



Australian Government

Department of Communications and the Arts

National Relay Service—quarterly performance report

Quarter 2, 2018–19



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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.

The 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 for each quarter of the 2018–19 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	\$7,293,529.91	\$7,268,195.17			\$14,561,725.08
Outreach Service	\$336,124.50	\$391,606.03			\$727,730.53
Total	\$7,629,654.41	\$7,659,801.20			\$15,289,455.61

Service level performance: relay service provider

For 2018–19, service levels were amended to incorporate changes resulting from the International Telecommunications Union Standardisation for Relay Services. The relay service provider's performance in 2018–19 is measured monthly against the following service levels:

- **Service level 1 (a):** for each month for calls to the '106' text emergency number and the Triple Zero emergency call number, 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):** for each month for calls to the '106' text emergency number and the Triple Zero emergency call number, 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 calls). Raw accuracy is measured through monthly staff assessments of relay officers.
- **Service level 4:** for each month, at least 85% of all other non-emergency calls (with the exception of Video Relay calls) are answered by a call take within 10 seconds.
- **Service level 5:** for each month, at least 80% of Video Relay calls are answered by a call taker within 120 seconds.

The relay service provider's reported performance over the 2018–19 financial year to date against these service levels is stated 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	Service level 4	Service level 5
July 2018	99.94%	99.97%	2.21%	98.91%	86.42%	98.91%
August 2018	99.92%	99.97%	1.73%	97.88%	91.57%	99.06%
September 2018	99.98%	99.98%	1.58%	97.94%	91.4%	99.14%
October 2018	99.73%	99.97%	1.24%	97.44%	89.98%	99.08%
November 2018	99.81%	99.97%	1.73%	98.10%	87.55%	99.05%
December 2018	99.76%	99.98%	2.13%	98.19%	88.52%	99.12%
January 2019						
February 2019						
March 2019						
April 2019						
May 2019						
June 2019						

The relay service provider has reported not fully meeting all service levels in Quarter 2, 2018–19; Service level 2 was not met in December 2018 with a performance result of 2.13% exceeding the 2% maximum threshold.

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 2018–19 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 over the 2018–19 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 2018	99.63%	100%	98.63%	86.96%
August 2018	99.83%	100%	98.55%	100%
September 2018	99.61%	100%	99.39%	100%
October 2018	99.46%	100%	100%	95.45%
November 2018	100%	100%	99.58%	100%
December 2018	100%	100%	98.37%	100%
January 2019				
February 2019				
March 2019				
April 2019				
May 2019				
June 2019				

The outreach service provider has reported fully meeting all service levels in Quarter 2, 2018–19.

