

Press release

OPTICAL FIBRE

Altitude Infra and XpFibre commit to a rehabilitation plan for some of their FttH networks

Paris, 22 November 2022

At a time when deployments and subscription rates are surging, elected officials, operators and users regularly report issues they are having with FttH networks to the regulator, either directly or via the “[J’alerte l’Arcep](#)” platform: users’ line disconnected when a new subscriber is added, dilapidated street cabinets, temporary cut-offs, connection issues...

Altitude Infra and XpFibre have notified Arcep of their rehabilitation plans for a portion of their networks that are the main subjects of user complaints

Arcep has been collecting data on the quality of FttH network operations in France since April 2021. The collected data highlight a situation that differs considerably depending on the network: a small number of networks, representing around 2% of all fibre lines in Metropolitan France, and located chiefly in the Ile de France region, have a rate of failure that is well above average.

In accordance with the commitments made by the sector in September 2022 (see inset), these infrastructures will be the target of dedicated rehabilitation plans carried out by the concerned infrastructure operators: Altitude Infra and XpFibre have notified their plans to Arcep to this end.

Altitude Infra has committed to rehabilitating 70 shared access points (SAP), notably in the Essonne and Calvados, covering 33,000 premises, by March 2023

On 23 September 2022, Altitude Infra notified a rehabilitation plan for the most problematic SAP in the former Covage network, which Altitude Infra took over in September 2021, to “elevate these networks to the standard of legacy Altitude Infra networks”¹.

This action plan includes the rehabilitation of 70 shared access points and their service areas covering around 33,000 premises. It will focus on reengineering shared access points (SAP) and bringing them up to code, rehabilitating all of the intermediate cabinets and optical connection point (OCP), the labelling of cabinets and cables; replacing multipurpose cabinets with the installation of OCP dedicated to connection, and realigning the information contained in the company’s information system with the reality in the field. Liaison meetings will be held regularly with operators on the methods and progress of rehabilitation work on these SAP. The action plan will be carried out between June 2022 and March 2023.

XpFibre has committed to rehabilitating 900 shared access points (SAP), chiefly in Ile-de-France and the Rhône Calvados, covering 400,000 premises, by the end of 2024, along with other SAP with operating issues, as needed

On 19 October 2022, XpFibre notified Arcep of an action plan designed to “resolve problems identified on its networks”², particularly line set-up failures and outages.

This action plan includes:

- The reinforcement of line set-up and operating procedures, notably to improve the handling of set-up failures and network maintenance;
- The rehabilitation of 900 shared access points (SAP), covering around 400,000 premises, including the physical rehabilitation of the SAP and its service area (optical connection point (OCP), intermediate cabinets, SAP-OCN fibre supply...), ensuring the information contained in the company’s information

¹ Excerpt of the letter from Altitude Infra to the Arcep Chair, notifying their plan

² Excerpt of the letter from XpFibre to the Arcep Chair, notifying their plan

system is consistent with the reality in the field, and reviewing network architecture when necessary (offloading, division of “1000 SAP”³, etc.);

- As an adjunct, the specific rehabilitation of shared access points (aside from the 900 already identified) with operating issues, as required (rewiring, ensuring IS-field info consistency, offloading...). A preliminary list of some one hundred SAP has been established, but could evolve depending on reported issues and needs.

The rehabilitation timetable set by XpFibre will extend over the next two years, with a target of completing the rehabilitation of a quarter of the SAP in question in 2023 and the remaining three quarters in 2024.

Monthly liaison meetings will be held with Arcep, on the one hand, and with commercial operators, on the other. XpFibre will also contact concerned local authorities and inform them in advance of rehabilitation plans, and the progress of indicators in their municipality.

Arcep will be vigilant in ensuring these rehabilitation plans are brought to completion, and will perform regular checks on the progress and quality of these networks

The Authority continues to closely monitor the quality of fibre networks deployed in France. It will therefore track the implementation of the plans being proposed by XpFibre and Altitude Infra, and particularly the coordination of rehabilitation operations with commercial operators, and the restoration of service for every subscriber once the work is complete. Arcep will work in concert with operators to monitor the progress in the quality of these networks' operation.

Arcep will also closely monitor the successful implementation of action plans for improving the quality of FttH operations

Aside from these rehabilitation plans aimed at specific networks, operators continue to work on identifying and rehabilitating shared access points in need of repair on all networks, in accordance with Arcep's supplementary action plan to improve the quality of FttH network operations, published in November 2021, and the commitments made by the sector in September 2022 (see inset).

³ Architecture specific to shared access points installed by operators on the first FttH networks deployed, concentrating at least 1,000 lines, composed by multiple distribution bays and multiple operator equipment bays, enabling cross-connection from any distribution-side connection point to any operator-side connection point.

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Actions taken by operators, under Arcep's aegis, to improve the quality of fibre network operations

To resolve the growing number of reports from users on issues they are encountering on fibre networks, Arcep departments have been chairing the "FttH Operations" working group since April 2019, bringing together every operator with a view to improving FttH network operating conditions.

As part of this work, in March 2020 operators adopted an initial "Quality roadmap" for implementing technical and contractual changes, after which the Authority published a supplementary action plan [to improve the quality of FttH network operations](#), which had three main strands:

- Better monitor service calls thanks to the introduction of an inter-operator tool for real-time notification of service calls and automatic analysis of the photographic record (e.g. by using artificial intelligence);
- Limit the number of sub-contractors and improving the training given to service technicians;
- Bring the most dilapidated infrastructures up to code.

Following through on this supplementary action plan, operators and digital infrastructure sector representatives made a commitment in late September 2022, to the Minister responsible for electronic communications and digital affairs, and to the Arcep Chair, in four areas:

- Introduction of a seal of approval for technicians and enterprises attesting to technicians' skills;
- Strengthening on the spot checks of service calls thanks to the implementation of e-service calls and having commercial operators share their technical service call work schedules on a weekly basis (on some 20 public-initiative networks to begin with);
- Better monitor connection quality thanks to a path for improving the photographic record of service calls to make them more useable;
- Rehabilitation of dilapidated infrastructures, which includes not only the network's physical restoration but also realigning operators' information networks with the reality in the field.

Arcep will continue to be vigilant in monitoring and ensuring the concrete and rapid completion of these actions, and compliance with the commitments made.






Arcep at a glance

The Regulatory Authority for Electronic Communications, Postal Affairs and Print Media Distribution (Arcep), a neutral and expert arbitrator with the status of independent administrative authority (IAA), is the architect and guardian of internet, fixed and mobile communications and postal networks in France.

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