



Australian Government

Department of Communications and the Arts



National Relay Service

Quarterly Performance Report

Quarter 2, 2015–2016

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 activity measures and key performance indicators 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 of 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 Quarters 1 and 2, 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	\$5,246,979			\$10,399,527
Outreach service	\$1,047,549	\$1,047,549			\$2,095,098
Total	\$6,200,097	\$6,294,528			\$12,494,625

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	Oct-15	Nov-15	Dec-15
Service level 1(a)	95.46%	95.45%	95.27%	94.60%	94.39%	94.62%
Service level 1(b)	96.09%	96.02%	95.89%	95.22%	95.11%	95.47%
Service level 2	0.78%	0.75%	0.69%	0.88%	0.98%	0.79%
Service level 3	97.28%	97.73%	97.67%	97.98%	97.57%	97.72%

The relay service provider fully met all service levels in Quarter 2, 2015–16. 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 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 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	Oct-15	Nov-15	Dec-15
Service level 1	99.96%	99.46%	99.56%	99.99%	N/A	99.99%
Service level 2	100%	100%	100%	99.99%	99.99%	100%
Service level 3	99.55%	99.55%	98.46%	99.99%	99.99%	99.99%
Service level 4	100%	92.86%	91.67%	99.92%	100%	100%

Note: Compliance with the call answer time requirements of Service Level 1 could not be determined for the month of November 2015 as Helpdesk call answer time data was not recorded for the period 13-25 November 2015 (9 business days) due to an external system fault. The outreach provider has introduced more frequent monitoring of data collection related to Service Level 1 as a mitigation strategy, following the events in November 2015.

Apart from this exception, the outreach service provider demonstrated that it had complied with all remaining service levels in Quarter 2, 2015–16.

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 Activity Measures (KAMs) and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

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

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

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 0 the NRS1 that are engaged with the Relay Service Friendly Programme		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	N/A				250
KAM 2.2: New NRS branding and related guidelines completed by 28 February 2016	N/A	N/A				
KAM 2.3: Build of new NRS website is finalised by 30 June 2016	N/A	N/A				
KAM 2.4: # clickthroughs from Australia to simulated call portal (to commence in early 2016)	N/A	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	23			44	40

¹ In the 12 months prior to the commencement of the relevant financial year

	Q1 2015–16	Q2 2015–16	Q3 2015–16	Q4 2015–16	Actual Activity YTD	KPI Annual Target
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	36			113	100
KAM 3.3: # TTY users introduced to mobile NRS calls including through the NRS app	14	193			207	115

The Outreach service provider met with three major organisations in quarter 2 to progress their engagement with the Relay Service Friendly programme (KAM 1.1).

KAM 3.3 is a key priority for the Outreach service in 2015–16, involving activities which expose and encourage existing TTY users to mobile NRS call options, including the NRS app. This was provided to a total of 193 TTY users in quarter 2 via targeted training and awareness sessions.

Notes:

KAM 1.1: 12 other organisations commenced the Relay Service Ready Program in Quarter 2

KAM 2.1: and KAM 2.4 are reliant on the development of a NRS call tutorial microsite, which will provide a simulation environment for individuals to learn and practice using the NRS to place or receive calls. Release of the Call Tutorial microsite is expected to occur in Q3 2015–16.

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.

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	807			1,667	1,500	111%
Number of promotion/ conference events (National)	2	6			8	8	100%
Number of training sessions	106	134			240	380	63%
Number of orgs commencing Relay Service Friendly Program (RSFP)	9	12			21	70	30%
Number of orgs completing the training step within RSFP	8	10			18	23	78%
Number of contact centres involved in Hearing Awareness Week (HAW) 2015	295	N/A	N/A	N/A	295	250	118%
Number of contact centre agents involved in HAW 2015	50,198	N/A	N/A	N/A	50,198	30,000	167%

Outreach delivered a total of 74 Awareness Sessions in quarter 2, involving a total of 807 participants. One major event during the quarter involved a cinema audience at the “Access All Areas Film Festival” in December 2015, accounting for approximately 200 participants, where attendees were introduced to the NRS. ²

134 training sessions were conducted in quarter 2, with calls to or by other parties being the focus in more than 1/3 of all training events. There was a reduction in the number of TTY training sessions in Q2 (31 compared to 43 in Q1), with an increase in training sessions for most other call types including internet relay, video relay and web-based captioned relay.

