

BT Report on progress against the Broadband Universal Service Obligation

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Comments should be addressed to:
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1. Broadband Universal Service

Overview

At BT, we are committed to improving the UK's digital infrastructure and bringing the benefits of good connectivity to all parts of the country.

The Universal Service Obligation (USO) is a legal obligation imposed on BT Plc by Ofcom which launched on 20 March 2020. As the designated Universal Service Provider for the UK (excluding Hull), BT is obliged to provide a minimum broadband service of 10Mbps to those who request if the following conditions are met:

- no service which fulfils the USO criteria is available from BT or another supplier;
- no suitable improvements are planned within 12 months via a public procurement programme.

BT is required to upgrade a premises' connectivity to meet the USO criteria at no cost to the customer if the necessary works cost less than £3,400, with costs are met by BT/industry rather than the Government. In practice, upgrades typically result in building gigabit-capable, full-fibre connections.

Where the necessary works cost more than £3,400, customers have the option to pay any additional costs. Following discussions with Ofcom, in October 2021 BT implemented a new approach to help reduce the cost to customers of network build for some of these USO premises. Further information on the new approach can be found on the BT [website](#).

By the end of March 2022, BT had built a USO connection to over 4,600 premises, with more than 2,300 further builds in progress.

This report is our fourth broadband USO progress update, covering the period between 1 October 2021 and 31 March 2022.

2. Performance Update

2.1 Number of Requests

Broadband USO Requests	Oct 21	Nov 21	Dec 21	Jan 22	Feb 22	Mar 22
Number of broadband USO Requests received by the USO Helpdesk	792	379	213	460	661	695

2.2 Number of Ineligible Requests

Reason Requests deemed ineligible*	Oct 21	Nov 21	Dec 21	Jan 22	Feb 22	Mar 22
i. Existing BT product that already meets the broadband USO criteria	234	164	103	174	272	271
ii. Existing product belonging to another company that already meets the broadband USO criteria	133	87	52	82	72	75
iii. Broadband network build supported by a government scheme that is due to be completed in the next 12 months	45	9	14	53	92	82

In some cases, a customer might be deemed ineligible as they fall into category (i), but further checks result in this being revised. In these instances, the customer might be reallocated to ii or iii resulting in occasional 'double counting'. Where a customer is ineligible because they fall into both category ii and iii, they are typically allocated to category iii.

2.3 Number of Confirmed Orders

USO Order Requests*	Oct 21	Nov 21	Dec 21	Jan 22	Feb 22	Mar 22
Number of Confirmed Orders	12	54	20	22	14	48
i. Which will lead to the build of a new broadband network free of charge (i.e., below the cost threshold)	8	12	10	15	10	37
ii. Which require a customer to contribute to the costs (i.e., above the cost threshold)	4	42	10	7	4	11

2.4 Number of USO Requests responded to within 30 days

Time taken to respond	Oct 21	Nov 21	Dec 21	Jan 22	Feb 22	Mar 22
Number of eligible requests responded to within 30 days	202	200	75	251	316	270
Number of eligible requests responded to after 30 days	0	1	0	0	0	0

Note - ineligible requests are not included as they are all responded to within 30 days

2.5 Time between order confirmation and delivery of service

Provision of Broadband Services*	Oct 21	Nov 21	Dec 21	Jan 22	Feb 22	Mar 22
Number of Broadband Services delivered	209	249	223	174	139	124
Number of Broadband Services delivered between 0-6 months	3	6	0	0	0	0
Number of Broadband Services delivered between 6-12 months	62	54	23	15	18	10
Number of Broadband Services delivered between 12-18 months	143	184	180	136	66	55
Number of Broadband Services delivered between 18-24 months	1	5	20	23	55	59
Number of Broadband Services delivered after 24+ months	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	0

*"Broadband Services" means both a broadband connection and a service provided to a customer on a network built under the USO Conditions. This table therefore does not reflect the total number of services available to customers (total homes passed), which is much higher.

Time taken to deliver calculated as the number of months from the build request date where applicable, or the order request date where build request date is not applicable.

2.6 Complaint and Dispute Resolution relating to the Broadband USO

Complaint and Dispute Resolution*	Oct 21	Nov 21	Dec 21	Jan 22	Feb 22	Mar 22
Number of Complaints Received by BT	11	5	11	17	17	12
Number of Complaints Resolved by BT	4	0	0	0	4	0
Number of Complaints Not Resolved by BT	5	9	11	23	11	16
Number of Complaints referred to the ADR Scheme	2	1	5	2	1	2

*"Complaint" means an expression of dissatisfaction made by a USO Customer to BT related to either: (i) matters relating to BT's obligations under these Conditions; (ii) the complaint-handling process itself; or (iii) the level of customer service experienced by the USO Customer

Numbers reflect when actions were completed, as there is some delay in resolving complaints and may not always total up e.g., February's complaints may be resolved in March.

One entry can have multiple actions recorded against it, e.g., it is marked as not resolved in one month, and then is later resolved, meaning that the total actions sum up to more than the total complaints.

Complaints are marked as resolved or not resolved when BT has dealt with them based upon a customer's acceptance/rejection of BT's response. Complaints that are still being dealt with are not included in the figures for those Not Resolved.

2.7 Quality of Service Measurement for Broadband USO Services

Quality of Service Measurement	Oct 21	Nov 21	Dec 21	Jan 22	Feb 22	Mar 22
Supply of Broadband Services (days)*	351	234	285	442	396	359
Fault Rate per Access Line**	1.5%	2.7%	1.8%	2.5%	1.5%	2.0%
Fault Repair Time for Broadband USO Services (hours)***	37.93	100.56	158.29	35.88	153.68	30.43

Large fluctuations are likely due to the very low numbers of lines involved. In the period October 2021 – March 2022, the UK experienced several adverse weather events which caused an increase in fault rates compared with the previous reporting period.

*Number of days from the Confirmed Order to Broadband Provision (average days for broadband USO services provided in that month). This is services provided to customers in the reported month who have placed a confirmed build order.

**Number of faults per circuit that month in use for Broadband USO Services.

***Number of clock hours from the first report of a fault to resolution of that fault (average hours for all broadband USO services with faults in that month)

3. Next Steps

For further details about the broadband USO please see the BT web page and our FAQs at www.bt.com/uso

BT will publish this report every six months. The next update is due by 30 October 2022.

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