

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN FIRE ALARM MIGRATIONS: QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Introduction

There are literally thousands of monitored fire alarms in South Australia, and many of them are connected via Telstra's Voice Grade Dedicated Line (VGDL) service.

Telstra is working to migrate these alarm services onto more up-to-date technology. The migration project requires an enormous amount of work and co-operation between Telstra, the South Australian Metropolitan Fire Service (MFS) and your Alarm Service Provider. Everything has to run smoothly so that your existing fire alarm services are migrated without interruption.

Why is this happening?

Telstra's VGDL service runs on a network that was first launched in 1969 and maintaining it is no longer practical.

We've already let you know that the VGDL service connecting your fire alarm is scheduled to be withdrawn. Before the VGDL service is shut down, the MFS and Telstra want to make sure your fire alarm service has been successfully migrated onto a newer network with primary and back-up connections.

What is the new service?

In simple terms, a new Fire Line service will be connected to the fire alarm at your premises. This line will communicate with MFS headquarters via their purpose built network, which was developed after a competitive tendering process run by the MFS.

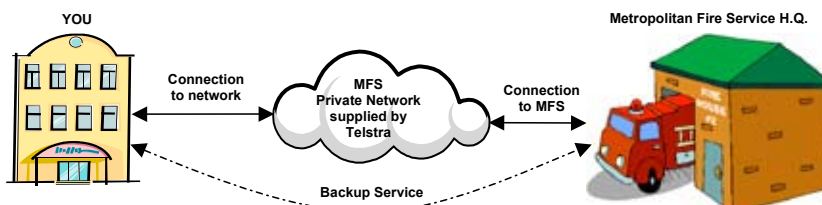
To achieve this new connection, you'll need to have two new connection components:

- An IP WAN port (**network service**); and
- An IP WAN standard connection using the public switched telephone network (**site service**).

Collectively, these two Telstra provided services will be known as your Telstra Fire Line service.

As the MFS has already advised, you will need to replace your current Romteck Alarm Transponder Unit with new Alarm Signalling Equipment.

The replacement monitoring solution provided by the MFS also includes a backup service based on a wireless connection over the Telstra Next G™ Network. This component will be incorporated into the new Alarm Signalling Equipment that will be installed at your premises by your Alarm Service Provider.



What do I need to do to get my new Fire Line service connected?

1. Immediately complete the attached Fire Line service application form and follow the instructions for returning it to us. We need to have this form by 30 April 2010.
2. Once we write and confirm that your new Telstra Fire Line service has been installed, contact your Alarm Service Provider to organise installation of your new Alarm Signalling Equipment and cutover to the new service.

What other obligations do I have?

Statutory requirements and regulations govern whether you must have a monitored fire alarm, and relate to the installation and maintenance of monitored fire alarms in South Australia. You're responsible for complying with these requirements. If your fire alarm service is disconnected you should notify any persons (including, without limitation, any tenants, co-tenants, landlords or neighbours of the site or any fire brigades or fire alarm service providers) who may be affected by the disconnection of the fire alarm service.

What costs can I expect?

Upfront Charges from Telstra

If you apply for your new Fire Line service before 30 April 2010, we'll waive the installation and network connection fees. If you wait until after 30 April 2010 however, you will need to pay these fees when you upgrade your fire alarm service. The fees are set out in Telstra's Our Customer Terms.

Monthly Charges from Telstra

The monthly fee for your new Telstra Fire Line service will be \$106.43 per month excluding GST. In some cases this may be the same or even less than the monthly fee for the old VGDL service.

The new monthly fee will appear as a single line item on your Telstra bill, beginning from when your new fire alarm monitoring service becomes active. Your old VGDL service and monthly charge will stop on the same date.

Equipment and Installation Charges from your Alarm Service Provider

Once we've installed your new Telstra Fire Line service, your Alarm Service Provider will be able to install your new Alarm Signalling Equipment and connect it up.

They should be able to tell you the cost of this work when you contact them to arrange it.

Can I buy this service from another provider?

No you can't. The MFS has chosen Telstra as the provider of its new fire alarm connectivity solution via a formal tender process. This solution operates on a private network that cannot be accessed by other providers.

What happens to my old VGDL service

When you apply for this new service, you'll also give the MFS and Telstra authority to cancel the old VGDL service once your new fire alarm monitoring service is up and running.

I have several VGDL fire line services. Do I have to upgrade them all?

Yes. The attached covering letter lists the VGDL services which are recorded as fire alarm services for your business. You need to complete an application for each of these services, so that you continue to receive a monitored fire alarm service.

If you don't need any of the services listed, you should get in touch with us and cancel them.

When do I need to get my application(s) back to you?