12 new organisations commenced the Relay Service Ready Program during the quarter, including State Emergency Services NSW, Electoral Commission Queensland, Real Insurance, Optus and Advanced Energy (WA).

² NRS outreach was a sponsor at the film festival.

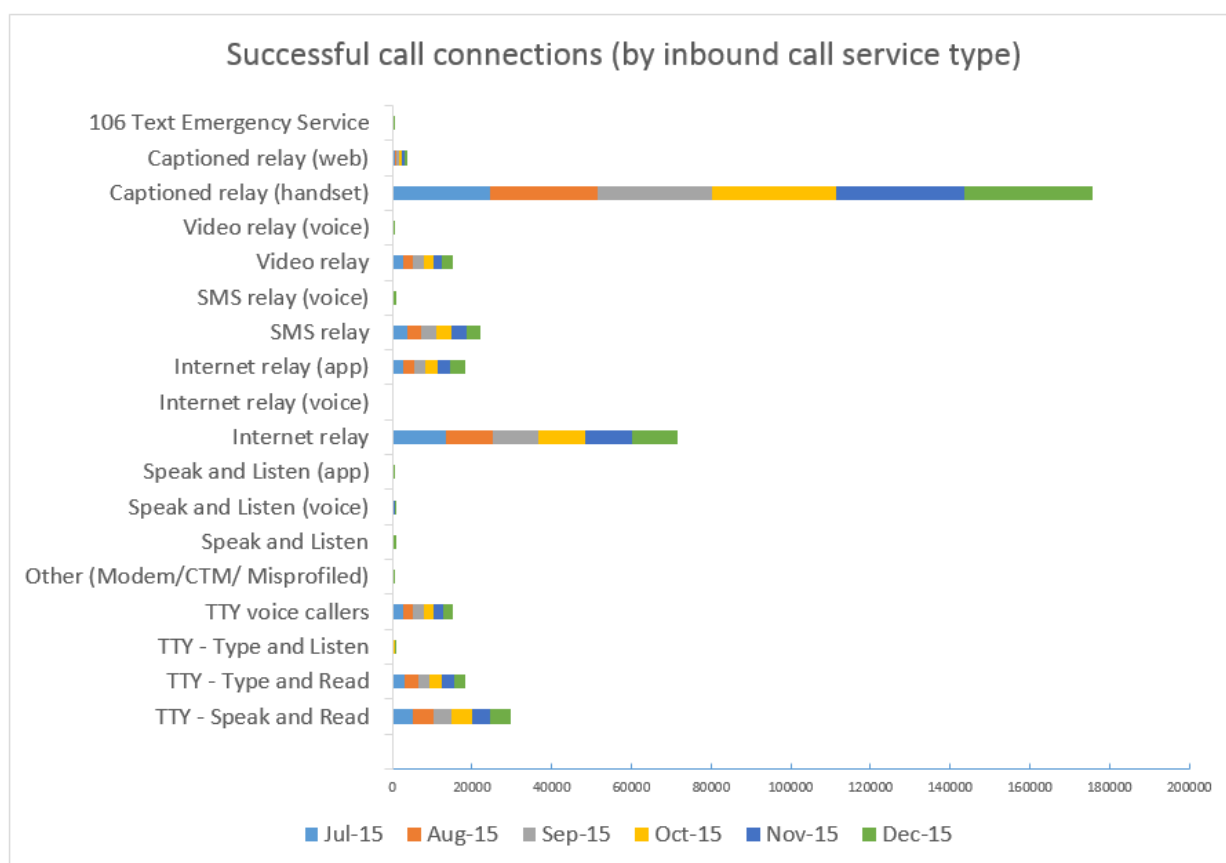
NRS Outreach took part in a range of activities to celebrate the International Day of People with Disability (IDPWD) in December 2015, with activities promoted on social media. A major activity was outreach being among sponsors for the Access All Areas Film Festival in Sydney where the new Yarning with My Mob (Aboriginal video) was shown. The NRS app was recognised for winning the Apps for All Challenge sponsored by Telstra in September through the inclusion of the NRS in an article on the Telstra Exchange Blog during IDPWD.

The NRS Customer Charter was launched on the NRS website (www.relayservice.gov.au) in quarter 2, with Auslan (video) and English (print) versions available. This charter was developed in collaboration with members of the National Advisory Group (NAC). There was a meeting of the NRS NAC in quarter 2.

