warning in order to avoid both service interruption or disconnection due to non-payment.

GC 14 –

Requires voice providers to inform their consumer or small business customers of any feature that differs from a normal “Publicly Available Telephony Service”, specifically in relation to **service reliability, Emergency Calls and number portability.**

This is covered at the beginning of this document.

GC 15 – Special Measures for End Users with Disabilities.

VoIP technology is still in a relatively early stage of maturity and as such not all measures that are currently available to disabled end users might be in place for a VoIP solution. Timico undertakes that it will work with end users with disabilities to satisfy their VoIP telephony requirements on a case by case basis.

GC 16 – Provision of Additional Facilities.

Timico’s VoIP service provides support for tone dialling or dual-tone multi frequency operation and Calling Line Identification facilities.

Trefor Davies

Technology Director