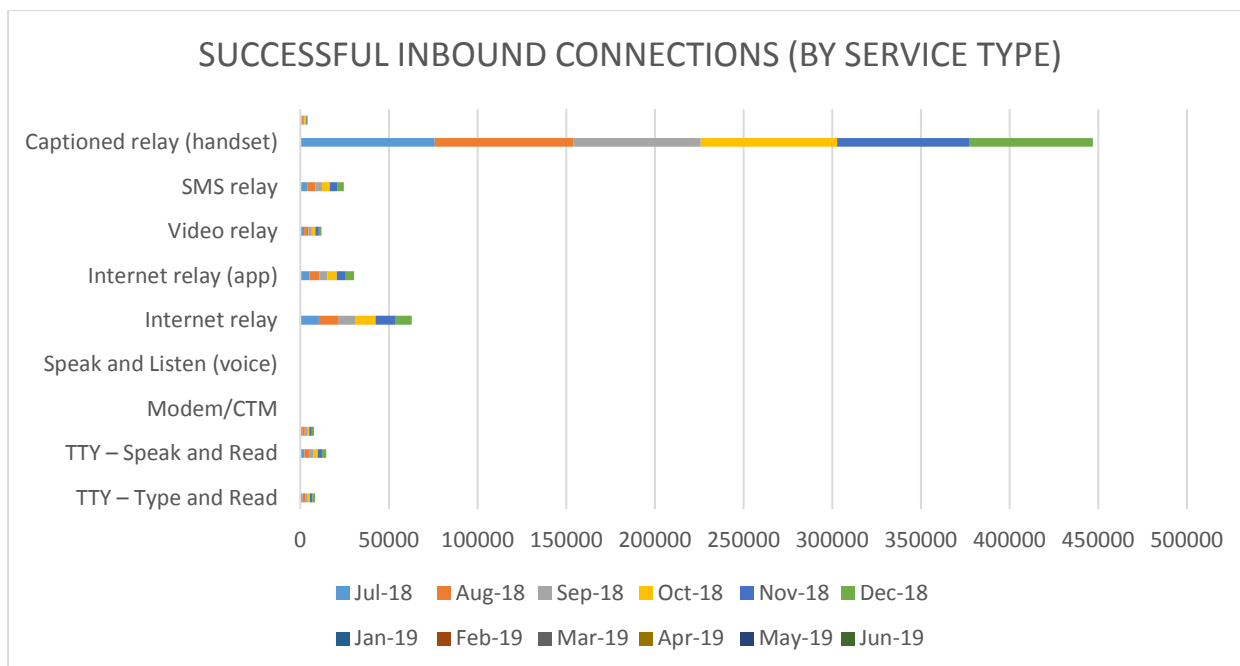
The Department considers the performance of the outreach service provider to be consistent with its obligations in the Outreach Services Agreement.



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 2018–19 financial year to date.



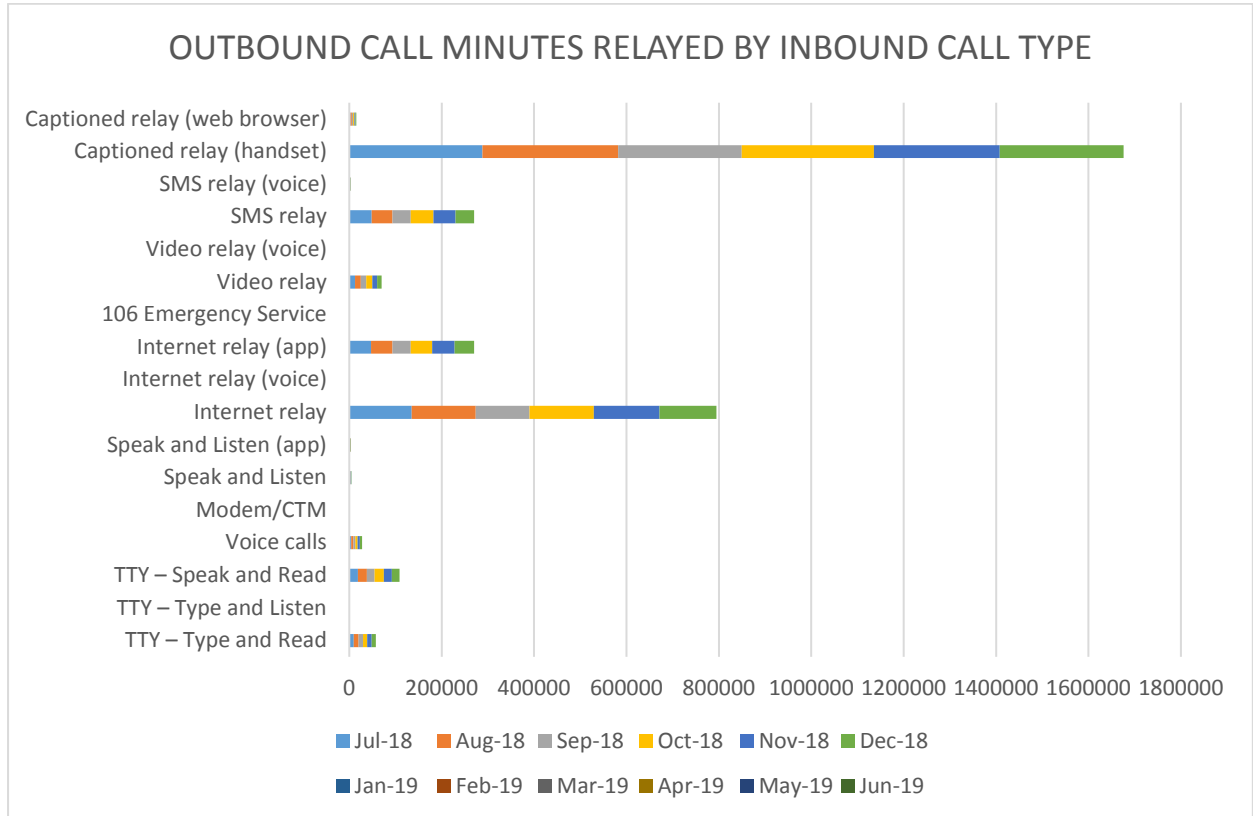
A total of 304,007 successful inbound connections were made to the NRS in Quarter 2, 2018–19; an amount consistent with the previous quarterly figure of 306,480.

Continuing to follow a well-established trend, the captioned relay service experienced high usage compared to other relay options accounting for just under 73% of connections for the year-to-date. Internet relay is the next most utilised technologies with just over 10% of connections to date, with all other technologies collectively accounting for the remaining 16.8% of connections. Voice-based technologies continue to be hardly used.



Outbound call minutes relayed (by inbound connection type)

The graph below shows a month by month breakdown of the outbound call minutes for each inbound connection type for the 2018–19 financial year to date.



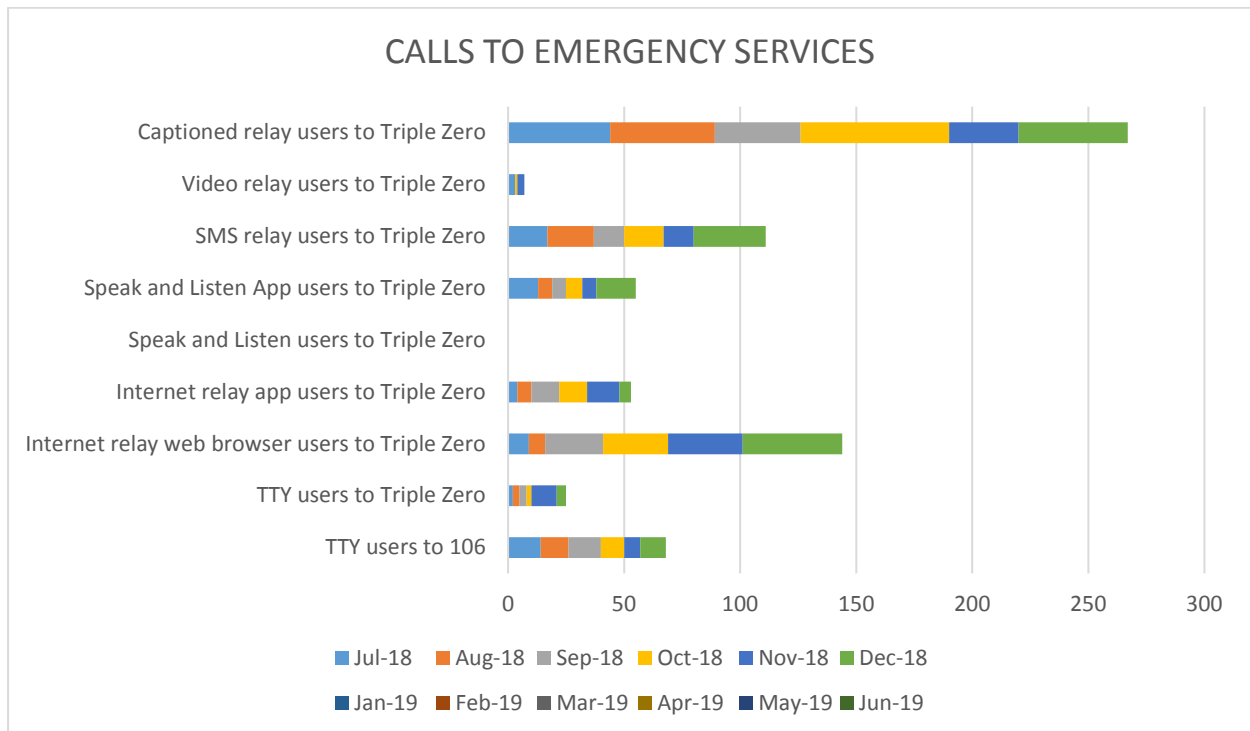
A total of 1,647,782 call minutes were relayed in Quarter 2, 2018–19; an amount consistent with the quarterly average for the previous financial year (1,701,038). Also consistent with a well-established trend is the overwhelming contribution of the captioned relay (handset) option, accounting for just under 51 per cent of all call minutes, followed by Internet relay at just over 24 percent. All other call options individually contribute less than 10 percent to total call minutes.