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 Quarters 1 and 2, 2015–16:

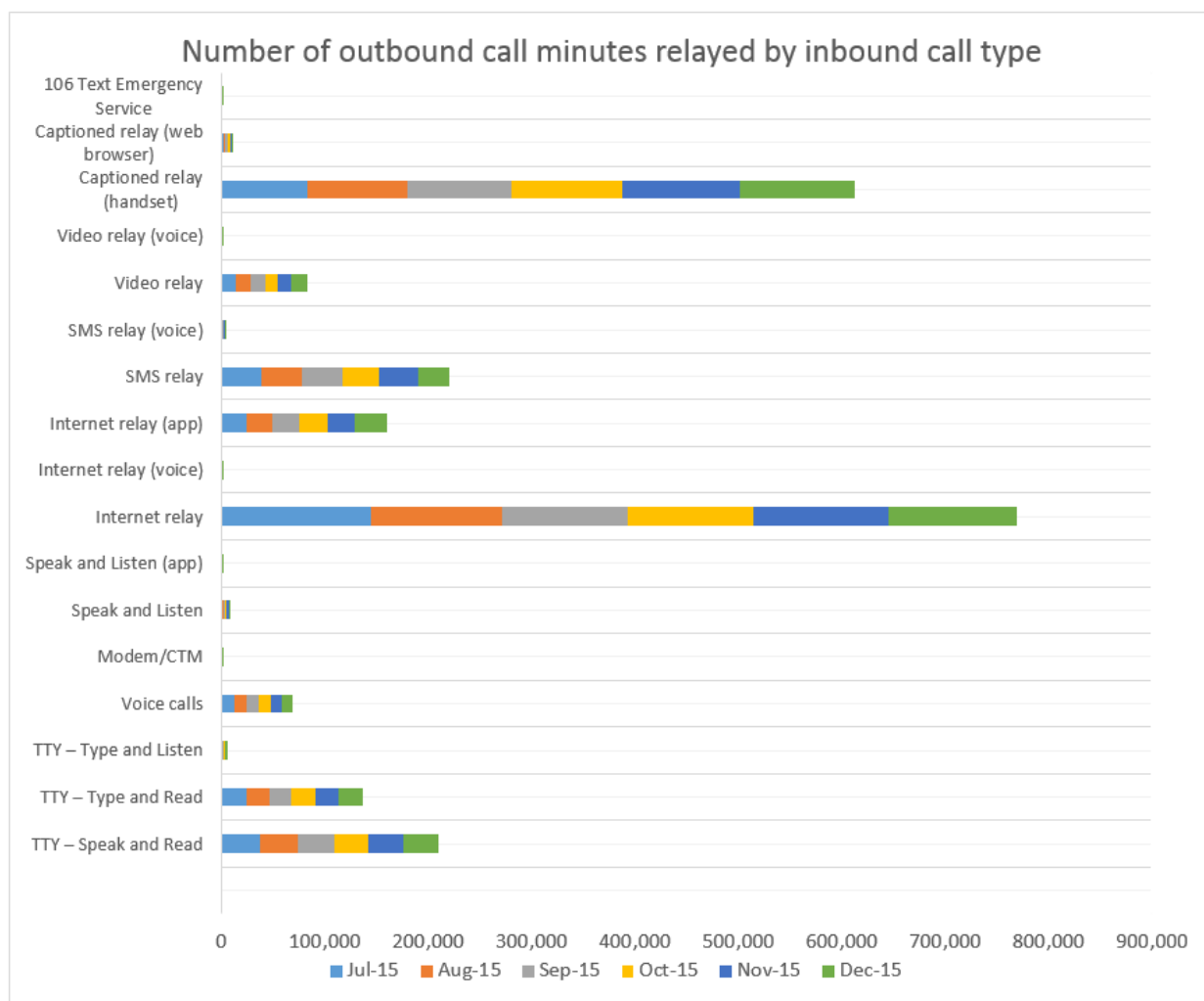


193,518 successful inbound connections were made to the NRS in Quarter 2, 2015–16 (up 7.9% from 179,407 in Quarter 1). Use of captioned relay and the NRS app by internet relay users continued to grow this quarter, with small reductions in the number of successful connections by most other call types in the same period. More than 50% of all successful connections to the NRS were made by captioned relay handset users in quarter 2, 2015–16.

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 Quarters 1 and 2, 2015–16:

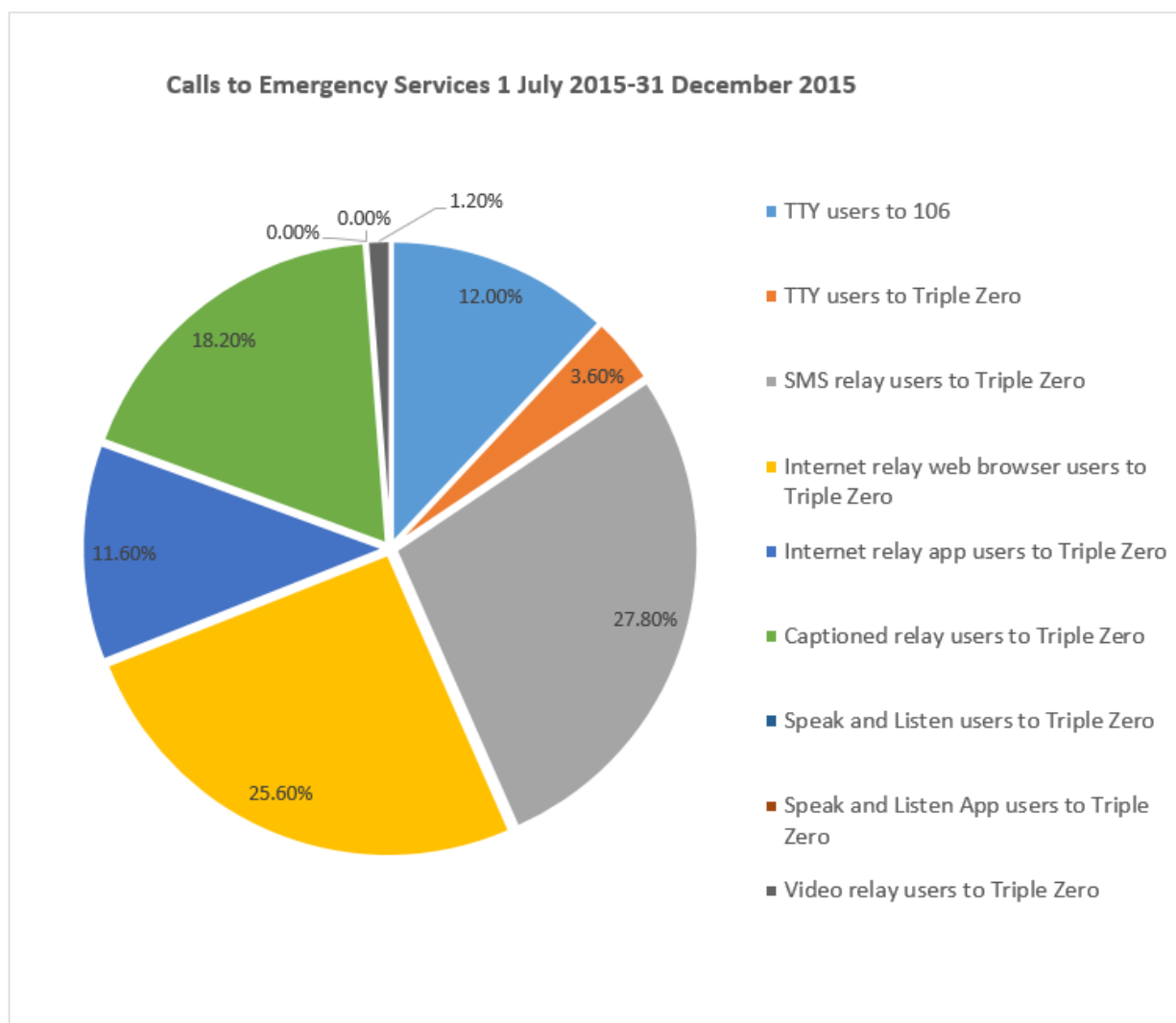


More than 1.15 million call minutes were relayed in Quarter 2, 2015–16, compared to around 1.13 million in the previous quarter. The total of 2.28 million calls minutes relayed in the first 6 months of 2015–16 presents an increase of more than 25% when compared to the first 6 months of the previous financial year (1.82 million in the first 6 months of 2014-15).

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 the period between 1 July and 31 December 2015:



The number of calls to emergency services via the NRS increased in Q2, with a total of 287 genuine calls in the quarter, compared to 216 in Q1. Internet relay was the most used option, with a total of 102 genuine calls made via this service access option. This represents more than 35% of all calls to emergency services during the quarter. More than 80% of all calls were made via internet relay, SMS relay and captioned relay, with calls by TTY users now less than 1 in 5.

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 Quarters 1 and 2, 2015–16:

