

# National Relay Service—Quarterly Performance Report

Quarter 3, 2017–18

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Contents

[Background 4](#_Toc517360931)

[Cost of delivering the NRS 4](#_Toc517360932)

[Service level performance: relay service provider 4](#_Toc517360933)

[Service level performance: outreach service provider 5](#_Toc517360934)

[Successful inbound connections (by inbound service access type) 7](#_Toc517360935)

[Outbound call minutes relayed (by inbound connection type) 8](#_Toc517360936)

[Calls to emergency services relayed through the NRS 9](#_Toc517360937)

[Helpdesk enquiries 10](#_Toc517360938)

Tables

[Table 1. Cost of delivering the NRS 4](#_Toc517349136)

[Table 2. Service level performance: relay service provider 5](#_Toc517349137)

[Table 3. Service level performance: outreach service provider 6](#_Toc517349138)

## Background

The National Relay Service (NRS) providers are required to submit activity and performance data to the Department of Communications and the Arts (the Department) each quarter. These reports are used to review the performance of the NRS providers against agreed service levels as well as provide data and information about how the NRS has been used in the quarter.

The Department then reports on:

* the cost of delivering the NRS on a quarterly basis
* the performance of the NRS providers against agreed service levels, and
* information on how the NRS is used, including the number of successful inbound connections, the volume of outbound call minutes generated by each service access option, the number of calls to emergency services and the volume of different types of contact with the NRS helpdesk.

This quarterly report provides regular transparency of ongoing costs and the NRS providers' performance in delivering the NRS.

## Cost of delivering the NRS

The annual cost of delivering the NRS varies, as the relay service component is affected by the number of call minutes relayed during the financial year. The cost of providing the NRS is funded from the telecommunications industry levy paid by eligible telecommunications carriers.

The cost (GST-inclusive) of providing the NRS in the 2017–18 financial year to date is outlined in the table below:

Table 1. Cost of delivering the NRS

|  | Quarter 1 | Quarter 2 | Quarter 3 | Quarter 4 | Total YTD |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Relay Service | $7,208,321.12 | $7,489,567.97 | $7,488,181.55 |  | $22,186,070.64 |
| Outreach Service | $336,124.50 | $336,124.50 | $336,124.50 |  | $1,008,373.50 |
| Total | $7,544,445.62 | $7,825,692.47 | $7,824,306.05 |  | $23,194,444.14 |

## Service level performance: relay service provider

The relay service provider’s performance in 2017–18 is measured monthly against the following service levels:

* **Service level 1 (a):** at least 85 per cent of calls are answered by a call taker within five seconds of reaching the relevant answering point for the call.
* **Service level 1 (b):** at least 95 per cent of calls are answered by a call taker within 10 seconds of reaching the relevant answering point for the call.
* **Service level 2:** no more than two per cent of calls abandoned after leaving the Interactive Voice Response (IVR) or being presented to the call routing queue (monthly average).
* **Service level 3:** no less than 95 per cent raw accuracy of words (excluding video relay). Raw accuracy is measured through monthly staff assessments of relay officers.

The relay service provider’s reported performance in the 2017–18 financial year to date against these service levels is outlined in the table below:

Table 2. Service level performance: relay service provider

| Month | Service level 1(a) | Service level 1(b) | Service level 2 | Service level 3 |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| July 2017 | 96.07% | 96.65% | 0.33% | 97.79% |
| August 2017 | 96.12% | 96.7% | 0.37% | 97.19% |
| September 2017 | 94.62% | 95.5% | 0.9% | 97.68% |
| October 2017 | 94.06% | 95.05% | 1.08% | 97.44% |
| November 2017 | 92.43% | 93.65% | 1.27% | 97.51% |
| December 2017 | 92.71% | 93.87% | 1.34% | 97.56% |
| January 2018 | 93.16% | 94.13% | 1.26% | 96.5% |
| February 2018 | 92.6% | 93.54% | 1.54% | 96.99% |
| March 2018 | 91.76% | 92.71% | 2.8% | 97.6% |

The relay service provider has reported not fully meeting all service levels in quarter 3, 2017–18. Service Level 1(b) was not met in January, February and March 2018, and Service Level 2 was not met in March 2018.

The Department considers the performance of the relay service provider to not be consistent with its obligations under the Relay Services Agreement.

## Service level performance: outreach service provider

The outreach service provider’s performance in 2017–18 is measured monthly against the following service levels:

* **Service level 1:** the service contractor personnel must answer greater than 85 per cent of all telephone calls from helpdesk users during the hours of operation of the helpdesk within 90 seconds. Any call other than a call that is ended by the user hanging up within 5 seconds from the first ring tone of the call is included in measurement of compliance with this Service Level.
* **Service level 2:** the service contractor personnel must acknowledge greater than 85 per cent of all enquiries received through public NRS email addresses or forms from the NRS website or from helpdesk users within four hours where the enquiry is received before 2 pm (AEST) on a business day or otherwise by 12 noon (AEST) on the next business day.
* **Service level 3:** the service contractor personnel must resolve greater than 85 per cent of all enquiries received from helpdesk users by telephone (that are not able to be resolved while on the call), website or email, that it is able to resolve without input from the Commonwealth or the relay service provider or a third party within two business days.
* **Service level 4:** the service contractor personnel must resolve greater than 85 per cent of all complaints received during the month within the timeframes required under the agreement (including the complaint handling policy) for the type of complaint.

The outreach service provider’s reported performance in the 2017–18 financial year to date against these service levels is outlined in the table below:

Table 3. Service level performance: outreach service provider

| Month | Service level 1 | Service level 2 | Service level 3 | Service level 4 |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| July 2017 | 99.78% | 100% | 97.93% | 95% |
| August 2017 | 99.81% | 100% | 98.40% | 100% |
| September 2017 | 100% | 100% | 97.12% | 100% |
| October 2017 | 99.8% | 100% | 99.13% | 100% |
| November 2017 | 99.63% | 100% | 97.95% | 100% |
| December 2017 | 99.73% | 100% | 99.29% | 100% |
| January 2018 | 99.8% | 100% | 100% | 100% |
| February 2018 | 99% | 99.05% | 97.62% | 100% |
| March 2018 | 99.31% | 100% | 98.23% | 100% |

The outreach service provider has reported fully meeting all service levels in quarter 3, 2017–18.

The Department considers the performance of the outreach service provider to be consistent with its obligations in the Outreach Services Agreement.

## Successful inbound connections (by inbound service access type)

Inbound connections are made by users of the relay service—either someone with a hearing and/or speech impairment or someone wishing to contact a person with such an impairment.

The graph below shows a month by month breakdown of the successful call connections for each NRS inbound service access type for the 2017–18 financial year to date.

The chart shows a monthly breakdown of successful inbound calls for each NRS service access option for the 2017-18 financial year to date.
  
The service access options are listed along the Y axis and the number of successful inbound connections is listed along the X axis. Colour coding has been used to breakdown the amount of successful inbound calls for each month.

The key outcome is that a long-term trend continues where captioned relay is overwhelmingly the technology used most for inbound calls, followed by internet relay, the internet relay app and SMS relay. Teletypewriter (TTY) use is relatively low compared to other technologies.

319,848 successful inbound connections were made to the NRS in quarter 3, 2017–18; an amount not significantly less than the quarter average for the year to date (322,627).

The captioned relay service continues to experience high usage with 231,570 successful inbound connections made during quarter 3, 2017–18. Over 72% of all successful connections to the NRS in quarter 3, 2017–18 were made by captioned relay handset users; a proportion consistent with the quarterly average of successful connections of 72.6% for the year to date.

## Outbound call minutes relayed (by inbound connection type)

The following graph shows a breakdown of the outbound call minutes for each inbound connection type for the 2017–18 financial year to date.

The chart shows a monthly breakdown of the number of call minutes relayed by each of the NRS service access options for the 2017-18 financial year to date.
  
The service access options are listed along the Y axis and the number of call minutes is listed along the X axis. Colour coding has been used to breakdown the amount of call minutes for each month.

The key outcome is that total monthly call minutes remain stable. The greatest technology contributions come from captioned relay and internet relay users.  Teletypewriter (TTY) users are the lowest contributors.


1,698,869 call minutes were relayed in quarter 3, 2017–18; an amount not significantly greater than the quarter average for the year to date (1,670,381).

## Calls to emergency services relayed through the NRS

All NRS calls (except for the video relay service, which has limited operating hours) requesting emergency services are given priority access to a relay officer within the relay service provider’s internal system, before being connected to either a Triple Zero operator or directly to the appropriate emergency service organisation for TTY 106 text emergency calls.

The following graph illustrates the ways in which NRS users have accessed emergency services in the 2017–18 financial year to date:

The chart shows a monthly breakdown of calls to emergency service organisations for each call type for the 2017-18 financial year to date.

The call types are listed along the Y axis and the number of calls is listed along the X axis. Colour coding has been used to breakdown the amount of calls for each month.

The key outcome is that emergency service calls are mostly made to 'triple zero', and mostly come from users of captioned relay, internet relay and SMS relay technologies. Teletypewriter (TTY) users mostly make emergency calls to the '106' number, but the 'triple zero' is also used by TTY users, albeit less frequently.

388 calls to emergency services were relayed in quarter 3, 2017–18, an amount not significantly greater than the quarter average for the year to date (371).

## Helpdesk enquiries

The outreach service provider provides a helpdesk support function and handles complaints and feedback about the service.

The graph below illustrates a breakdown of the types of helpdesk enquiries received in the 2017–18 financial year to date:

Helpdesk enquiries

The chart shows the quarterly breakdown of helpdesk enquiries received for the 2017-18 financial year to date.

The key outcome is that helpdesk enquiries not actually relating to NRS use continue to be the greatest number of calls received. The most legitimate enquiries relate to business introduction and support, client introduction, and client maintenance and support.

There were 1,803 helpdesk enquiries for quarter 3, 2017–18; an amount not significantly greater than the quarter average for the year to date (1,685).

‘Not for us’ calls (1,098), business introduction and support (234), client introductions (182), and client maintenance and support (161) remained the primary functions undertaken by the helpdesk this quarter.