



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

National Relay Service Plan

2008–09



An Australian Government Initiative

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Introduction

The National Relay Service (NRS) is a national telephone relay service that allows Australians who are deaf, or who have a hearing, speech or communication impairment to communicate with anyone who uses a standard telephone and vice versa. This telephone access is provided on terms and in circumstances that are comparable to those which other Australians have access to a standard telephone service.

The NRS is an Australian Government initiative provided under contract with the Commonwealth. It is funded by a levy on eligible telecommunications carriers. Established under Part 3 of the *Telecommunications (Consumer Protection and Service Standards) Act 1999* (TCPSS Act), the NRS comprises:

- the relay service, which provides persons who are deaf, or who have a hearing and/or speech impairment with access to a standard telephone service—this service is provided by Australian Communication Exchange Ltd under contract to the Commonwealth; and
- the Outreach Service, which provides information on the NRS and support and training to users and potential users of the relay service, including a Helpdesk—this service is provided by WestWood Spice Pty Ltd under contract to the Commonwealth.

The NRS consists of a call centre where relay officers relay calls from people who are deaf or have a hearing, speech or communication impairment to other people plus an Outreach Service which provides activities to support awareness, training and usage of the NRS.

The NRS Relay Service Provider is defined as an Emergency Call Person under the *Telecommunications (Emergency Call Person) Determination 2002*.

Service options

The following call relay options are provided 24 hours a day, every day of the year, in the English language. Appendix C contains the operational terms and conditions for use of the relay service.

Inbound			Call option	Call Type	Outbound	
TTY	Modem	Voice			TTY	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	✓	✓

* Enables a user with a speech impairment to receive communication directly from the other party and to type their side of the conversation on a TTY, while a relay officer uses voice to communicate to the other party.

** Enables a user with hearing impairment to communicate directly with another party using natural speech and receive communication from the other party via text through a relay officer.

Privacy policy

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

Feedback process

Appendix F contains information on the NRS complaint handling processes. Suggestions, complaints and comments are welcomed.

Access to the service

The NRS provides a relay service which operates 24 hours a day, every day of the 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 D.

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

Service type	Number to call
Relay service	133 677 (133 NRS)
Relay service toll free number*	1800 555 677 (1800 555 NRS)
Relay service from other countries**	+61 7 3815 7799
Speech to speech relay (Speak and Listen)	1300 555 727 (1300 555 S2S)
Speech to speech (Speak and Listen) relay toll free number*	1800 555 727 (1800 555 S2S)
Speech to speech (Speak and Listen) relay from other countries**	+61 7 3815 8000
Text emergency call service***	106
Speak and Listen emergency call service	1300 555 727 and ask for 000
Reverse charge calls through the relay service	1800 555 722 (1800 555 RCC)

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

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

*** Speech-to-speech (Speak and Listen) relay callers in need of an emergency service may call 000 via Speech-to-Speech Relay.

Emergency services

The 106 text emergency service provides a free, high quality and reliable text emergency call service—equivalent to 000—for use by TTY or computer with TTY imitation software callers who need to contact an emergency service organisation. This service is for emergency situations requiring an immediate response from the police, fire or ambulance service.

Emergency calls using speech-to-speech relay can be made by calling 1800 555 727 (toll free) or 1300 555 727 and requesting '000'.

Internet relay users can make emergency calls by asking for 000.

National Relay Service Plan

The National Relay Service Plan (NRSP) describes the NRS services, how they will be delivered and the standards users can expect. It contains policies, key priorities and strategies for the year and the performance standards users can expect. As such, it outlines the activities for the providers of both the relay service and the outreach service for 2008–09. With a commitment to continually improving the service, the focus in 2008–09 is on further enhancing the NRS to improve the internet relay service and build upon the strengths of the new technology platform through the introduction of proactive call monitoring for quality purposes, improving service level and quality.

A customer consultative committee has been established to gain feedback and advice on quality of service, consumer benefits and consumer satisfaction related to the operation of the NRS. This consultation will assist in the development of future NRSPs.

Feedback

Anyone is welcome to comment on the content of the NRSP and make suggestions for improvement. Feedback can be provided by:

- contacting the Helpdesk by TTY on 1800 555 630
- contacting the Helpdesk by telephone on 1800 555 660
- contacting the Helpdesk by fax on 1800 555 690
- writing to the NRS Outreach Service at:
88 Darling Street, East Balmain NSW 2041
- sending an email to the NRS Outreach Service, at feedback@relayservice.com.au
- sending in your ideas on the feedback form on the website, at www.relayservice.com.au.

