# Failed Analogue Calls

Version 1.0 – December 2024

# Contents.
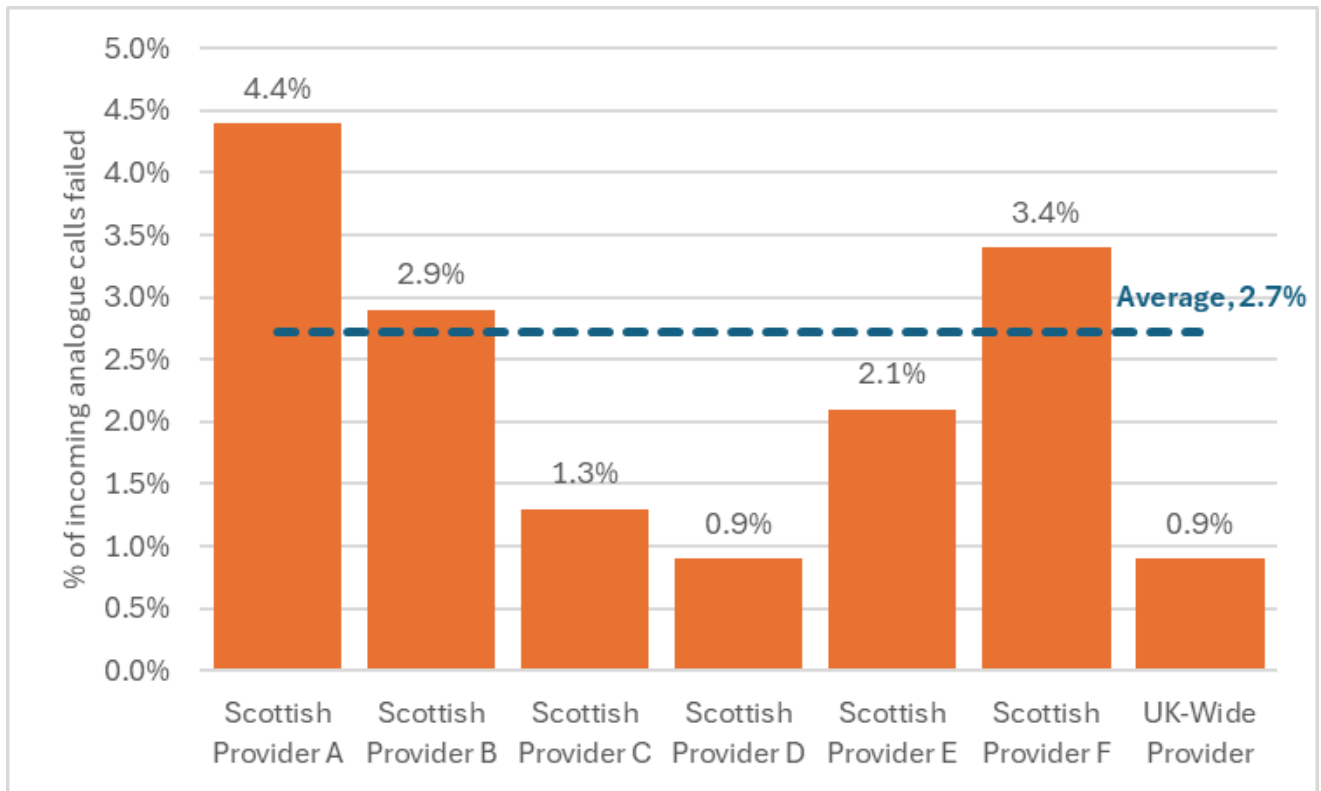
# Failed Analogue Calls

Telecare Service Providers (TSPs) are at different stages of their migration to digital telecare. Until this migration is completed analogue telecare alarms remains in use, meaning there is an ongoing risk of alarm calls from these analogue devices failing.

There has been some recent coverage of failed call rates seen elsewhere in the UK. This summary presents an update on the current failed call figures being seen in Scotland.

One of the advantages of the Shared ARC Platform is that there is much simpler access to data, including on failed calls. The figure below shows the number of failed calls seen for 6 Scottish TSPs using the Shared ARC Platform, for comparison figures are also shown for another user of the Skyresponse solution that has a UK-wide customer base.

As can be seen, **the average analogue call failure rate is 2.7%**. Figures vary between TSPs, from 0.9% and 4.4%.

These figures relate to analogue alarm calls only. The calls were received in September and October 2024. A total of 63,447 analogue calls were received during this period. All failed calls are included in the percentages shown (ie not just failures to connect on a first attempt).



