

Telecommunications Universal
Service Management Agency

National Relay Service

Quarterly Performance Report
Quarter 3 2014-2015

National Relay Service Quarterly Performance Report Quarter 3 2014-15

Background

The NRS providers are required to submit activity and performance data each quarter. We use these reports to review and manage the delivery of the NRS.

We report on:

- the cost of delivering the NRS on a quarterly basis
- the performance of the NRS providers against the service levels and key activity measures outlined in the NRS Plan
- information on how the NRS is used, including inbound and outbound call volumes and the service options 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 is consolidated in annual reporting requirements.

Costs 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 cost (GST-inclusive) of providing the NRS in 2014-15 is outlined in the table below:

Cost of delivering the NRS

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Total YTD
Relay service	\$4,198,552	\$4,099,182	\$4,444,937		\$12,742,671
Outreach service	\$1,024,999	\$1,024,999	\$1,024,999		\$3,074,997
Total	\$5,223,551	\$5,124,181	\$5,469,936		\$15,817,668

Service level performance: relay service provider

The relay service provider’s performance in 2014-15 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 to be 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-14	Aug-14	Sep-14	Oct-14	Nov-14	Dec-14	Jan-15	Feb-15	Mar-15	Apr-15	May-15	Jun-15
Service level 1(a)	92.52%	93.63%	92.49%	92.94%	92.60%	93.45%	90.89%	94.28%	96.75%			
Service level 1(b)	93.24%	94.21%	93.15%	93.59%	93.19%	94.01%	91.68%	94.82%	97.10%			
Service level 2	0.7%	0.51%	0.56%	0.59%	0.72%	0.69%	0.87%	0.79%	0.70%			
Service level 3	97.68%	98.16%	97.83%	97.66%	97.51%	97.46%	96.71%	97.32%	97.59%			

The relay service provider has fully met service levels 1(a), 2 and 3 in all quarters of 2014-15 and compliance with service level 1(b) was achieved for the first time in March 2015. TUSMA 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 2014-15 is measured monthly against the following service levels:

- Service level 1: the service contractor personnel must answer greater than 85 per cent of telephone calls from help desk users during the hours of operation of the Help Desk within 90 seconds;
- 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-14	Aug-14	Sep-14	Oct-14	Nov-14	Dec-14	Jan-15	Feb-15	Mar-15	Apr-15	May-15	Jun-15
Service level 1	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	N/A			
Service level 2	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	99.82%	100%	99.85%			
Service level 3	97.8%	99.8%	100%	99.8%	99.7%	100%	100%	99.81%	99.51%			
Service level 4	96.3%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%			

The outreach service provider fully met the requirements of service levels 2, 3 and 4 in the first three quarters of 2014-15, performing well above the minimum thresholds for each service level. A data collection failure in Quarter 3 resulted in call data not being fully recorded for some days in March 2015. Consequently, compliance with service level 1 for March 2015 could not be measured, however the service level was met for January and February. The outreach service provider has advised it has since implemented measures to minimise the risk of this failure occurring again. TUSMA 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)

In addition to the service levels, the performance of the outreach service provider in 2014-15 is measured against a number of Key Activity Measures (KAMs).

The outreach service provider's performance against the KAMs with anticipated activity levels is outlined in the table below:

Outreach service provider performance against key activity measures (KAMs)

	Q1 2014-15	Q2 2014-15	Q3 2014-15	Q4 2014-15	Actual Activity	Anticipated Activity	% Actual Activity against Anticipated
Number of participants at awareness sessions	352	451	989		1,792	2,800-3200	64%
Number of promotion/conference events	4	1	0		5	8-10	62%
Number of training sessions	82	74	100		256	380-420	67%
Number of orgs commencing Relay Service Friendly Program (RSFP)	14	13	16		43	30	143%
Number of orgs completing RSFP	1	1	3		5	20-25	25%
Number of contact centres involved in Hearing Awareness Week (HAW) 2014	292	0	0	0	292	50-60	584%
Number of contact centre agents involved in HAW 2014	27,469	0	0	0	27,469	20,000	138%

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 Hearing Awareness Week outreach activities in August 2014 was substantially higher than in the previous year. This is reflected in the level of actual activity against the projected figures of the anticipated level of activity. Major business operations, local councils and government departments were among the participants in outreach HAW activities.

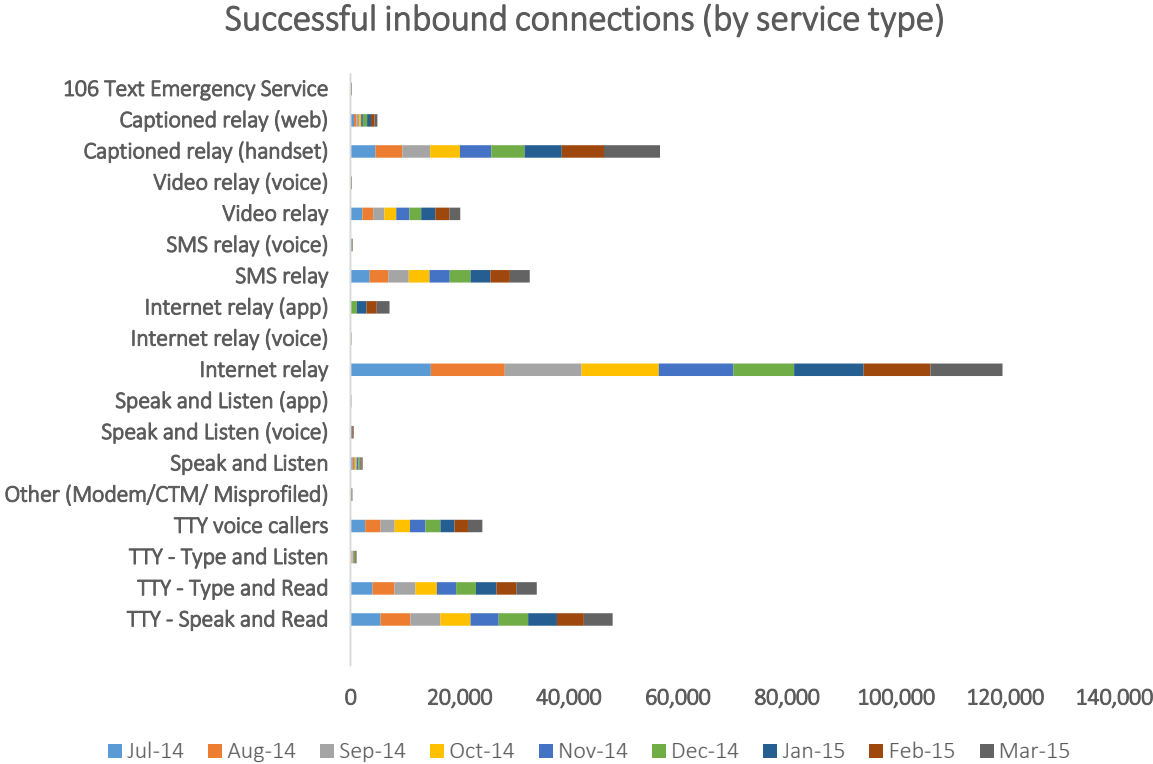
There were more than double the participants at awareness sessions in Quarter 3 than Quarter 2. Although a steady quarter-on-quarter increase in participants has been reported in 2014-15, participants remain below anticipated activity for this financial year. Requests for training sessions increased by 35 per cent in Quarter 3, following a relatively consistent first half of 2014-15.

The annual target for organisations commencing the Relay Service Friendly Program (RSFP) has been well exceeded by Quarter 3, with 16 organisations commencing RSFP this quarter. The number of organisations completing RSFP, however, is currently at 25 per cent of anticipated activity for 2014-15.

Successful inbound connections (by 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 inbound calls for each service type in 2014-15:



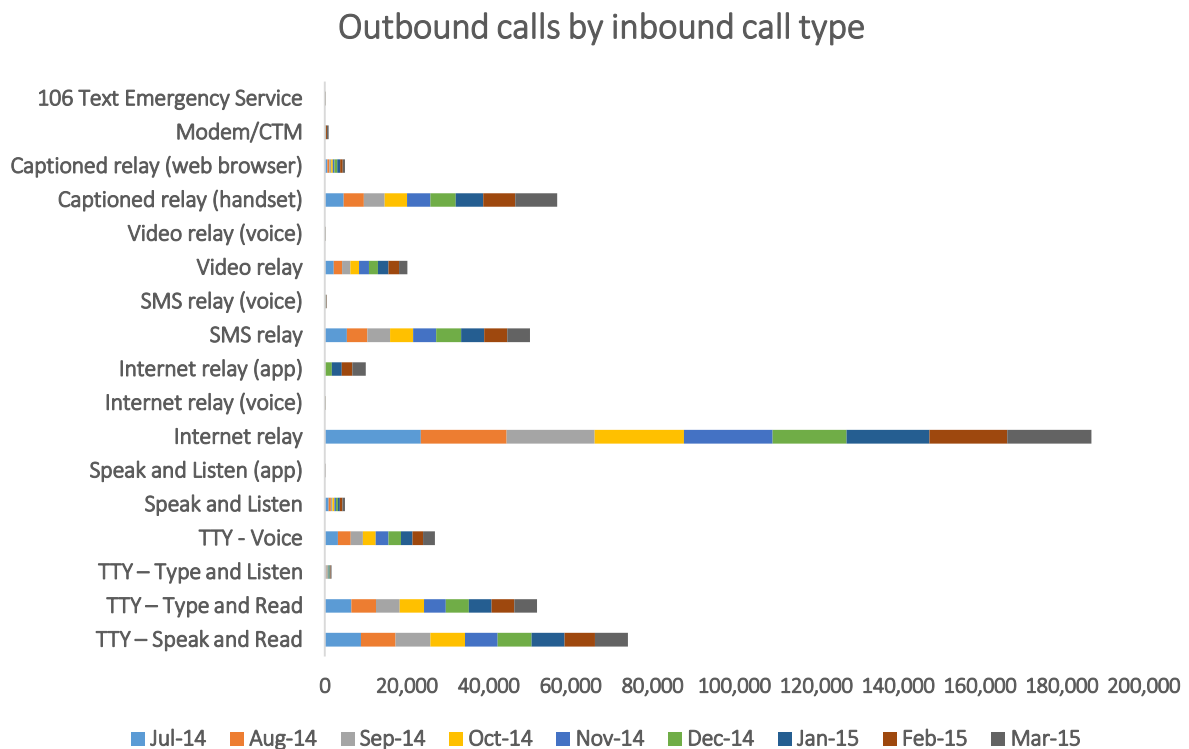
More than 350,000 successful inbound connections were made to the NRS in the first nine months of 2014-15, compared to around 319,000 successful connections in the same period in 2013-14. This represents an increase of more than 10 per cent.