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 graph below shows a month by month breakdown of the ways in which NRS users accessed emergency services over the 2018–19 financial year to date.



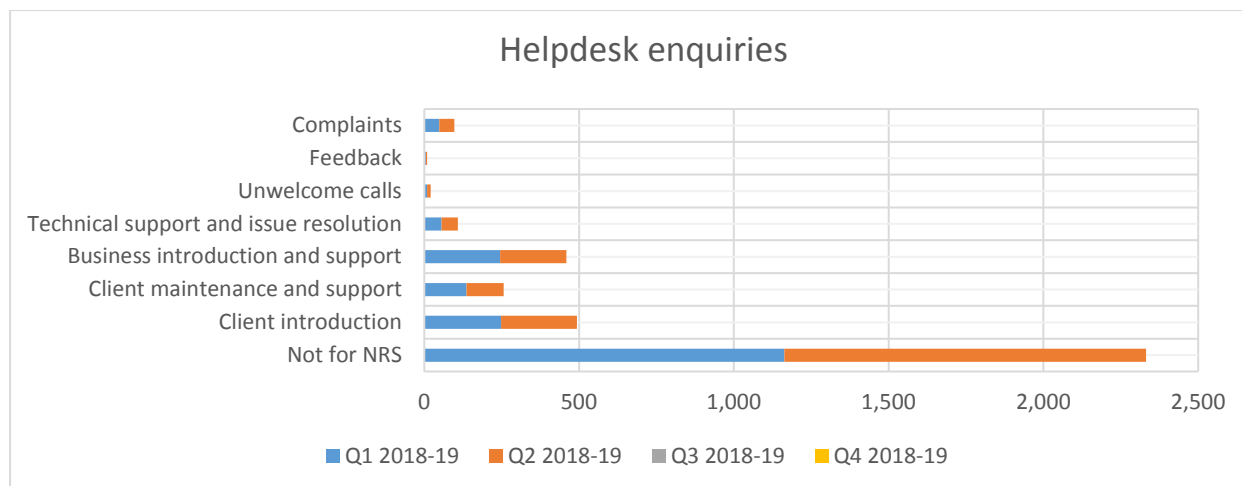
A total of 415 calls to emergency services were relayed in Quarter 2, 2018–19, a sizeable increase on the previous quarter (315), and the average for the previous financial year (329).



Helpdesk enquiries

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

The graph below shows a quarterly breakdown of the types of helpdesk enquiries received over the 2018–19 financial year to date.



There were 1,865 helpdesk enquiries for Quarter 2, 2018–19; an amount not significantly greater than the quarterly average for the previous financial year (1,863).

‘Not for us’ calls (1,169), client introductions (245), business introduction and support (214), and client maintenance and support (120) were the primary functions undertaken by the helpdesk for the quarter.

