



A phone solution for people
who are deaf or have a
hearing or speech impairment

National Relay Service Plan 2012–13



An Australian Government Initiative

Contents

INTRODUCTION	1
THE NATIONAL RELAY SERVICE PLAN	1
DESCRIPTION OF THE SERVICE AND OPTIONS	1
PRIVACY POLICY	2
ACCESS TO THE SERVICE.....	2
EMERGENCY SERVICES	3
FEEDBACK AND COMPLAINTS	4
PRIORITIES FOR 2012–13	5
RELAY SERVICE PRIORITIES FOR 2012–13	5
RELAY SERVICE STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS KEY PRIORITIES	5
OUTREACH SERVICE PRIORITIES FOR 2012–13	6
OUTREACH SERVICE STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS KEY PRIORITIES	6
PERFORMANCE STANDARDS.....	9
NRS RELAY SERVICE PROVIDER	9
NRS OUTREACH SERVICE PROVIDER.....	9
APPENDIX A – CONTACT INFORMATION	14
NRS	14
NRS RELAY SERVICE PROVIDER (AUSTRALIAN COMMUNICATION EXCHANGE)	14
NRS OUTREACH SERVICE PROVIDER (WESTWOOD SPICE).....	14
APPENDIX B – TERMS AND CONDITIONS	15
NATIONAL RELAY SERVICE PROVIDER.....	15
APPENDIX C – COST OF USING THE NRS	19
CALLING FROM WITHIN AUSTRALIA	19
CALLING FROM OUTSIDE AUSTRALIA.....	21
APPENDIX D – PRIVACY POLICIES	22
NRS RELAY SERVICE PROVIDER.....	22
NRS OUTREACH SERVICE PROVIDER	23
HOW DO WE PROTECT YOUR PRIVACY AND PERSONAL INFORMATION?	23
APPENDIX E – CREDIT MANAGEMENT POLICY	26
POLICY APPLIES TO.....	26
INTRODUCTION	26
CREDIT CONTROL	26
CREDIT MANAGEMENT.....	26
FAIRNESS, EQUITY AND HARDSHIP	26
APPENDIX F – COMPLAINT HANDLING PROCEDURE.....	27
HAVE YOU GOT A PROBLEM OR COMPLAINT ABOUT THE NRS?	27
APPENDIX G – GLOSSARY.....	34

Introduction

The National Relay Service (NRS) is a telephone relay service that allows Australians who are deaf, or who have a hearing or speech impairment to communicate with anyone who uses a standard telephone and vice versa.

The NRS is an Australian Government initiative provided under contract with the Commonwealth. The NRS is funded by a levy on eligible telecommunications carriers.

The NRS is an Australia-wide service established under the *Telecommunications Universal Service Management Agency Act 2012* (TUSMA Act). It comprises:

- The **relay service**—provided by Australian Communication Exchange (ACE)—which provides persons who are deaf, or who have a hearing and/or speech impairment with access to a standard telephone service; and
- The **outreach service**—provided by WestWood Spice (WWS)—which provides information regarding the NRS and support and training to users and potential users of the relay service, including a Helpdesk.

The NRS consists of a call centre where relay officers relay calls from people who are deaf or have a hearing or speech impairment to other people; and an outreach service to provide activities which support awareness, training and usage of the NRS.

The NRS relay service provider is also defined as an Emergency Call Person under the *Telecommunications (Emergency Call Person) Determination 1999*.

The National Relay Service Plan

The National Relay Service Plan (NRSP) is a document that describes the NRS services, provides information about policies, key priorities and strategies for the year and identifies performance standards including key performance indicators and targets that users can expect.

The NRSP must include timetables for the supply of the NRS and performance standards to be met by the NRS providers.

The NRSP can be obtained from the NRS website at www.relayservice.com.au.

Anyone is welcome to comment on the content of the NRSP and make suggestions for improvement at any time by contacting the outreach service provider (see Appendix A for contact details).

Description of the service and options

The NRS provides people who are deaf, or have a speech or hearing impairment with access to a standard telephone service. This telephone access is provided on terms, and in circumstances that are comparable to the access other Australians have to a standard telephone service.

Appendix B contains the operational terms and conditions for use of the relay service.

Most calls made through the NRS are billed through your telecommunications service provider. The relay service provider only charges you for calls made to international destinations or premium rate services. Charges for using the NRS are detailed in Appendix C.

The following call relay options are provided 24 hours a day, every day of the year, in the English language.

Table 1: Call relay options provided by NRS

Inbound TTY	Inbound Modem	Inbound Voice	Call option	Call type	Outbound TTY	Outbound Voice
		✓	Type and read	Voice-to-text relay	✓	
✓	✓		Type and read	Text-to-voice relay		✓
✓		✓	Type and listen	Hearing carry over (HCO)		✓
✓		✓	Speak and read	Voice carry over (VCO)		✓
✓		✓	Speak and read	VCO to VCO	✓	✓
		✓	Speak and listen	Speech-to-speech relay (SSR)		✓
✓	✓			Text emergency service		✓
	✓			Internet relay	✓	✓

Privacy policy

The NRS complies with the *Privacy Act 1988*. Any information collected from users is used to provide a quality service. Appendix D contains the NRS privacy policy.

Access to the service

The NRS provides a relay service which operates 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Users can make as many calls as they wish. There is no limit on the length of calls or the number of follow-on calls to local, long distance or mobile numbers once connected to the relay

service. Users are required to set up an account to make calls to international or premium rate numbers, as there are charging arrangements for these types of calls. Further details are given in Appendix E.

For information, instructions or training in the use of the relay service, visit the NRS website at www.relay-service.com.au or contact the outreach service. Contact details are given in Appendix A.

Table 2: Contact numbers for the various NRS call types

Service type	Number to call
Relay service	133 677 (133 NRS)
Relay service toll free number ¹	1800 555 677 (1800 555 NRS)
Relay service from other countries ²	+61 7 3815 7799
Speak and Listen (Speech to Speech) Relay	1300 555 727 (1300 555 S2S)
Speak and Listen (Speech to Speech) Relay - toll free number ³	1800 555 727 (1800 555 S2S)
Speech to Speech Relay from other countries ³	+61 7 3815 8000
Text Emergency Call Service	106
Reverse charge calls through the relay service	1800 555 722 (1800 555 RCC)
Internet relay	www.relay-service.com.au

Emergency services

The *Telecommunications (Emergency Call Persons) Determination 1999* specifies that the NRS provider is the national operator of emergency call services for calls to the emergency service number 106. The NRS provider will receive all calls to emergency service number 106, connect the caller to the requested emergency service organisation (Police, Fire or Ambulance) and relay the call during the emergency.

¹ 1800 access numbers can only be used for calling other toll free numbers.

² Calls to and from other countries via the NRS are restricted to the English language and require a PIN number and account.

³ Speak and Listen (Speech-to-Speech) relay callers in need of an emergency service should request to be connected to Triple Zero (000).

The 106 Text Emergency Service is a text/TTY based emergency call service for people who are deaf or have a hearing or speech impairment. This service operates using a TTY or a computer with modem (i.e. a dial-up modem, also known as an analog modem which converts a computer's digital pulses to tones that can be carried over analog telephone lines) and does not accept voice calls or SMS messages. It should be used in life threatening and time critical situations. It is not available to Speak and Listen (SSR) or internet relay users.

You can make emergency calls using Speak and Listen (SSR) Relay by calling 1800 555727 (toll free) or 1300 555 727 and requesting Triple Zero (000). These types of calls cannot be identified as an emergency call and are not given telecommunications network level priority, however Speak and Listen calls are given priority access to a Relay Officer within the NRS call answering system. The location and type of emergency service required are not automatically provided with the call. A Relay Officer must ask the caller to provide this information.

Internet relay users do not have access to the Text Emergency Call Service, however, the internet relay service can be used to relay a call to the standard Triple Zero (000) service. These calls cannot be identified as an emergency call and given priority until the call is connected to a Relay Officer. The location and type of emergency service required are not automatically provided with the call. A Relay Officer must ask the caller to provide this information.

Feedback and complaints

The NRS encourages and welcomes suggestions, complaints and feedback. People can provide feedback by:

- contacting the NRS Helpdesk by TTY on 1800 555 630
- contacting the NRS Helpdesk by phone on 1800 555 660
- contacting the NRS Helpdesk by fax on 1800 555 690
- contacting the NRS Helpdesk by SMS on 0416 001 350
- writing to the NRS at:

21A Elliott St
Balmain, NSW 2041

- sending an email to: helpdesk@relayservice.com.au
- sending in ideas on the 'send us a message' form on the NRS website at www.relayservice.com.au/contact .

NRS billing complaints

Relay service users can express their concerns by contacting the Accountant, NRS Billing by phone, in writing or by email.

Please refer to Appendix F for more information on the NRS Complaints Handling Procedure.

What people think of the outreach service

In addition to feedback received from NRS users, independent research is undertaken by the NRS during the year to find out the views of users (and potential users) of the NRS. Key findings will be reported in the annual NRS Performance Report and on the website at www.relayservice.com.au.

Feedback from this research is used as a valuable input into service improvement processes.

NRS Customer Consultative Committee

The NRS has a Customer Consultative Committee which provides feedback and advice to the NRS providers on quality of service, consumer benefits and consumer satisfaction related to the NRS.

Priorities for 2012–13

Relay service priorities for 2012–13

- Further enhancement of the NRS's capacity to deliver services which meet the changing needs of NRS users.
- Introduction of online interactive learning modules for Relay Officers.
- Improved consistency with a focus on process compliance in the relaying of all call types.

Relay service strategies to address key priorities

- Further development and review of the existing capabilities of Relay Officers, with a specific focus on enhancing knowledge, skills and experience across all relay services. This will be delivered through planned training sessions with a view to further enhancing workforce flexibility, enabling the workforce to embrace positively changes in technology and develop new skills to accommodate the provision of services that meet the changing needs of relay service users.
- The relay service provider is committed to achieving continuous improvement across key areas of the business via online interactive learning modules (e-learning). Improvements will be achieved across a number of key areas including induction training, policy awareness and compliance, workplace health and safety, professional development opportunities and ultimately, enhanced quality in all relay services. E-learning will also enable the relay service provider to ensure learning support in relation to quality standards specifically relating to corrective and preventative actions, thereby achieving continuous improvement.
- To enhance the NRS user experience through delivering consistency in process compliance the relay service provider will be implementing numerous strategies in the day-to-day operations of the National Relay Service. Increased focus on process via the introduction of process-specific quality relay assessments will provide the NRS user with comfort that each time they contact the NRS their user experience will be of similar

quality. Reprioritisation of relay service team leader key performance indicators will ensure that the delivery of this strategy is successful.

Outreach service priorities for 2012–13

During July 2012–June 2013, the NRS outreach service will continue to focus on a theme of 'Building it in'. Areas of effort will be to:

- Build NRS awareness into existing education, training, health and aged care systems and reforms
- Build NRS action into day-to-day behaviour by making it simple for practitioners to take the next step
- Build up NRS awareness among hard-to-reach groups
- Build checkpoints into pre- and post-training activities of new NRS users.

Outreach service strategies to address key priorities

Build NRS awareness into existing education, training, health and aged care systems and reforms

NRS outreach will act in a number of areas:

- Taking training to where the people are. This will involve integrating NRS into job-seeker, new employee, business 'diversity and inclusion' agendas, disability action plans and other programs where phone access should seamlessly include people who are deaf or who have a hearing or speech impairment.
- Incorporating the NRS into undergraduate and other professional education activities of key groups. This will involve:
 - Online interactive 'NRS awareness' modules to achieve continuing professional development points (CPD) for graduates. Initially the module is targeted at audiologists, audiometrists, speech therapists, occupational therapists, rural health workers, Indigenous health workers and community support workers. In 2012–13 it will be tested and expanded to provide relevance for other professions like practice nurses, practice managers and emergency service staff.
 - Development of 'NRS awareness' modules for undergraduates in relevant disciplines.
 - Considering general practitioner (GP) continuing professional development.
- Reducing call refusals. This will involve continuing effort to encourage business and government agencies to become 'relay service friendly' with both their communications and their call centre practices. This work will build on successful efforts over the past few years. Focus for 2012–13 will be utilities, local government and emergency services with additional campaign effort during Hearing Awareness Week.
- Linking with government and its agencies in relation to cycles of activity and changes in government drivers:

- **Australian Electoral Commission:** NRS outreach is working to create effective and accurate promotion of NRS where phone access is relevant to Commonwealth, State/Territory and local government elections
- **Australian Tax Office:** NRS outreach is working to create effective and accurate promotion of NRS where phone access is relevant
- **Telehealth:** NRS is seeking to ensure that people who are Deaf or have a hearing or speech impairment are not inadvertently excluded from participation in the Telehealth pilots
- **Medicare Locals:** (see details next section)
- **Local government:** NRS will continue work with local governments to ensure they are relay service friendly.

