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NBN And Emergency Lift Phones, Alarms, And Other Fixed Diallers

Emergency phones like those in Lifts, and Security Alarm Systems with back to base monitoring are also affected by the NBN changeover and cut-offs, therefore building owners and managers need to start considering what action they need to take, even if the NBN is not as yet active in your area, it likely won't be that far off, so you'll need to start planning for the changeover, it's also beneficial to change earlier, cheap PAYG mobile plans are more economical for standby emergency and idle telecommunications than PSTN line rental. As for Alarms, many B2B providers supply you with a SIM that includes all signal calls in your monthly B2B plan.

This process is not as daunting or expensive as it might sound, for example, with Lifts, you're not going to need lengthy and costly service calls, or have downtime to change over the panels, because the system stays the same, it's only the external part, on how it talks to the outside world, that changes. These systems are intelligent, with a lot of electronics behind them, as part of that, the system is pre-programmed by the Lift company on who to call in the event of emergency call button activation. These systems usually have a phone lead from them plugged into a telecommunications outlet on a normal PSTN phone line, just like your home phone, as this example shows. In the current set up, when the call button is pressed, it automatically dials the pre-determined phone number which usually is the Lift or Security company, it's exactly like if you pick up a normal phone and hit a stored number memory button. Most Alarm Systems with B2B monitoring operate the same way, all you need to do is make sure it's plugged into a working PSTN line.

And therein lies the problem, the PSTN line, it is the existing copper network, which NBN switches off 18 months after the area is NBN ready. To get around this we go wireless - with 3G or 4G dialler gateways, and please, do not consider using VoIP for such critical infrastructure, somebody's life, maybe your own, may one day depend on that call button on a Lift, or panic button on your Alarm getting through to someone, help can't come if your internet is down, or high jitter because your Internet is lagged out, or worse, it's on FTTN technology.

This example shows how easy this is overcome, in most cases, you can do it yourself, you will need to purchase a SIM Card compatible with a 3G network - you're only after voice service - not data, get a good PAYG plan with a well established Telco (so you know they'll be there in years to come) of your choice, you could use pre-paid, but I don't advise it, you don't want to be cut off for out of credit, or past expiry and didn't read the renewal warning Email your Telco hopefully sent you (and as touched on earlier, if this is for B2B Alarm, talk to your B2B company first). Once the SIM is inserted into the dialler, unplug the phone lead coming from your Lift Control going to the phone outlet, and plug it into the socket at the rear of the 3G dialler, power it up, and you're good to go.

Some units may however have their phone cabling hard wired, in this case, you'll need to seek out a Registered Cabler to sort it out for you. Incidentally, the dialler doesn't have to be located in or next to the Lift Control, if the existing PSTN line is currently wired to an MDF, the dialler can be connected there, or anywhere in between for convenience, or security.

The most commonly used dialler is the Ness 106-249 3G single line unit, these range in cost from around \$160 to \$200. At 16*10*4 cm, it's small enough to fit inside most Lift Control units, it also includes a backup battery capable of powering the unit for two to three hours, which although not appearing to be very long, should be ample time - let's face it, if you're stuck in a Lift, you're not going to sit around for two hours before calling for help. This unit also has an operating temp 0-50c, and is suitable for humid environments, making it the perfect fit for all Australian climates. Larger multi-line/SIM capacity units are available from other manufacturers such as Aristel.

If you're looking at this for your Security Systems, before you go out and get one of these devices have a good read of its manual, it's just possible your system is already capable of 3G services, either right now, or through purchase of a module or licence upgrade (yeah, I too despise these licence upgrade paths, someone's always out to rip us off every way they can).

If you're considering replacing or upgrading your entire Security System, you must ensure it is 3G or 4G capable if you want back to base monitoring. I'm not in the security business, but I do have a personal preference for Bosch systems, who offer a range of choices with inbuilt cellular diallers.

Blog Export: Noel's Muses, <http://blog.ausics.net/>

As for monitored Fire Alarms, you need to talk to your Fire Alarm service provider about your options, they may recommend a 3G dialler or something else.

Hope this explains what needs to change for your Lifts and B2B Alarms. If you have other fixed dialler uses, like Doors, or Taxi phones, you may get away with using VoIP/SIP, but don't take any chances with services that may potentially save a life.

Posted by NoelB at 17:53