**FIGURE 1: ANALOGUE CALL FAILURE RATES FOR SHARED ARC PLATFORM CUSTOMERS - SEPT AND OCT 2024**

## Why do Figures Differ?

As shown, there is variation in the failure rates being seen by TSPs. Testing completed on analogue telecare equipment has shown that failure rates can be influenced by a range of factors which explains this variation. These factors include:

- The alarm equipment being used
- The alarm protocol being used (eg TTOld, TT92, BS8521)
- The telephone line type and telephone provider being used by the customer
- The ARC solution the calls are answered
- The type of telephone line type used by the ARC

## No Cause for Complacency: Call Failures are not Equally Spread

Although the headline percentage of analogue calls that are failing is relatively low TSPs should continue to roll out digital alarm equipment as quickly as possible.

Digital Office analysis of call data has shown that telecare users can experience very different failure rates. This variation is likely to be due to the range of factors outlined above.

Looking at the detail behind the headline call failure rate shows that the low overall failure rate comprises a mix of user experiences. Many users have alarm devices that experience no, or a very low number of, failed calls over the reporting period. However, there are also a number of users who have alarms that experience very high numbers of failed calls. Clearly any service user with an alarm in this latter group will be placed at additional risk.

The Digital Office recommends that TSPs regularly monitor failed analogue calls to check for any service users experiencing an unacceptably high level of failures. Any service users in this situation should be prioritised in a TSP's digital telecare rollout planning.

High failed call rates can also be caused by equipment failures or incorrect configuration. In some cases the overall fail rate can be increased by a single alarm device making very large numbers of failed calls. Common causes of this behaviour include:

- Faulty grouped scheme equipment, which in some cases can fail and make hundreds of failed calls a day.
- Equipment configured with the wrong analogue protocol – for example, alarm devices that are configured to use STMF will make repeated attempts to connect to the Shared ARC Platform (or any other non-Tunstall ARC) before switching to an alternative DTMF-based analogue protocol.

Again, regular monitoring of failed calls will allow TSPs to identify equipment that is faulty or wrongly configured, and prioritise its reconfiguration or replacement.

## Checking For Service Users Experiencing High Call Fail Rates

To check for service users experiencing high levels of failed calls TSPs need to run a report on their ARC solution that:

1. lists incoming analogue calls
2. shows which calls failed to connect correctly
3. shows the alarm identifier for each call

TSPs can then use this information to identify any alarms with high numbers of failed calls.

Instructions on how to run this report on the Shared ARC Platform are appended to this document.

**For further support examining your call failure rates, please contact the [Digital Office](#).**

# Appendix: Running a Report on Failed Analogue Calls on the Shared ARC Platform

**Instructions for Shared ARC platform users on how to run this report:**

- Log into the Skyresponse admin portal (https://admin.skyresponse.com/adminportal)

- Select "Alarm History" from the menu on the left of the screen.

- Select "Table Data" and from the dropdown menu, ensure that the following fields are selected (others can be selected if required):
  - Alarm code
  - Identifier
  - Time of alarm
  - Organisation
  - Sub Organisation
  - Transmitter

- Select the period the report needs to cover using the "Time period" drop down menu

- Press the "Export" button at the top right of the screen. This will download an Excel file to your browser.

**The following instructions are how to extract the required information from Excel. Other packages such as PowerBI could also be used, if preferred**.

- Open the downloaded file in Excel.

- (Depending on your security setting, you may need to select "Enable Editing" from a ribbon across the top of the screen).

- Filter the Transmitter product name field to show only entries starting with "Alarmbridge". To do this:
  - Select the small down arrow next to "Transmitter product name" column
  - Select "text filters", then "Begins with".
  - The following popup box will be shown.
  - Enter "Alarmbridge" in the box as shown. Then press "OK".
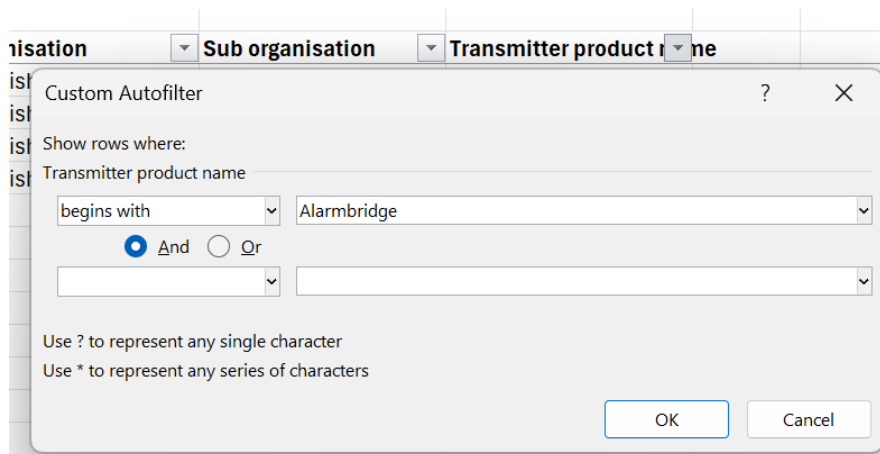
The spreadsheet now lists all analogue alarm calls.

