

Department of Communications and
the Arts

National Relay Service

Quarterly Performance Report
Quarter 1, 2015-2016

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Quarter 1, 2015-16

Background

The NRS providers are required to submit activity and performance data to the Department of Communications and the Arts (DoCA) each quarter. We use these reports to review and manage the delivery of the NRS.

DoCA reports on:

- the cost of delivering the NRS on a quarterly basis;
- the performance of the NRS providers against the service levels, key performance indicators and key activity measures outlined in the NRS Plan; and
- information on how the NRS is used, including inbound and outbound call volumes and the service options that callers use to access the NRS.

This provides greater transparency on the NRS providers' performance and ongoing costs in delivering the NRS. Information provided in quarterly performance reporting will be consolidated into the annual reporting requirements that are due at the end of the financial year.

Cost of delivering the NRS

The annual cost of delivering the NRS varies, as the relay service component is based on 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 annual funding allocation for the provision of the NRS is currently \$22 million (including GST).

The cost (GST-inclusive) of providing the NRS in Quarter 1, 2015-16 is outlined in the table below:

Cost of delivering the NRS

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Total YTD
Relay service	\$5,152,548				\$5,152,548
Outreach service	\$1,047,549				\$1,047,549
Total	\$6,200,097				\$6,200,097

Service level performance: relay service provider

The relay service provider’s performance in 2015-16 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 performance against these service levels is outlined in the table below:

Service level performance: relay service provider

	Jul-15	Aug-15	Sep-15
Service level 1(a)	95.46%	95.45%	95.27%
Service level 1(b)	96.09%	96.02%	95.89%
Service level 2	0.78%	0.75%	0.69%
Service level 3	97.28%	97.73%	97.67%

The relay service provider fully met all service levels in Quarter 1, 2015-16. This is the second full quarter for which service level 1 (b) has been achieved, reflecting the ongoing work by the relay service provider to improve compliance with this service level. The Department considers the performance of the relay service provider to be generally consistent with its obligations in the Relay Services Agreement.

Service level performance: outreach service provider

The outreach service provider’s performance in 2015-16 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 help desk users during the hours of operation of the Help Desk 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 4 hours where the enquiry is received before 2 pm (AEST) on a business bay 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 2 business days; and
- **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 performance against these service levels is outlined in the table below:

Service level performance: outreach service provider

	Jul-15	Aug-15	Sep-15
Service level 1	99.96%	99.46%	99.56%
Service level 2	100%	100%	100%
Service level 3	99.55%	99.55%	98.46%
Service level 4	100%	92.86%	91.67%

The outreach service provider fully met the requirements of the service levels in Quarter 1, 2015-16, generally performing well above the minimum thresholds for each service level. The Department considers the performance of the outreach service provider to be generally consistent with its obligations in the Outreach Services Agreement.

Outreach service provider performance against Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and Key Activity Measures (KAMs)

In addition to the service levels, the performance of the outreach service provider in 2015-16 is measured against a number of Key Performance Measures (KPIs) and Key Activity Measures (KAMs).

The outreach service provider's performance against these measures, along with associated annual targets, are outlined below:

Outreach service provider performance against Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

	Q1 2015-16	Q2 2015-16	Q3 2015-16	Q4 2015-16	Actual Activity YTD	KPI Annual Target	% Actual Activity against Anticipated
Number of participants at awareness sessions	860				860	1,500	57%
Number of promotion/conference events	2				2	8 (National)	25%
Number of training sessions	106				106	380	28%
Number of orgs commencing Relay Service Friendly Program (RSFP)	9				9	70	13%
Number of orgs completing the training step within RSFP	8				8	23	35%
Number of contact centres involved in Hearing Awareness Week (HAW) 2014	295				295	250	118%
Number of contact centre agents involved in HAW 2014	50,198				50,198	30,000	167%

Levels of participation in awareness sessions has continued to grow this quarter with 57% of the annual target for 2015-16 now met. Outreach delivered a total of 64 Awareness Sessions, some of which were to large groups of participants e.g. 180 students attended the NRS presentations at University of Melbourne. During Hearing Awareness Week in August, some Education Coordinators also delivered Awareness Sessions to large groups e.g. NRS partnered with the WA Deaf Society for Awareness Sessions attended by 53 participants.

Requests for training sessions have been steady, with 28% of the annual target now met. Training of TTY users accounted for 40% of training sessions delivered in Quarter 1 while NRS app training sessions accounted for more than 12% of all training sessions.

Hearing Awareness week (HAW), held annually in August, is a key opportunity for raising awareness of the NRS. The number of contact centres and contact centre agents involved in HAW outreach activities in August 2015 was sustained from the previous year, involving major business operations, local councils and government departments among the participants.

The number of organisations commencing the Relay Service Friendly Program (RSFP) was also sustained with 9 organisations commencing the program this quarter, with 8 completing the training step with the RSFP.

Outreach service provider performance against Key Activity Measures (KAMs)

	Q1 2015-16	Q2 2015-16	Q3 2015-16	Q4 2015-16	Actual Activity YTD	KPI Annual Target
KAM 1.1: # organisations with contact centre operations for the eleven phone numbers most frequently called through the NRS ¹ that are engaged with the Relay Service Friendly Program	0				0	5
KAM 2.1: # simulated NRS call journeys completed between 1 January 2016 and 30 June 2016 (to commence in early 2016)	N/A					250
KAM 2.2: New NRS branding and related guidelines completed by 28 February 2016	N/A					
KAM 2.3: Build of new NRS website is finalised by 30 June 2016	N/A					
KAM 2.4: # clickthroughs from Australia to simulated call portal (to commence in early 2016)	N/A					2,000
KAM 3.1: # participants in Training Sessions relevant to people with complex communication needs which cover mobile NRS calls including through the NRS app	21				21	40
KAM 3.2: # participants in Awareness Sessions relevant to people with complex communication needs which cover mobile NRS calls including through the NRS app	77				77	100
KAM 3.3: # TTY users introduced to mobile NRS calls including through the NRS app	14				14	115

Notes:

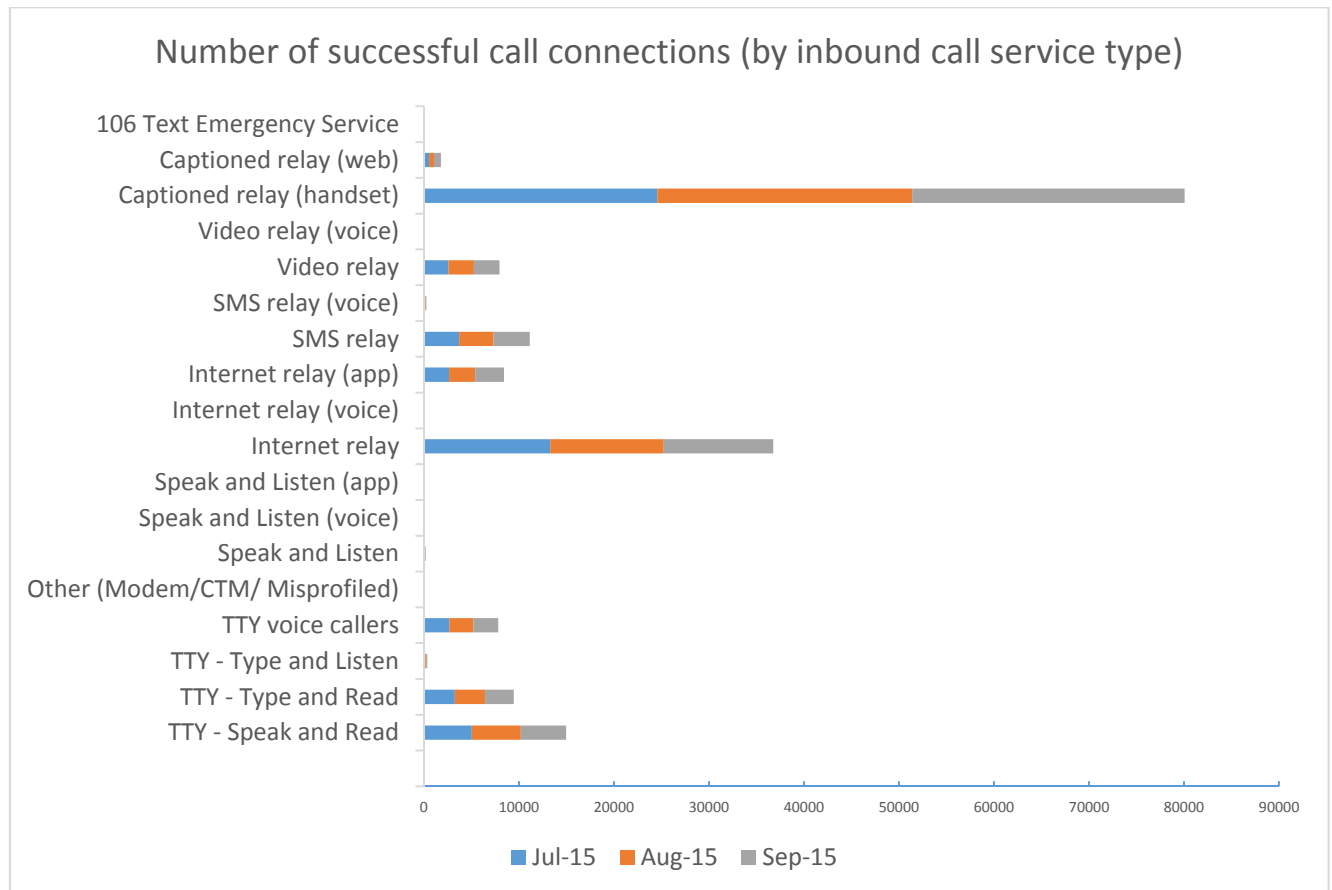
- *KAM 1.1: It is worth noting that 9 other organisations commenced the Relay Service Ready Program in Quarter 1*
- *KAM 2.1: and KAM 2.4 are reliant on the development of a NRS call simulation portal, due in early 2016, which is intended to provide a simulation environment for new users to learn and practice using the NRS to place calls.*
- *KAM 2.2: is a project that is due for completion by 28 February 2016.*
- *KAM 2.3: is a project that is due for completion by 30 June 2016.*

¹ *In the 12 months prior to the commencement of the relevant OSP year*

Successful call connections (by inbound call service 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 breakdown of the successful call connections for each NRS inbound call service type in Quarter 1, 2015-16:

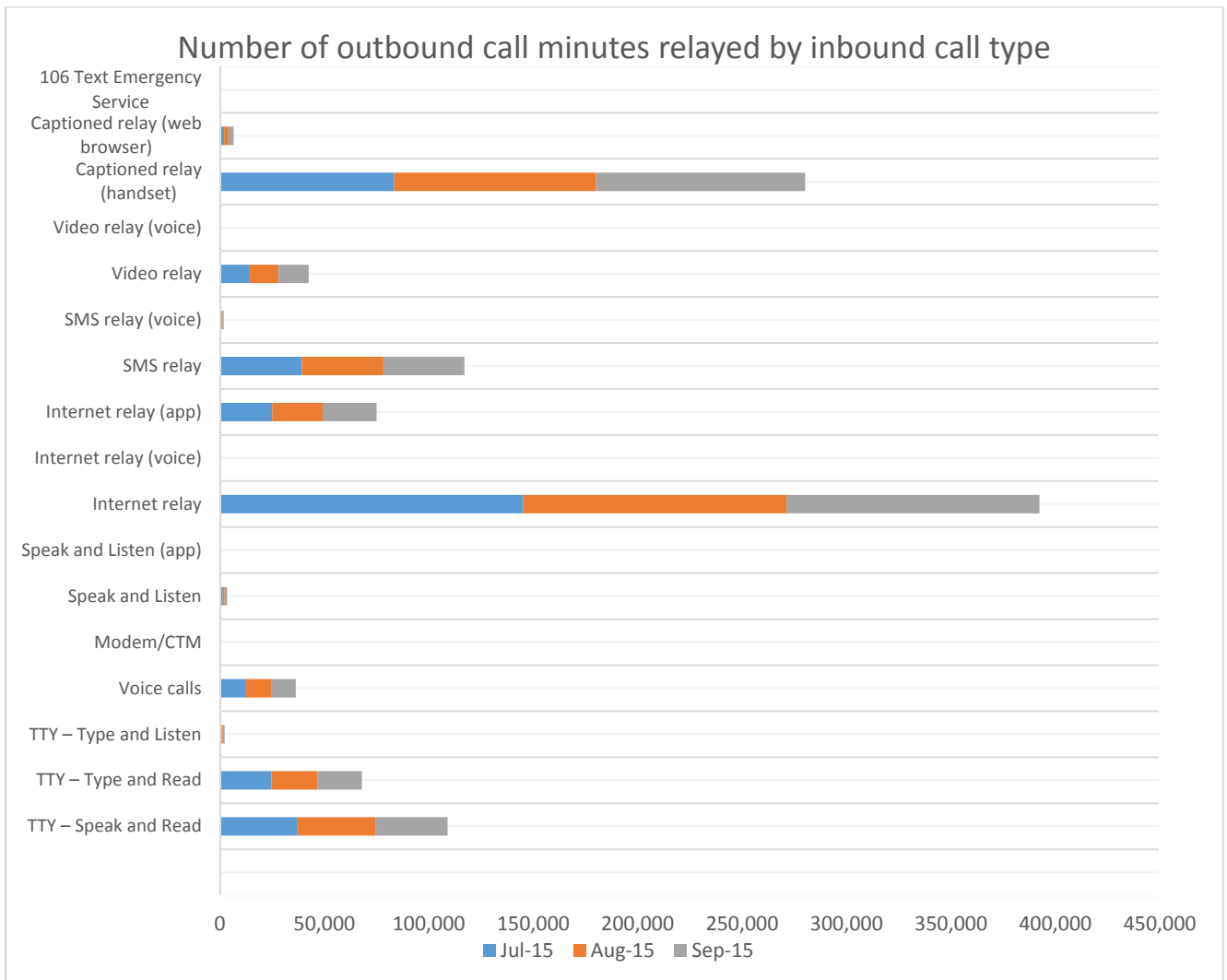


Almost 180,000 successful inbound connections were made to the NRS in Quarter 1, 2015-16, which is almost a 25% increase on the number of connections made in the previous quarter. Use of captioned relay and SMS relay continued to grow this quarter, with a small reduction in the number of successful connections by internet relay and TTY users in the same period.

Outbound call minutes relayed (by inbound call type)

Outbound calls are placed by the relay service on behalf of users, primarily to businesses, government organisations, friends and family.

The following graph shows a breakdown of the outbound call minutes for each inbound call type in Quarter 1, 2015-16:

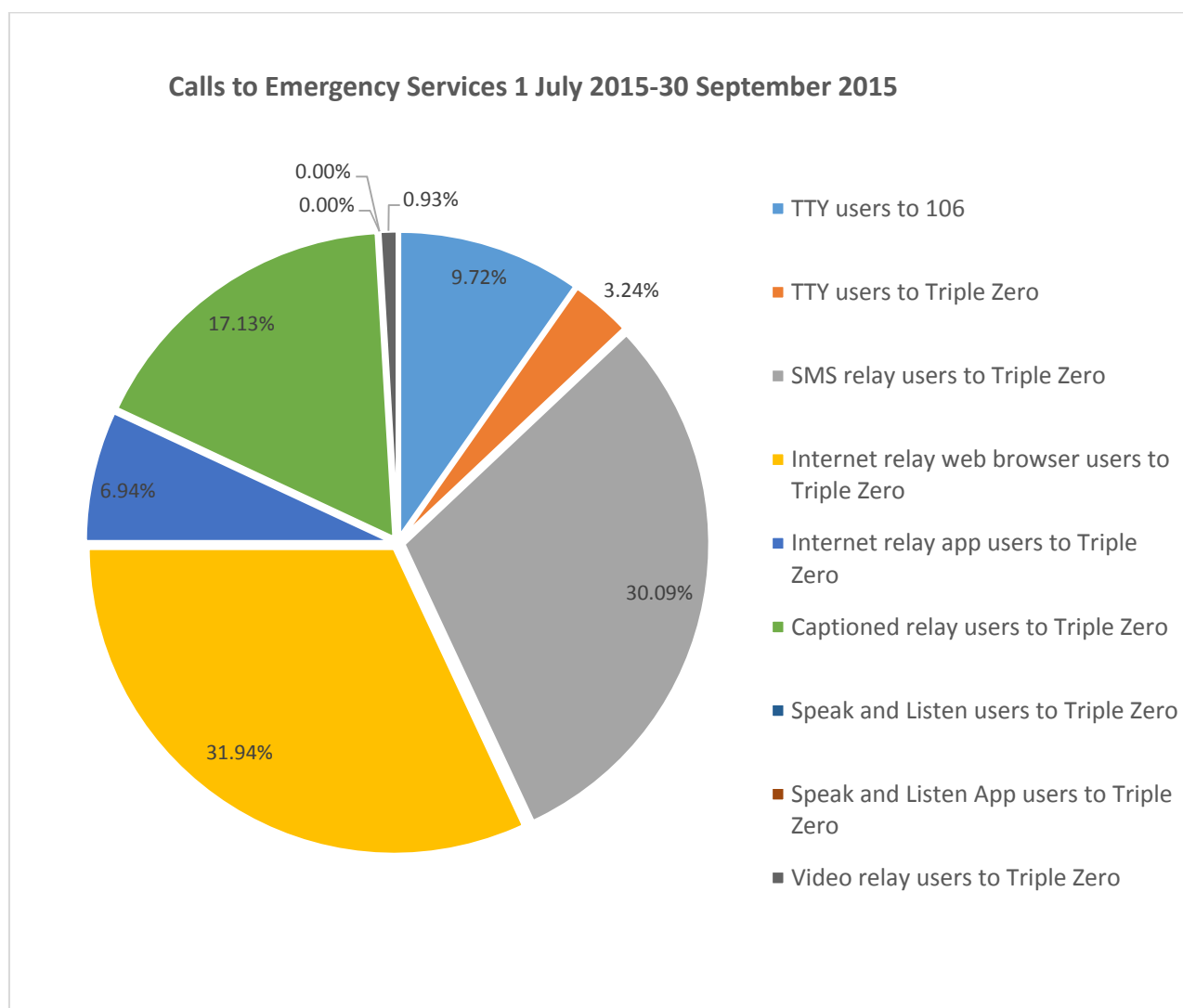


More than 1.13 million call minutes were relayed in Quarter 1, 2015-16, compared to around 1.02 million in the previous quarter. Use of internet relay (web browser and NRS app versions), SMS relay, captioned relay (handset) and TTY Speak and Read and Type and Read service access options continued to account for the overwhelming majority of call minutes relayed during the quarter.

Calls to emergency services relayed by the NRS

All NRS calls (except for the video relay service, which has limited operating hours) requiring emergency services are given priority access to a relay officer, before being connected to either a Triple Zero operator or directly to the appropriate emergency service organisation.

The chart below illustrates a proportional breakdown of the ways NRS users accessed emergency services in Quarter 1, 2015-16:



A total of 216 calls were relayed to emergency service organisations by the NRS in Quarter 1, 2015-16.

Internet relay and SMS relay were the most common options for contacting emergency services during the quarter, accounting for around 32 and 30 per cent of calls to emergency services respectively. This is comparable to the proportional distribution recorded in the previous quarter.

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 during Quarter 1, 2015-16:

