

MIGRATION · FAILURE MODES · 2026

Switching Phone Providers: What Actually Goes Wrong

Most changeovers are boring, which is the goal. The ones that are not fail on nine specific things. Eight of them cost you an afternoon and an apology.

Nine failures, one of them irreversible. Ranked: (1) someone cancels the old service to move it, the number is released, quarantined, and gone for good; (2) a monitored alarm or medical alert stops reporting silently, discovered weeks later; (3) the port is rejected on a legal entity name mismatch and the date slips; (4) the number range cannot be partially split, found late; (5) an early termination charge nobody asked for in writing; (6) cutover on a Friday, so a problem gets the weekend to run; (7) call flow rules were never documented before being replaced; (8) staff were not shown the new system; (9) the old service was cancelled before the new one was verified. Prevention for all nine fits on one page.

The short version

#	Failure	Consequence	Reversible?
1	Someone cancels the old service in order to move it	The number is permanently lost	X No
2	A monitored alarm or medical alert stops reporting	Silent, and discovered when it is needed	~ Yes, but the gap already happened
3	Port rejected on entity name mismatch	Date slips, sometimes past a hard deadline	✓ Yes
4	Number range cannot be partially split	Plan rebuilt late, some numbers stranded	✓ Yes, expensively
5	Early termination charge discovered afterwards	An invoice nobody budgeted for	X Not really
6	Cutover scheduled on a Friday	Any problem gets 65 hours to run	✓ Yes, on Monday
7	Call flow rules never documented before replacement	Calls quietly go to the wrong place for months	✓ Yes, once noticed
8	Staff never shown the new system	Workarounds harden into permanent habits	✓ Yes, harder later

■ Also worth knowing

Device	What you see	What is actually happening
Back-to-base alarm	Arms, beeps, lights up normally	The monitoring centre is receiving nothing
Medical alert pendant	Pendant works, base unit responds	No signal leaving the building
Fire panel dialler	Panel appears healthy	Not reporting, a compliance and insurance problem as well as a safety one
Lift emergency phone	Nothing visible at all	The button in a stuck lift now does nothing
EFTPOS on a line	Declines or fails to settle	At least this one announces itself immediately
Gate and door intercom	Visitors cannot get in	Discovered at the worst possible moment, always
Fax	Appears to send, does not arrive	Still genuinely used in legal, medical and freight

The pattern across all nine

Not one of them is a technical problem. Every single failure on this list is a **process or communication** failure, something not asked, not written down, not walked, or not said to the right person. That is genuinely good news, because it means none of them requires expertise to prevent. It requires a list and someone using it.

■ Questions the full guide answers

- ☐ Can I lose my business phone number when switching providers?
- ☐ What actually breaks during a phone changeover?
- ☐ Why do port requests get rejected?
- ☐ Does porting my number end my contract with the old provider?
- ☐ When is the best day to cut over?
- ☐ How do 1300 and 1800 numbers fit into a changeover?
- ☐ What are the slow failures that do not show up on cutover day?

This is the summary. The guide has the detail.

Every point above is worked through in full on our site, with the Australian context, the numbers and the exceptions. If you would rather talk it through, call **1300 663 222** or visit vocphone.com/about/contact-us.