Failed alarm calls have an Alarm Code of "924".

- **To show just failed calls, use the same filter approach as above.**
  - Select the small down arrow next to "Alarm Code" column
  - Select "number filters", then "Equals".
  - The following popup box will be shown.
  - Enter "924" in the box as shown. Then press "OK".
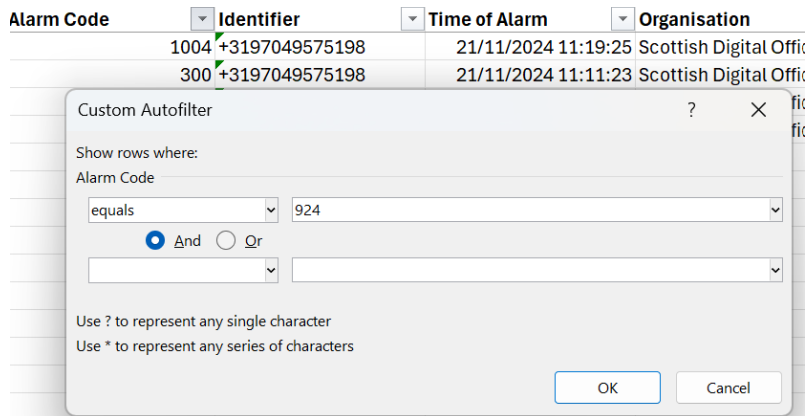


The "Identifier" column in list now shown can be used to identify any alarms experiencing repeated failed calls.

**If you still have a long list of calls at this point, a relatively quick way to spot alarms with repeated failed calls is to sort the list by Identifier. To do this:**

- Select all the rows of data from the line that lists the Column Names ("Alarm Code", "Identifier", etc) down to the last row of your data.

- From the "Data" menu at the top of the screen, select "Sort".
  - The following popup box will be shown.
  - In the "Sort by" menu select "Identifier". Then press "OK".
  - The data should now be sorted by Alarm Identifier, rather than chronologically, meaning repeated failed calls experienced by a single alarm will be seen together.
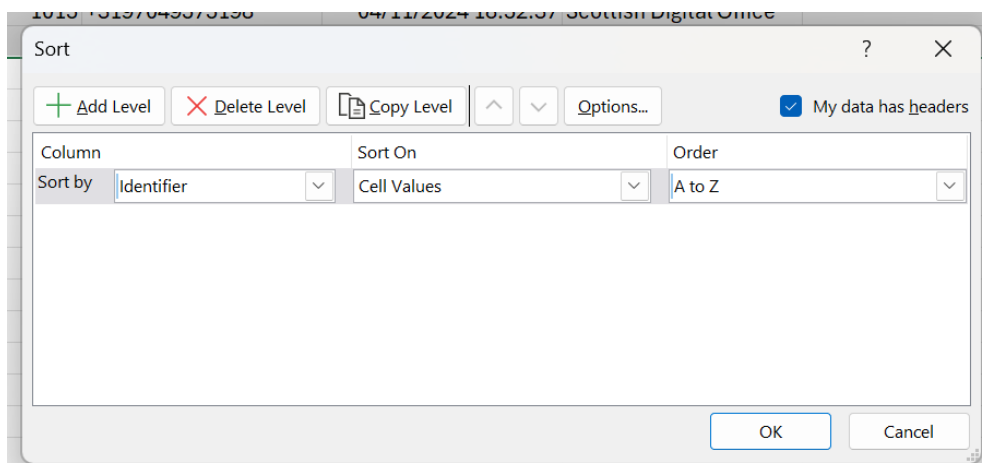


**6-** Failed Analogue Calls

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