

## **Consultation: Resilience guidance**

Pretty much all the assurances I've read about the potential loss of landlines in favour of VoIP calls make the incorrect assumption that in the event of a power cut one can simply make calls - including emergency calls - from a mobile.

That is very much not the case outside towns and cities because as soon as the power goes, so do the mobile transmitters because they have no backup facilities. Once the power's gone - and that's a very regular occurrence outside towns and cities because of the ubiquitous use of overhead power cables - the landline is literally the only means available of making emergency calls or communicating with the outside world.

When the power goes down, the router ceases to work and there is no internet. Without the internet there is no means of making VoIP calls, and therefore no means of calling emergency services. And, as I have explained, no mobile signal either.

Power cuts are common outside towns and cities because overhead power lines are the norm, rather than underground cables. All it takes is a bird strike, a piece of farming equipment or some bad weather, and down come the power lines. It happens frequently, and every time it happens there's no internet, no VoIP and no mobile signal because the transmitters are also down.

One possible but partial solution is to require mobile companies to provide several hours of battery backup cover for the inevitable power cuts. This should have been made mandatory by Ofcom years ago, but if landlines are to disappear it's now absolutely critical to protect the lives of those who live outside towns and cities.