Performance standards

Under subsection 95(2) of the TCPSS Act, the NRSP must include timetables for the supply of the NRS and performance standards to be met by the providers. Under subsection 95(3), the Minister for Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy arranges for the NRSP to be published. The NRSP is available on the NRS website, at www.relayservice.com.au.

The relay service performance standards for 2008–09 are listed in Appendix B. These performance standards are the target performance levels against which the relay service is delivered.

The contract for the provision of Outreach Service requires provision of services linked to performance measures and to funding levels provided for in the contract. The strategies used to achieve results (and the related performance indicators) are subject to annual review.

Priorities for 2008–09

During 2008–09, the NRS is seeking to improve user satisfaction in several areas. In particular, this will cover the efficiency of NRS calls placed by callers who are deaf or have a

hearing, speech or communication impairment, and the effectiveness of 'community' callers to the NRS in reaching their target markets.

Improved satisfaction will be achieved through activities of both the relay service and the outreach service.

Relay service

Following the successful implementation of the new technology platform in 2007, we are planning to further enhance the Relay Service to build upon the strengths of the new technology platform through the introduction of proactive call monitoring for quality purposes.

Enhancements program

The planned enhancements are aimed at providing improved service levels and ensuring that you experience a high level of quality and consistency in your interactions with the Relay Service.

Quality management

We are introducing improved call quality management processes through call monitoring which will be made possible with an enhancement to the technology platform. This ensures you experience a higher standard of service in your interaction with us.

Outreach service

The overarching design of the NRS Outreach Service is for all users and potential users of the NRS to be aware of it, know how it works and be able to use it effectively. More specifically, the NRS Outreach design is intended to:

- Improve awareness of the NRS;
- Create confidence and knowledge about the NRS; and
- Support acceptance of the NRS among key target groups.

During July 2008 – June 2009, the Outreach Service has objectives of:

- Improving the effectiveness and 'ease of use' of NRS calls placed by callers who are deaf or have a hearing or speech impairment
- Increasing the awareness of friends and family members about the NRS; and
- Improving the effectiveness of 'community' callers to the NRS in reaching their targets - individuals or particular target markets

Target audiences are:

- people with a hearing impairment
- people with a speech or communication impairment
- people who are deaf
- people who have a combination of impairments which result in their speech, communication or hearing being affected
- people who act as intermediaries for the above groups
- members of the public including the business community.

Outreach activities

Key features of the 2008–09 Outreach activities are:

1. Tailoring of Outreach Service activities (marketing, information, training) to the needs and communication patterns of all target groups (current users, new users, intermediaries and members of the public)
2. Continuation of research which has planned research/pilot projects to better understand the needs of particular NRS user groups (or potential user groups)
3. Provision of national education/ information activities for existing and new NRS customers and their networks e.g. their families and intermediaries
4. Continuation of the internet relay campaign targeted at current and potential NRS users stressing the benefits of internet relay portability and easy access
5. Continuation of the campaign targeted at older Australians with acquired hearing loss
6. Continuation of the business and government campaign
7. A clear emphasis on performance monitoring which will work towards longer term behavioural objectives evidenced at the Relay Service interface while recognising intermediate objectives related to inputs and throughputs

Responding to users

Consultation, input and complaints processes

The relay Service Provider and the Outreach Service Provider have a sustained commitment towards delivering the best NRS service possible. They encourage and welcome suggestions, complaints and input from people who use the NRS.

They have developed particular policies aimed at understanding what NRS users are thinking and are concerned about.

What people think of the Outreach Service

The Relay and Outreach Services sponsor independent research annually to find out the views of users (and potential users) of the NRS. Key findings will be reported on the website at www.relayservice.com.au.

What works best to help people with the NRS

The Outreach Service will be undertaking various market research activities during 2008–09. Some results of these activities will be reported in quarterly reports as well as the annual Outreach Service performance report. Key findings will be reported on the website at www.relayservice.com.au.

Customer consultative committee

The Relay Service 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. The Outreach Service Provider is a member of this committee.