You need to return all your applications for replacement fire line services as soon as possible – and no later than 30 April 2010, otherwise your alarm monitoring may be interrupted while the replacement monitoring solution is being deployed. Plus you'll save on installation and connection fees if we receive your application by this date.

What if I don't send back a completed application in time?

Telstra will have the right to cancel your VGDL fire alarm service if we don't receive your application for a new Fire Line connection by 30 April 2010. You will get written notice 30 days before the disconnection.

If you apply for the new service after 30 April 2010, you'll need to pay installation and network connection fees as set out in Our Customer Terms.

Remember, statutory requirements and regulations govern whether you must have a monitored fire alarm and relate to the installation and maintenance of monitored fire alarms in South Australia. You're responsible for complying with these requirements. So if your fire alarm service is disconnected you'll need to notify any persons (including, without limitation, any tenants, co-tenants, landlords or neighbours of the site or any fire brigades or fire alarm service providers) who may be affected by the disconnection of the fire alarm service.

What happens after the application forms are submitted?

As we mentioned above, Telstra will need to implement two components for each new fire line service – the network service and site service. Once we process your application, we'll get in touch and arrange a time to install your new site service. The network service connection will be done at the exchange.

When both components are ready, we'll let you know in writing. You can then contact your Alarm Service Provider about getting the new Alarm Signalling Equipment installed and connected.

What should I do when Telstra lets me know my new Fire Line service has been connected?

Once you receive written confirmation that your new Telstra Fire Line service has been connected, you should contact your Alarm Service Provider about getting your new Alarm Signalling Equipment installed.

Your Alarm Service Provider will make an appointment to install your new Alarm Signalling Equipment (including components provided by MFS to support the backup service) and cutover to the equipment and the Telstra Fire Line service to the replacement monitoring solution.

You need to make these arrangements as soon as possible. If the installation and cutover isn't completed within 60 days of your connection confirmation letter being received, Telstra will have the right to cancel your VGDL service after 30 days' written notice.

Will my monitored fire alarm keep working while the replacement solution is being set up?

Back in December we advised that all VGDL fire alarm services would be withdrawn after 30 April 2010. However we can keep your service connected for longer if:

- a) We receive your application for a new Fire Line Service to replace each VGDL service before 30 April 2010; and
- b) Your new Alarm Signalling Equipment is installed and cutover within 60 days of us confirming that your new Fire Line service was connected.

If either of these two conditions aren't met, we reserve the right to cancel the VGDL service after 30 days' written notice.

When will billing for my VGDL service stop?

We'll stop billing you for your VGDL service from the day your service is cut over to the replacement monitoring solution; or when you arrange to have the service disconnected.

So if you're changing over to the replacement monitoring solution, your VGDL charges will cease on the same day that your replacement monitoring solution billing begins. This is all explained in the 'Fire Line Service Application Form'.

Or, if you have a VGDL fire alarm monitoring service that you don't need any more, you can simply contact us to arrange for it to be cancelled. We'll stop billing you from the agreed cancellation date.

If you receive notice that your VGDL service is going to be cancelled by Telstra, billing will cease from the cancellation date. (This could happen if you don't submit your Fire Line application form by 30 April 2010; or if you don't have your replacement monitoring solution implemented within 60 days of us confirming your new Fire Line service is connected.)

Can I use an existing telephone line instead?

No, the Telstra Fire Line service is a new and dedicated network service. However we'll waive the installation and network connection fees, as long as you apply before 30 April 2010.

What is Telstra's 'Our Customer Terms' (OCT)?

Our Customer Terms is Telstra's Standard Form of Agreement, setting out the terms and conditions on which Telstra provides certain products and services to its customers. It's been lodged with the Australian Communications and Media Authority, in line with telecommunications legislation.

Your new Fire Line service will be provided on the terms of the attached application form and Telstra's Our Customer Terms.

Who is my Alarm Service Provider?

Your Alarm Service Provider is the company you use for your alarm system's installation and maintenance.

I haven't received any recent information from the MFS – what should I do?

The MFS and Telstra keep separate records of the fire alarm services that they support. In some cases, these records can get out of sync, so that either Telstra or the MFS has different details on the services they're supporting.

The MFS wrote to all of their fire alarm customers in early March 2010 with detailed instructions for upgrading to the new fire alarm services. If you didn't get their letter or if you've misplaced it since then, you should contact the MFS urgently and confirm that they have accurate details for all of your monitored fire alarms. They'll also be able to send you another copy of their instructions.

Where can I get more information?

If you need to find out more from Telstra, you can use the contact details on the attached cover letter.

To get in touch with the MFS you can email: enquiry@MFS.sa.gov.au