Build NRS action into day-to-day behaviour by making it simple for practitioners to take the next step

NRS work over the coming year will focus on ‘embedding’ the NRS within relevant operational structures. In particular, this will involve:

- Working more closely with key service providers such as Department of Veterans Affairs, developing tailored resources, and training their staff to use those resources. The objective is to integrate the NRS into their client relationship work.
- Working closely with key system structures and instruments such as the Aged Care Assessment Service teams (ACAS) and their assessment instruments so that if people are assessed as ‘not being able to use the phone’ there is prompt response by the assessors providing information about the NRS. Progress in 2011–12 was slow but momentum has been established and will continue.
- Medicare Locals are emerging as critical framework reform in primary care. Building on a limited trial in 2011–12, NRS outreach will extend this in 2012–13 to include:
 - running a stage 2 pilot with Murrumbidgee Medicare Local
 - initial information and awareness activities with new Medicare Locals as they come online
 - inclusion of at least one Medicare Local network in an intense range or internal (staff) and external (patient and community member) activities during Hearing Awareness Week.

Build up NRS awareness among hard-to-reach groups

NRS work will focus on:

- Piloting communications aimed at Indigenous communities. In 2009–2010 and 2010–2011, NRS outreach invested in consecutive research projects and subsequently appointed a coordinator, Indigenous Project for 2011–12. In 2012–13, this work is likely to include:
 - intensive saturation awareness activities and training in a regional community

- integration of NRS messages in indigenous communications and networks via program reforms
 - engagement with policy makers
 - possible commencement of direct NRS outreach service provision in the Northern Territory.
- Preparing a Community Service Announcement (CSA) for regional areas
 - Developing and packaging NRS outreach activities that can occur without face-to-face activity—e.g. phone training, online learning, video info session

Build checkpoints into pre- and post-training activities of new NRS users

NRS is aware of the many information and experience points that influence potential NRS users to give the NRS a try, and to continue to use it. The NRS operates in a rapidly changing technical environment and must keep NRS users informed of constraints and uncertainties. In particular during 2012–13 NRS will:

- Continue to revise NRS processes that impact on the ‘new NRS user’ experience, based on the findings from both the qualitative research and the revised feedback form commenced in 2011–12. For example, while training new NRS users, outreach staff may demonstrate a practice call to the NRS Helpdesk in order to demystify the role of the Helpdesk for NRS users.
- Review the process of participant ratings of their experience in ‘NRS training sessions’. NRS is currently trialling a revised feedback form for use at training sessions; a 3-month review will lead to us finalising it so we can get increased value from participants’ comments.

Performance standards

NRS relay service provider

Text Emergency Calls and Speak and Listen (SSR) Calls

- No more than 0.5 per cent of combined text emergency calls and Speak and Listen (SSR) (speech to speech relay) calls into the relay service will receive a busy signal on any day; and
- At least 99 per cent of text emergency calls and Speak and Listen (SSR) calls are answered by a Relay Officer within ten seconds. The ten seconds starts when a call is released by the IVR and placed into a queue. The ten seconds does not include the time taken for initial automodring and protocol negotiation between the customer equipment and the relay service or the automated message to the caller or the caller's response.

Standard relay service calls

Performance standards for receiving standard relay service calls are based on an abandonment rate.

- No more than 5 calls per 100 into the relay service will be abandoned on any one day; and
- No more than 2 calls per 100 into the relay service will be abandoned in any quarter.

A call will be deemed to be abandoned when:

- a. If there is an overload queuing system, the call is still queued after 60 seconds; or
- b. If there is no overload queuing system, the caller receives a busy signal.

Whilst the relay service has the ability to turn queuing on or off the queue is always on.

NRS outreach service provider

Performance standards and indicators for 2012–13

The following tables link each performance measure to either a performance target or to data tracking where there is no target (called reportable measures). The targets have been set based on past experience, forward plans and some assumptions about other factors like progress on some development projects and timely approval of key products to allow their full impact in the reporting period.

NRS outreach expends considerable effort in some areas that are not linked to either key performance targets or reportable measures. These matters are reported in quarterly and annual reports and the like. Typically these activities involve trial projects, proof of concept activities, meetings with key stakeholders and consolidating relationships that embed and sustain NRS awareness in organisations. NRS outreach believes they are vital in order to fulfil our obligations and should not be unrecognised in any measurement of NRS outreach performance.

Table 1 presents the key performance targets for 2012–13 (both minimum and aspirational targets).

Table 2 which follows presents other reporting measures.

Table 1: Key performance targets

		Minimum Performance Target 2012–13	Aspirational Target 2012–13
Target 1.1	Number of training sessions held in metro areas	170 sessions	187 sessions
Target 1.2	Number of training sessions held in non-metro areas	80 sessions	88 sessions
Target 1.3	Number of intense practice sessions held in metro areas	5	6
Target 1.4	Number of Intense practice sessions held in non-metro areas	1	2
Target 1.5	% of training sessions that average more than 1 participant	80% of sessions	90% of sessions
Target 1.6	Participant rating of training sessions rate session as 'helpful' or 'extremely helpful'	90% of training session participants	98% of training session participants
Target 2.1	Number of participants at information sessions in metro areas	2050 metro participants	2255 metro participants
Target 2.2	Number of participants at information sessions in non-metro areas	1700 non-metro participants	1870 non-metro participants
Target 2.3	Increased awareness [of participants at Information Sessions] of NRS offerings when averaged across 5 items:	55% of participants	60% of participants

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heard of NRS? • Know of internet relay? • Know NRS is for Deaf? • Know NRS is for hearing impaired? • Know NRS is for speech impaired? 		
Target 2.4	Increased awareness [of participants at Information Sessions] of the availability of internet relay	60% of participants	65% of participants
Target 2.5	Participant rating of information sessions as 'helpful' or 'extremely helpful'	90% of info session participants	98% of info session participants
Target 3.1	Number of staffed displays at major national conferences expos/ exhibitions	16 national events	18 national events
Target 3.2	Number of staffed displays at metro expos/exhibitions	13 metro regional expos/ exhibitions	14 metro regional expos/ exhibitions
Target 3.3	Number of staffed displays at non-metro expos/exhibitions	6 non-metro regional expos/ exhibitions	7 non-metro regional expos/ exhibitions
Target 3.4	Number of direct contact exposures at conferences/ expos/ exhibitions (without request for follow up)	1900	2090
Target 3.5	Number of requests for follow-up at conferences/ expos/ exhibitions	205 requests	220 requests
Target 4.1	Requests for outreach action received via the Helpdesk	2200 requests for action	2420 requests for action

Table 2: Reportable measures for 2012–13

Reportable measure		Detail
Reportable measure 1.1	Number of training sessions by target group	Participants from each disability sector ['Ageing/Hearing Impaired', 'Speech impaired/ complex communication needs' using a proxy of call type]
Reportable measure 2.1	Number of information sessions held in metro areas	Track numbers and provide commentary where required
Reportable measure 2.2	Number of information sessions held in non-metro areas	Track numbers and provide commentary where required
Reportable measure 2.3	% of information session participants by target audience	Participants from each target sector ['Deaf', 'ageing/hearing impaired', 'speech impaired/complex communication needs', 'business', and 'government (including emergency services)']
Reportable measure 3.1	Number of conferences/ expos/ exhibitions by target audiences	Conference/ expo/ exhibitions - audience by sector ['Deaf', 'hearing impaired/ ageing', 'speech impaired/ complex communication needs', 'business/ government']
Reportable measure 3.2	Number of inserts in conference participant packs	Number of NRS inserts in conference participant packs and provide commentary where required
Reportable measure 4.1	Helpdesk activity	Number of trigger tasks from each of the different Helpdesk call types Number of cases for complaints, compliments, feedback Number of cases related to outreach, Relay, general Number of cases related to internet relay Timeliness of complaints resolution
Reportable measure 5.1	Number of print products distributed	Number printed x product name

Reportable measure		Detail
	[by product]	
Reportable measure 5.2	Number of other products distributed [by product]	Number of products x product name
Reportable measure 6.1	Number of call centres involved in Hearing Awareness Week	Track call centre numbers and provide commentary in report
Reportable measure 6.2	Number of call centre agents exposed to NRS material during Hearing Awareness Week	Track call centre agent numbers and provide commentary in report
Reportable measure 7.1	Number of website visits	Track numbers and provide commentary where required
Reportable measure 7.2	Number of website page views	Track number and provide commentary where required
Reportable measure 7.3	Number of video views	Changed indicator – will allow wider coverage and commentary where required including view counts of the QSOL (YouTube) videos
Reportable measure 7.4	Number of ‘likes’ on NRS Facebook site	Track number and provide commentary where required
Reportable measure 7.5	Number of ‘followers’ on NRS Twitter site	Track number and provide commentary where required
Reportable measure 7.6	Number of online interactive completions	Track participant completion of online interactive
Reportable measure 7.7	Number of online CPD ⁴ completions	Track participant completion of CPD requirements by professional group

⁴ CPD=Continuing Professional Development – Refer to page 6 section Outreach service strategies to address key priorities

for more details

Appendix A – Contact information

NRS

There are many ways to contact the National Relay Service:

- Contact the NRS Helpdesk by TTY on 1800 555 630
- Contact the NRS Helpdesk by phone on 1800 555 660
- Contact the NRS Helpdesk by fax on 1800 555 690
- Contact the NRS Helpdesk by SMS on 0416 001 350
- Write to the NRS at:
21A Elliott Street
Balmain, NSW 2041
- Send an email to the NRS at helpdesk@relayservice.com.au
- Send in ideas on the 'send us a message' form on the NRS website at www.relayservice.com.au/contact

NRS relay service Provider (Australian Communication Exchange)

General enquiries: (07) 3815 7600
(Open 9 am to 5 pm EST, Monday to Friday. Closed on public holidays)

Account payments: 133677 and ask for 1300 300 551 (TTY),
1300 107 546 (voice)

Fax: (07) 3815 7601

Website: www.relayservice.com.au

Mail: 295 Logan Road (PO Box 473)
Stones Corner QLD 4120

NRS outreach service provider (WestWood Spice)

Voice: 1800 555 660

TTY: 1800 555 630

Fax: 1800 555 690

SMS: 0416 001 350

Appendix B – Terms and Conditions

National Relay Service provider

Terms and conditions of use

These Terms and Conditions apply to the use of the National Relay Service (NRS) Relay Service. The NRS Relay Service is provided by the Australian Communication Exchange under a contract with the Australian Government. By using the NRS Relay Service, you agree to these Terms and Conditions.

1. The NRS may only be used to make calls to or from persons who are deaf, or who have a hearing and/or speech impairment. Such a call constitutes a genuine relay call.
2. We reserve the right, acting reasonably and subject to our obligations as the emergency call person for 106 under the *Telecommunications (Emergency Call Services) Determination 2002*, to interrupt, block or disconnect any relay call that is not a genuine relay call.
3. You must not use, or allow any other person to use, the NRS for any unlawful purpose. If you use the NRS for any unlawful purpose, we reserve the right, acting reasonably to interrupt, block, disconnect or otherwise restrict your access to the NRS.
4. You must not use the NRS in a manner that we reasonably consider would adversely affect the provision of the NRS to other NRS users. If you use the NRS in such a manner, we reserve the right, acting reasonably to interrupt, block, disconnect or otherwise restrict your access to the NRS.
5. You must not use the NRS to make “Unwelcome Communications”. Unwelcome Communications are unsolicited communications that, by virtue of the content, frequency or timing, are offensive or tend to menace or harass the recipient. If you use the NRS to make an Unwelcome Communication, we reserve the right, acting reasonably to interrupt, block, disconnect or otherwise restrict your access to the NRS.
6. While we will do everything within our reasonable control and capability to ensure that the NRS is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, we do not warrant that the NRS will be uninterrupted, continuous or error free or that you will be able to use the NRS for your intended purpose.
7. You must have an NRS account and Personal Identification Number (PIN) from us to call international, premium rate, and certain other numbers that we may notify to you. If you do not pay any invoices related to the NRS within the required timeframe your access to such services via the NRS may be cancelled or restricted.
8. You are responsible, at your own cost, for providing, maintaining and configuring any equipment necessary to access the NRS, including TTYs, modems, computers,

telephone or other and for costs associated with telephone and or internet service providers for connection to the NRS.

9. With the agreement of the Commonwealth, changes may be made to the NRS or the manner in which the NRS is accessed or used. Notice of such changes will be published on the NRS website www.relayservice.com.au
10. To the maximum extent permitted by law, we exclude all liability to you (whether in contract, tort, including negligence, or otherwise) in respect of any loss (whether direct, indirect, consequential or otherwise) arising out of or in connection with use of the NRS, and these Terms and Conditions.
11. The *Trade Practices Act 1974 (Cth)* and the State fair trading laws imply warranties and conditions into contracts for the supply of goods or services. Where any law implies a condition or warranty which may not be lawfully excluded (Non-excludable Condition), then to the maximum extent permitted by law, our liability for breach of the Non-Excludable Condition (except a Non-Excludable Condition referred to in the clause directly below), is limited, at our option, to either resupply of the services or the refund to you of the amount actually paid for the defective service.
12. If you are a consumer (as defined under the *Trade Practices Act 1974 (Cth)*), we do not exclude or limit our liability to you for breach of any Non-excludable Condition in respect of goods or services of a kind ordinarily acquired for personal, domestic or household use or consumption.
13. These Terms and Conditions are governed by the law of the Australian State or Territory in which you ordinarily reside and you and we agree to submit to the jurisdiction of the courts of that State or Territory.
14. These Terms and Conditions are the entire agreement between you and us and supersede all previous agreements and understandings, whether oral or in writing, in relation to the NRS Relay Service.

NRS outreach service customers

The primary customers of the NRS outreach service are people who are deaf, or have a hearing or speech impairment. Other customers include the friends, family, colleagues and carers of the primary customers, 'intermediaries' who work closely with primary customers (such as audiologists, speech therapists, teachers, rehabilitation therapists and medical professionals) as well as businesses, community organisations and government.

NRS outreach services

NRS outreach services are provided through three main service streams (see below) - primarily in English with a range of targeted communication and marketing activities designed to meet the communication styles, information channels and key message drivers of particular target groups. In practice, the first two are managed as a single education and customer service team with considerable cross-skilling occurring.

Customer service

A national helpdesk operates as the key point of a broader customer service function.

- Responds to requests for information about the NRS from customers, potential customers and intermediaries
- Provides assistance for users (typically via phone or email) in relation to NRS access - including information about accessing appropriate equipment and guidance about problem-solving interface issues
- Acts as a first point of contact for requests for training or information sessions, feedback, complaints and compliments about the NRS
- Coordinates the logistics of a marketing presence including at conferences and expos
- Provides complaints resolution (in consultation with the relay service provider where appropriate)

Education, information and training

At least one Education and Information Officer is based in the capital city of each State, and is available to travel to rural and regional areas. Education and Information staff provide:

- Information sessions for potential NRS customers and intermediaries
- Training for new users in person (or over the phone if necessary)
- Presentations, demonstrations and displays for key target groups including at local expos and larger conferences
- Point-of-contact in each state for customers, potential customers and intermediaries
- Other activities related to state implementation of national campaigns

The NRS Helpdesk is available between 9 am and 5 pm Eastern Standard Time (NSW business hours) and provides free contact by phone, direct TTY, fax, SMS, email or internet. At other times, customers may leave a message by fax, email, voice, SMS or TTY answering machines. They will be contacted during the next business day.

Marketing

A marketing team works to design and deliver an agreed marketing and communication strategy which is informed by the outcomes of a continuous research and engagement strategy. The marketing team oversees the following functions:

- Market research
- Development and implementation of major marketing campaigns as well as targeted marketing projects

- Development of products to assist awareness, understanding, confidence and usage of the NRS e.g. brochures, posters, fact sheets, DVD, radio ads to customers, potential customers, intermediaries, businesses, community organisations and government
- Management of the NRS website www.relayservice.com.au

Cost of NRS outreach services

Customers do not pay for NRS outreach services.

Availability of NRS outreach services

NRS outreach services are available to all current and potential users of the NRS. NRS outreach has contractual arrangements with the Commonwealth which identify priority target groups and activities and guide the delivery of fair and equitable service provision (including in metropolitan, regional and rural areas; and through an agreed balance of face-to-face, phone, mail, fax and email contact).

Appendix C – Cost of using the NRS

The tables below show the charges that apply to different call types depending on the phone you make the call from.

Calling from within Australia

Table 3: Calling from a fixed-line telephone or TTY (home or work), a public phone or TTY payphone

To ...	Phone company charges	NRS charges
Local or long distance numbers in Australia	Approximately the cost of a local call	Nil
Any mobile number in Australia	Approximately the cost of a local call	Nil
Any overseas number (needs a National Relay Service account⁵)	Approximately the cost of a local call	The cost of the overseas call from Australia
Any premium rate information service (e.g. 1900 numbers) in Australia (needs a National Relay Service account⁶)	Approximately the cost of a local call	The cost of the premium rate call
Any 1800 number in Australia	Nil *	Nil
TTY emergency service - 106	Nil	Nil
Speak and Listen emergency service - 1800 555 727	Nil	Nil

* no charge for TTY callers who call through the NRS by first dialing 1800 555 677 then requesting the particular 1800 number they want. Speak and Listen callers should dial 1800 55 727 then ask for the required 1800 number.

⁵ www.relayservice.com.au/support/overseas-reverse-charge-calls

⁶ www.relayservice.com.au/support/opening-an-nrs-account

Table 4: Calling from a mobile phone or through internet relay

To ...	Phone company charges	NRS charges
Local or long distance numbers in Australia	Your internet connection costs (if any), or time charged by your mobile phone company	Nil
Any mobile number in Australia	Your internet connection costs (if any), or time charged by your mobile phone company	Nil
Any overseas number (needs a National Relay Service account⁷)	Your internet connection costs (if any), or time charged by your mobile phone company	The cost of the overseas call from Australia
Any premium rate information service (e.g. 1900 numbers) in Australia (needs a National Relay Service account⁸)	Your internet connection costs (if any), or time charged by your mobile phone company	The cost of the premium rate call
Any 1800 number in Australia	Your internet connection costs (if any), or time charged by your mobile phone company	Nil
TTY emergency service - 106	Not available	Not available
Speak and Listen emergency service - 1800 555 727	Time charged by your mobile phone company	Nil

Note: calls from a mobile phone can be either voice calls or internet relay calls if the phone is internet-connected and compatible with internet relay.

⁷ www.relayservice.com.au/support/overseas-reverse-charge-calls/

⁸ www.relayservice.com.au/support/opening-an-nrs-account/

Calling from outside Australia

Table 5: Calling from outside Australia

National Relay Service call type	Phone company charge	NRS charge
Local or long distance numbers in Australia	Time charged by your phone company	Nil
Any mobile number in Australia	Time charged by your phone company	Nil
Any overseas number	Not available	Not available
Any premium rate Information service (e.g. 1900 numbers) in Australia	Not available	Not available
Any 1800 number in Australia	Time charged by your phone company	Nil

NRS outreach services

Customers do not pay for NRS outreach services.

Appendix D – Privacy policies

NRS relay service provider

Collection of personal information

We only collect information from you that we need to provide the relay service to you. This information might include your name, address, telephone, fax and email address when you open an account with us. ACE complies with the National Privacy Principles (*Privacy Act 1988*).

Use and disclosure of information

We only use your personal information or disclose it to third parties in the following circumstances:

- to provide the relay service to you
- with your permission
- when the disclosure is required or permitted by law
- in relation to legal proceedings or the orders of a Court or Tribunal
- for account management and credit management

Security of information

We take reasonable steps to ensure that all information we collect is stored in a secure environment and accessed only by authorised persons. We do not retain any information for any longer than required except to fulfil our legal obligations.

Access and update of information

The *Privacy Act 1988* allows individuals to request access to records containing their personal information. You may request that information about you be corrected. Please contact us if you wish to make a request for access to your information (refer Appendix A).

Confidentiality of relay conversations

Confidentiality is one of the most important features of the relay service. We are committed to respecting your personal privacy and the confidentiality of calls at all times. We will not disclose your identity or the content of conversations relayed through the service, unless required or permitted by law.

Conversations made through the relay service may be recorded for quality and training purposes at the discretion of the user and as required or permitted by law. Calls made through the 106 Text Emergency Service are recorded.

Changes to this privacy policy

This Privacy Policy may be amended from time to time to reflect any changes to Privacy Laws.

NRS outreach service provider

What information do we collect about you?

In order to provide you with services, the outreach service asks you to give us certain personal information including your name, address and your contact details including TTY, phone and fax numbers and your email address. We may also collect other information like the type of equipment you use; the nature of your disability; your preferences in using the NRS; and any training or support which helps you use the relay service more easily.

The NRS may collect additional information in some circumstances, like your NRS account or your PIN number.

National Privacy Principles

The NRS must adhere to the Australian Government's National Privacy Principles which are set out in the *Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)*. The Privacy Principles control the way in which we may collect, store, use and disclose your personal information.

In addition, the NRS must also comply with confidentiality and privacy matters set out in Part 13 of the *Telecommunications Act 1997*.

How do we protect your privacy and personal information?

Collecting your personal information

We only collect your personal information when it is needed for us to provide a good service to you. We only collect this information by lawful and fair means—generally, we will only collect personal information from you directly, and not from a third party. We keep your personal information either in hard copy form or electronically (on our computer).

Using your personal information

We may use the personal information we collect from you to:

- Provide you with a better relay service and improve our customer service to you
- Provide you with the outreach service activities that you have requested such as training about your equipment to access the NRS
- Respond to your enquiries or send you information about the NRS
- Investigate any complaints you have about the NRS
- Gain your feedback on the service we have provided to you
- Investigate any complaints you have about the NRS
- Bill you for chargeable services that you use (including overseas telephone calls, and special information services)
- Enable us to prepare internal reports and statistical data on the services we provide to NRS users.

We take all reasonable steps to protect your personal information from misuse and loss, and from unauthorised access, modification or disclosure.

Storing your personal information

We keep all personal information in safe storage. Hard copy notes, forms and files containing personal information are kept in locked filing cabinets and can only be accessed by NRS employees.

All computer generated correspondence and emails are created and stored on password-protected computers, ensuring that no unauthorised access can occur.

Disclosing your personal information

We will not pass your personal information to a third party without your permission, unless required by law to do so (such as calls to emergency services).

Access to your personal information

The NRS takes all reasonable steps to ensure that the personal information we collect about you is accurate, complete and up-to-date.

You have the right (with some exceptions) to access the personal information that we hold about you. Access to your information can be arranged by contacting our Helpdesk (see details at end of this policy). You can also ask us to check and correct any of your personal information. No fee will be charged for these purposes.

Recording telephone / TTY contact with the NRS

When contacting the outreach service by phone, the conversation will not be recorded without your permission. Usually we ask to note the information or action you require. If you contact the outreach service by TTY, the conversation may initially be recorded via a TTY printer but the TTY printout will be discarded.

When making calls through the NRS, no records are kept of any NRS conversations, except for training purposes with the caller's consent, or where it is legally required, such as calls to emergency services.

Internet security

If you are submitting personal information to us over the Internet that you wish to remain private, you should be aware that there is the possibility that the information you submit could be observed by a third party while in transit.

Do you believe that the NRS has breached your privacy?

If you believe that the NRS may have breached your privacy, you should contact our Helpdesk to discuss your issues or concerns and we will try to resolve them in consultation with you. The best way to help us respond to your concerns is to tell us honestly, completely and accurately about what has happened. Tell us quickly about your concerns—do not sit on your problems. Please contact us:

TTY:	1800 555 630
Telephone:	1800 555 660
Fax:	1800 555 690

SMS: 0416 001 350

Email: helpdesk@relayservice.com.au

Mail: 21A Elliot St, Balmain, NSW 2041

Via the online complaints form on the NRS website:

www.relayservice.com.au/contact/complaint

The NRS has a complaints policy which seeks to ensure a fair and effective response where anyone has a concern or complaint about the NRS. If you remain dissatisfied with our response to your concerns about privacy at the NRS, you have a right to complain in writing to the Australian Information Commissioner:

TTY: 1800 620 241

Telephone: 1300 363 992

Fax: 02 9284 9666

Email: enquiries@oaic.gov.au

Mail: GPO Box 5218, Sydney, NSW 2001

Appendix E – Credit management policy

Policy applies to

This policy only applies to relay service users who open an account to make chargeable calls, currently international numbers, premium rate services and reverse-charge calls.

Introduction

Most calls made through the relay service are billed through your telecommunications service provider (see Appendix C – Cost of using the NRS). The relay service provider only charges you for calls made to international destinations or premium rate services. You are required to establish an account with the relay service provider in order to make these types of calls and to make or receive reverse-charge calls through the relay service.

Credit control

When establishing new accounts or reactivating existing accounts, the relay service provider may request prepayment and deposits where appropriate. Under certain circumstances, access may be restricted to just the standard relay service, without access to international calls or calls to premium rate services.

Credit management

The relay service provider sends out monthly relay service bills showing details of time of calls made, the numbers called, the length of the calls and the amounts charged. The total amount payable and the due date are also shown.

You can make payments by cheque, money order or credit card (MasterCard, Visa or Bankcard) by mailing us or using a 'pay by phone' service with your credit card.

If you fail to make a payment by the due date, the relay service provider will send you a reminder notice after which the account may be disconnected on the extended due date if payment is still not received. You have to pay the outstanding amount before your account can be reconnected. The disconnection of your account only restricts your access to chargeable calls. You can continue to access the relay service for emergency, free and local rate calls.

The relay service provider will take necessary steps to collect any outstanding debts and may refer you to a credit rating agency to be default listed.

If there are any disputes about outstanding amounts, we will endeavour to resolve these in a fair and timely manner.

Fairness, equity and hardship

The relay service provider ensures that credit and related debts are managed fairly and equitably. This policy maintains that parties who incur debts do so in full expectation of meeting the repayment terms prescribed.

We acknowledge that your circumstances can change. If you have problems paying a bill by the due date, you must promptly contact us.

Appendix F – Complaint handling procedure

Have you got a problem or complaint about the NRS?

The NRS has a complaints policy which seeks to ensure a fair and effective response where anyone has a concern or complaint about the NRS. The policy also helps us to listen to customers, learn from customers and improve our service to you.

Anyone can make a complaint about the NRS. A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction, concern or frustration with NRS services. You might have a complaint about the quality of NRS services; about the behaviour of an NRS staff member; about NRS policies and procedures that may impact adversely on you; or concerns about privacy or other matters.

There are no charges for making a complaint to the NRS.

If you have a problem or complaint, the NRS will make every effort to sort it out. We will:

- Treat you with respect
- Tell you what will happen while your complaint is being looked at, and keep you informed of progress
- Tell you who will deal with the complaint
- Be fair and open in the way your complaint is handled
- Deal with your complaint in a timely manner and give you reasons for the decision we make about your complaint
- Protect your privacy

We are keen to hear any concerns you have as this helps us to improve our services to you.

The best way to help us give you a better service, and to answer your concerns, is by:

- Telling us honestly, completely and accurately about what has happened.
- Telling us quickly about your concerns. Don't sit on your problems.
- Treating our staff with courtesy.

The NRS may contact you about irregular calls through the NRS

NRS outreach may contact you if there appear to be irregular, harassing or unwanted calls arising from your phone number. Please be aware that you must abide by the terms and conditions of use of the NRS see www.relayservice.com.au/about/terms-and-conditions

In summary:

- This means you must comply with the type of requirements that other phone users have when they use a phone service

- If the NRS believes someone is generating unwanted, harassing or illegal calls from your number, NRS may contact you to check this and discuss further action.

How can you make a complaint?

You can lodge a concern or complaint in a number of different ways:

TTY

1800 555 630 - our Helpdesk can take your TTY call and note details of your concern or complaint.

Phone

1800 555 660 – speak to our Helpdesk who will take details of your concern or complaint.

Fax

1800 555 690 to lodge your complaint by fax

SMS

0416 001 350 to lodge your complaint

In writing

You should direct your complaint to:

NRS Complaints Coordinator
21A Elliot St
Balmain NSW 2041

Email

You should direct your feedback or complaint to feedback@relayservice.com.au

Via the online complaints form on our website:

Go to: <http://www.relayservice.com.au/contact/complaint>

In person

You can make a complaint directly to any staff person in the NRS; or you may want to ask the Helpdesk to make a time for you to meet with the NRS Complaints Coordinator.

What happens to your complaint?

We will give careful attention to your complaint. We have a Complaints Coordinator who takes responsibility for seeing that your complaint is sorted out.

The main steps of our complaints policy are as shown.

Step 1

Our Complaints Coordinator writes to you within five business days to tell you they have received your complaint. This letter or email tells you the name of the person who will be handling your complaint. It also tells you how we will go about looking at your complaint and how long it is likely to take to get it sorted out.

Step 2

We investigate your complaint. We keep you informed about progress, contacting you every ten business days after acknowledging the original complaint.

Step 3

We report to you about the complaint.

We aim to resolve most complaints within 25 business days—early resolution may be possible simply by clarifying misunderstandings. If a complaint is complicated, it may take longer to sort out.

We will:

- Provide an explanation as to why the problem arose
- Propose action to fix the problem
- Apologise to you.

What if you aren't happy with the outcome of the complaint?

Sometimes it is not possible to sort out a complaint completely. If so, our Complaints Coordinator will work with you to look at other ways to address your concerns.

If you are not happy with the outcome of your complaint, you can do a number of things:

- You can **ask us to check our decision about your complaint**, or the way we handled it. This request should be in writing to your Complaints Coordinator. The complaint may be managed by other senior staff like the Manager of Outreach for the National Relay Service.
- If your complaint is about the **relay service** you can contact the Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman (TIO). The TIO provides a free and independent service to consumers with complaints about their telephone or internet service.

Details for contacting the TIO:

Freecall: 1800 062 058

Freefax: 1800 630 614

TTY: 1800 675 692

Email: tio@tio.com.au

Web: www.tio.com.au

Postal address: PO Box 276 Collins Street West, Melbourne Vic 8007

If your complaint is about the **outreach service**, you can contact the Australian Consumer and Competition Commission (ACCC) or the Office of Fair Trading in your State or Territory. The ACCC can provide advice to consumers and businesses about their rights and obligations under the *Trade Practices Act 1974*; and can assist in resolving a dispute by directing parties to appropriate complaints resolution options. The consumer protection work of the ACCC complements that of the State and Territory Offices of Fair Trading which administer similar legislation within their State or Territories.

Details for contacting the ACCC:

Phone 1300 302 502 (local call costs)

Postal Address: GPO Box 3648, Sydney NSW 2001

Details for contacting the Offices of Fair Trading:

There is an Office of Fair Trading in each State and Territory.

Table 6: Offices of Fair Trading in each State and Territory

State	Phone	Website
NSW	13 32 20 or 02 9895 0111	www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au
NT	1800 019 319	www.consumeraffairs.nt.gov.au
ACT	02 6207 3000	www.ors.act.gov.au
Qld.	13 74 68	www.fairtrading.qld.gov.au
SA	13 18 83	www.ocba.sa.gov.au
Tas.	1300 654 499	www.consumer.tas.gov.au
Vic.	1300 558 181	www.consumer.vic.gov.au
WA	1300 304 054	www.commerce.wa.gov.au

Who handles your complaint?

The outreach service provider is responsible for handling all NRS complaints with the only exception being billing complaints which are handled directly by ACE.

ACE's Complaints Handling Process is consistent with the timeframes contained in the NRS Complaints Handling Policy and the complaints handling chapter of the Telecommunications Consumer Protections Code.

ACE acknowledges its role in assisting the outreach provider with complaints relating to the operations of the 'relay service' that are within ACE's reasonable control in accordance with an agreed procedure entitled '*NRS Complaints Handling Policy*'.

The NRS Complaints Handling Policy can be found at <http://www.relayservice.com.au/resources/complaints-policy>

Overview of ACE's NRS complaints handling process

Complaints received by ACE are categorised into 'NRS billing' and 'NRS non-billing' complaints. NRS Billing complaints are handled directly by ACE, whereas all NRS non-billing complaints are to be handled by the NRS outreach provider.

NRS billing complaints:

Relay service users can express their concerns by contacting the Finance Division by phone, in writing or by email.

By phone: 133677 and ask for 1300 300 551 (TTY)

1300 300 551 (Voice)

In writing: Attention:
Accountant – NRS Billing
Finance Division
PO Box 473
Stones Corner QLD 4120

Fax: (07) 3815 7670.

By email: 'Attn: Billing Payments' in the subject line and sent to info@aceinfo.net.au

In person: Complaints can also be made directly by speaking to the Accountant – NRS Billing to arrange a time to meet.

Handling of billing complaints

All Billing complaints are channelled to the Accountant – NRS Billing of the Corporate Services department who will process the complaints.

Step 1: Response

In most cases when a formal billing complaint is made, the Finance Division will be able to resolve the matter promptly at initial contact.

If the issue cannot be satisfactorily resolved immediately, or the complaint is received in writing, the Accountant – NRS Billing will write to the complainant within five business days of the formal complaint being lodged by the complainant to acknowledge receipt and to inform the complainant of who will be handling the complaint. The letter will also explain how the complaint will be investigated and how long it is likely to take.

Step 2: Investigation

The Finance Division will proceed with the investigation and where appropriate inform the complainant on the progress of the investigation if resolution is not achieved within 30 business days.

Step 3: Resolution

Most complaints should be resolved within 30 business days, although complicated issues may take longer to resolve. The Finance Division will:

- Provide an explanation as to why the problem arose
- Propose action to fix the problem and improve the service in the future, where appropriate
- Apologise to the complainant, if necessary

Escalation of complaints

If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome or believes he or she has not received a fair hearing, the NRS will undertake a further review of the matter and may make another attempt to reach a resolution.

If the complainant is still not satisfied with the result achieved, the complainant also has the right to refer the matter to the Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman (TIO). The TIO provides a free and independent service to consumers with complaints about their telephone or internet service.

Freecall:	1800 062 058
Freefax:	1800 630 614
TTY:	1800 675 692
Email:	tio@tio.com.au
Web:	www.tio.com.au
Postal address:	PO Box 276 Collins Street West, Melbourne Vic 8007

ACE keeps a record of all NRS billing complaints (outreach keeps records of NRS non-billing complaints). To protect the confidentiality of ACE employees and NRS users, certain fields will be access / security protected.

Recorded complaints are classified and analysed each quarter and a report provided to management to ensure effective complaint handling compliance.

Complaint data gathered by the NRS outreach service provider Complaints Coordinator is provided to ACE's management on a quarterly basis and includes key summary information on complaints.

Systemic trends and recurring problems are identified and feedback provided to the relevant areas to rectify and eliminate the underlying causes of the complaints and improve current processes.

Relay's complaint handling processes and systems are reviewed annually to ensure optimum effectiveness and highlight any need for improvement.

NRS–Non-billing complaints

Relay users making contact via the NRS will be relayed through to the NRS Helpdesk as per standard relaying procedures. The Relay Officer will utilise the following standard scripting upon receiving a complaint/enquiry (see below):

“The most appropriate area to assist you further regarding the matter is our Customer Service Helpdesk I can put you through now. If they are not available you can leave a message and they will call you back. Or you can call them at another time on (TTY) 1800 555 630 or (voice) 1800 555 660 during business hours for further assistance. Which would you prefer?”

Appendix G – Glossary

- ACE Australian Communication Exchange – NRS relay service provider
- HCO Hearing Carry Over – international term for Type and Listen call option
- NRS National Relay Service
- NRSP National Relay Service Plan
- SSR Speech to Speech relay – international term for Speak and Listen call option
- SMS Short Message Service – text communication option available via mobile devices
- TDD Telecommunications Device for the Deaf
- TTY Teletypewriter, a type of TDD
- VCO Voice Carry Over – international term for Speak and Read call option
- WWS WestWood Spice – NRS outreach service provider