Internet relay remains the most popular option for NRS users. Inbound internet relay calls through the app are increasing, with March experiencing usage levels almost 25 per cent higher than February levels and nearly double those of December 2014. SMS, video and captioned relay usage also continues to increase. These three service options accounted for more than 30 per cent of all successful inbound connections in the first three quarters of 2014-15, compared to around 20 per cent in their first year of operation. Calls initiated by TTY users have now decreased to around 1 every 4 successful inbound connections to the NRS.

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 2014-15:

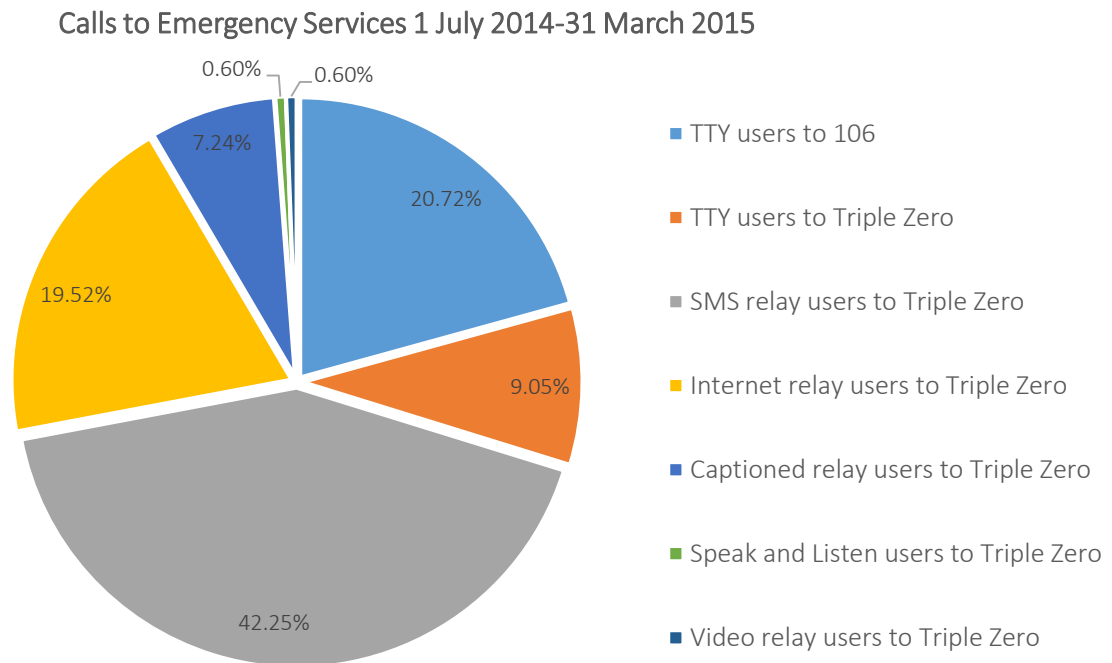


More than 2.7 million call minutes were relayed in the first nine months of 2014-15, an increase of over 260,000 call minutes when compared to the same period in 2013-14. This equates to an increase of more than 10 per cent. Internet relay continues to account for around half of all outbound call minutes, with the NRS app relaying over 10 per cent of all internet relay call minutes in Quarter 3. Use of SMS relay, video relay and captioned relay is also continuing to grow.

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 treated equally and 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 outlines the ways NRS users accessed emergency services in 2014-15:



A total of 497 calls were relayed to emergency service organisations by the NRS in the first three quarters of 2014-15. SMS relay provided over 40 per cent of calls to emergency services, while calls from TTY users accounted for around 30 per cent of calls. Internet relay was a very popular option for contacting emergency services in Quarter 3, accounting for over 40 per cent of emergency calls in the quarter.

Helpdesk enquiries

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

The graph below shows the types of helpdesk enquiries received in 2014-15:

