Avaya Demystified
by Walt Medak

Q: We have a customer that has a Definity version 8. They called me the other day and said they can't dial 911. After doing some testing with them, they can't dial 911 or 9,911 and apparently they have never been able to. I looked at the ARS Analysis and there are entries for both 11, which should work if someone picks up the phone and just dials 911, and 911, which would be for someone dialing 9911. I've tried a couple things like changing the call type from "svcl" to "emer", but that didn't help. I'm not an ARS expert so I'm not sure what else to look at.

A: I took a look at the programming, and yes, both scenarios of callers dialing 911 or 9911 are covered. The "*Call Type*" field being either "*svcl*" or "*emer*" in this case wouldn't make any difference as far as the call being routed out of the system. There is another option that I like to use called "*alrt*". This allows you to program a button on a phone, or phones, that will flash and display which extension is making the call. Those buttons are often programmed on a receptionist or security guard's phone so they can assist emergency responders when they arrive.
The rest of the programming looked correct. The "11" entry in ARS points to a route pattern that inserts a 9 before the call goes out which is correct. Without having a login that allows you to do a trace to watch the call progress and go out the trunk, it's difficult to troubleshoot what might be happening. About the only other thing I can suggest is making a change on the trunk group. On the second page of the trunk group is an option called "*Suppress # Outpulsing*". Sometimes the Definity will append a # to the end of a number being sent out over a trunk. That can cause problems with some providers. I can't see if that's happening without being able to trace a call, but it's worth changing that option to "*y*" and making a test call. If that doesn't work, I would call the provider and ask them to tell you why the call isn't going through.

Q: We are in the process of replacing our old Audix voicemail system with a new, non-Avaya system. We've had the new system up and running with a few test users for a while and have most of the issues worked out. One of the last remaining things we would like to address is the amount of time it takes for the new voicemail to answer when you call to check your messages. The Audix would usually answer in less than a full ring. The new system can take almost two rings. Is there any way to cut that time down?

A: Unfortunately, the difference is probably just due to the different way that the new voicemail is integrated with the Definity. Your old Audix used what was called DCIU integration. This was basically a direct serial connection between the processor interface board in the Definity and the Audix. The integration information would be sent almost instantly over that link when a call was placed to voicemail. Your new voicemail uses what is called Mode Code integration. With Mode Code, when a call is placed to voicemail the call is actually picked up right away, but the caller still hears ringing while the Definity sends a number of DTMF digits to the voicemail system. Those digits are what tells the voicemail system what mailbox to use, what type of call it is, etc... Sending those digits takes considerably more time than the fraction of a second for that information to be sent over the DCIU link. There are some timers related to the Mode Code digits that can be adjusted, but you probably couldn't gain more than a few milliseconds here or there before you begin to have a negative impact on the connectivity. I don't think it will take much time after you cut over to the new system that the extra ring will just become "normal" to your users.

And as always, if you have any questions please call 800-452-6477, or visit us at www.medak.com.