To: **Telecare device manufacturers**
Telecare service providers

Copy: **Telecare service commissioners**

Date: 24 November 2022

Dear Colleague

TEC Sector call to action on the results of telecare device testing

At a recent Ministerial led Roundtable at the Department of Health and Social Care, there was a call to action for all equipment solution suppliers and service providers within the Technology Enabled Care sector. This call to action was to complete telecare device testing and to share test results with telecare industry and sector stakeholders, particularly those test results that focus on the use of analogue-only devices on digital networks.

The meeting brought together representatives of telecare service providers, device manufacturers and Alarm Receiving Centre (ARC) / TEC Monitoring Services platform suppliers, and there was a broad commitment to share testing data, with service providers keen that equipment suppliers offered more information.

I am now asking you for the results of tests you already hold or plan to undertake in the near future and would be grateful for your assistance.

While analogue devices were not designed to be functional on digital networks, the reality is that existing analogue equipment is likely to continue to be used for some time given the cost, time and resources required to replace existing analogue with digital devices.

The output of this exercise is intended to be used as a guide for commissioners and service providers to help with understanding the risks of deployment of different types of analogue devices over digital networks. It is also to give insight on how best to mitigate any issues, to give confidence to the sector when procuring new telecare equipment and ultimately to help to avoid placing individuals at risk during the digital migration period.

Most current feedback on the use of analogue-only alarms is from laboratory tests that were carried out over two years ago, and the digital transformation landscape has changed significantly since then, with many Telecommunications Providers stating at least 50% of their core network is now digital. While the priority is for testing to focus on analogue devices via digital networks, data for digital devices on digital and cellular networks is also welcomed.

This request from TSA is endorsed by the Department of Health and Social Care, the Local Government Association, the Housing Learning and Improvement Network, TEC Cymru, the Digital Office for Scottish Local Government and Digital Health and Care Northern Ireland.

1. Submission of test data from testing already conducted by manufacturers / service providers

Existing test results carried out by Manufacturers and Service Providers should be shared with TSA (via ALLIP@tsa-voice.org.uk) by 16th December 2022, ideally in the format set out in **Annex A** , otherwise in whatever format the data has been recorded in and TSA will work with manufacturers and service providers to collate the data in a consistent manner.

2. Submission of test data from testing not yet conducted by manufacturers and service providers

Where manufacturers have not yet undertaken testing, please indicate what testing you will be undertaking by 16th December 2022– the request is that tests are completed for all existing products across all networks represented in a test environment (BT, Virgin, KCom, Talk Talk, Sky, Vodafone, Zen). Results should be recorded and collated (as set out in **Annex A**) and shared with TSA by 20th January 2023. Laboratory testing slots are available on a first come, first served basis so please get in touch with the various sites to book testing days (see **Annex B** for contact details).

3. Submission of real-world data from alarm calls handled within the last six months by Service Providers

Service providers should provide real-world evidence by extracting a report from their ARC / TEC platform which details a minimum of six months of anonymised call history. The requested fields are:

- Device/Scheme ID
- Date of call
- Time of call
- Equipment Type (e.g. Tynetec Advent XT / Tunstall Lifeline Vi etc..)
- Line Type (e.g. BT Digital / Talk Talk Analogue etc…)
- Alarm Description (e.g. Fall Detector / Pendant / Mains Fail etc…)
- Call Reason (e.g. Handshake failure / Test Call / Auto Answer etc…)

It is understood that some Service Providers may not hold some aspects of the data requested above (e.g. Line Type) but should still submit the data that is available. Copies of the data should be sent to the TSA (via ALLIP@tsa-voice.org.uk) by 16th December 2022.

Initial analysis of test data collated by the TSA will be publicly available via the TSA website and will also be shared with the partners listed above and via TSA marketing channels. It is intended that any future test data will be used to update the existing analysis and shared via those same channels. It is our intention that any data received by the 16th December will be collated, analysed, and shared by 6th February 2023.

If you have any queries about the content of this letter, please direct those queries to ALLIP@tsa-voice.org.uk

Yours Sincerely,

Alyson Scurfield
Chief Executive
TEC Services Association CIC (TSA)

Alice Ainsworth
Deputy Director
Adult Social Care Tech & Data
Department of Health and Social Care

Annex A - Format of Test Results

Recording test results in a similar format to this will enable easy collation and analysis of results. A link to a recording sheet is embedded at the bottom of this page. Should any manufacturer or service provider require any guidance or support in preparing for the testing sessions, please contact the TSA via ALLIP@tsa-voice.org.uk

Legend	
R	Alarm Voice call fails to connect or close down successfully
A	Alarm Voice redials and connects, or call connects but quality is poor or requires in-call control
G	Alarm Voice connects successfully with clear two-way voice

TESTING COMBINATIONS			Device 1			Device 2					
Communications Provider	Network	Alarm Receiving Centre / TEC Monitoring Platform	Protocol 1			Protocol 1			Protocol 2		
CP 1	SOGEA	ARC 1									
	FTTP	ARC 1									
	SOGEA	ARC 2									
	FTTP	ARC 2									
	SOGEA	ARC 3									
	FTTP	ARC 3									
CP2	SOGEA	ARC 1									
	FTTP	ARC 1									
	SOGEA	ARC 2									
	FTTP	ARC 2									
	SOGEA	ARC 3									
	FTTP	ARC 3									
CP 3	SOGEA	ARC 1									
	FTTP	ARC 1									
	SOGEA	ARC 2									
	FTTP	ARC 2									
	SOGEA	ARC 3									
	FTTP	ARC 3									
CP 4	SOGEA	ARC 1									
	FTTP	ARC 1									
	SOGEA	ARC 2									
	FTTP	ARC 2									
	SOGEA	ARC 3									
	FTTP	ARC 3									

Download a blank template for this results matrix here

Annex B - Test Locations

There are currently 5 locations in the UK where testing can be carried out.

Operator / Provider	Networks	Link to Info	Link to Book	Address
Openreach	• BT Consumer • BT Enterprise • Sky • Talk Talk • Vodafone • Zen	https://www.openreach.com/upgrading-the-UK-to-digital-phone-lines/industry/digital-services-test-lab	https://www.openreach.com/upgrading-the-UK-to-digital-phone-lines/industry/all-ip-test-lab-form	Kelvin House 123 Judd Street London WC1H 9NP
Virgin	• Virgin	https://www.virginmedia.com/corporate/about-us/ip-voice-lab	IPVoice@Virginmedia.co.uk	Building 300, Wharfedale Road, Winnersh Triangle, Wokingham RG41 5TZ
BT	• BT Consumer • BT Enterprise	https://www.bt.com/about/special-services	btdigitalvoice@bt.com	BT Labs, Barrack Square, Martlesham Heath, Martlesham, Ipswich IP5 3RE
KCom	• KCom		onenetworkenquiries@kcom.com	37 Carr Lane Hull HU1 3RE
Talk Talk	• Talk Talk Consumer • Talk Talk Enterprise		https://forms.office.com/r/XyjzqXJHUg	Brinell House,. Brinell Drive, Irlam, Manchester. M44 5BL