Appendix A – Contact information

NRS Relay Service Provider (Australian Communication Exchange)

General enquiries: +61 7 3815 7600

Open 9.00am to 5.00pm AEST, weekdays. Closed on public holidays.

Account payments: 1300 300 551 (voice and TTY)

Fax: +61 7 3815 7601

Website: www.relayservice.com.au

Mail: 295 Logan Road (PO Box 473)

Stones Corner QLD 4120

NRS Outreach Service Provider (WestWood Spice)

Telephone: 1800 555 660

TTY: 1800 555 630

Fax: 1800 555 690

SMS: 0416 001 350

Open 9.00am to 5.00pm (Sydney time), weekdays. Closed on public holidays

Email: feedback@relayservice.com.au

Website: www.relayservice.com.au

Mail: 88 Darling St

East Balmain NSW 2041

Appendix B – Performance standards

NRS Relay Service Provider

Text emergency calls and Speak and Listen calls

- No more than 0.5 per cent of combined text emergency calls and speech to speech calls into the relay service will receive a busy signal on any day, and
- At least 99 per cent of text emergency calls and speech to speech calls are answered by a relay officer within ten seconds

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
- b. If there is no overload queuing system, the caller receives a busy signal.

Internet relay calls

Performance standards for internet relay calls are as follows:

- That no more than 5 calls in 100 made via internet relay each day will be subject to call dropout attributable to the internet relay system.
- That no more than 5 calls in 100 made via internet relay each quarter be subject to call dropout attributable to the internet relay system.
- The definition of call dropout attributable to the internet relay system will be where three calls simultaneously drop out.

NRS Outreach Service Provider

The contract for the provision of Outreach Service requires provision of services linked to performance measures and to funding levels provided for in the contract. The strategies used to achieve results (and the related performance indicators) are subject to annual review.

The Outreach Service links its performance to improving awareness, confidence and knowledge, and acceptance of the NRS among key groups; and offering information, support and training for any person with an interest in the NRS.

During 2006/07, the Outreach Service established baseline data (inputs, throughputs, outputs and outcomes) on some key measures. During 2007/08, the Outreach Service

gained access to some limited disaggregated Relay Service call data; Outreach is seeking to strengthen the disaggregation and analysis of Relay Service call patterns to more clearly demonstrate change in call patterns and impact of some Outreach activities.

The Outreach Service has performance indicators which relate to improvements in three areas:

- Awareness of the NRS
- Confidence and knowledge about the NRS; and
- Acceptance of the NRS

This focus is likely to increase callers to the NRS and is intended to improve receptiveness of outbound calls made by the NRS.

Strategy 1: Inputs by targets		Performance Target
Indicator 1.1	Number of information sessions (by target audiences by geographic location)	300 sessions [200 metro: 100 non-metro]
		Track audience x sector [target 80% hearing impaired: 10% Deaf: 10% complex needs]
Indicator 1.2	Number of training sessions (by target group by geographic location)	237 sessions [180 metro: 57 non-metro]
		Track target group x sector [hearing impaired: Deaf: complex needs]
		8 major events [track audience group against % hearing impaired; % speech impaired; % deaf]
Indicator 1.3	Number of conferences expo/ exhibitions (by target audiences)	12 regional expos/ exhibitions
Indicator 1.4	Participant rating of effectiveness of information sessions and training sessions	90% of info session participants rate session as 'helpful' or 'extremely helpful'
		90% of training session participants rate session as 'helpful' or 'extremely helpful'
Strategy 2: Throughputs		Performance Target
Indicator 2.1	Number of participants at information sessions (by target audience by geographic location)	3,000 participants [2000 metro:1000 non-metro]
		Track target audience data [no target]
Indicator 2.2	Number of participants at training sessions	50% of sessions have more than 1 participant
Indicator	Number of direct contacts at	# conf participant packs with NRS

2.3	conference/expo/exhibition	info [track data]
		1500 direct contacts without request for follow-up
		# requests for follow-up at conference/expo/exhibition [track data]
Indicator 2.4	Number of website visits	Track data by general visits [no target] Track traffic across 10 most popular DVD clips [no target]
Indicator 2.5	Helpdesk activity	Track data [no target] for (1) complaints and (2) other calls related to Outreach, Relay and general NRS matters
Strategy 3: Outputs		Performance Target
Indicator 3.1	Number of print products distributed (by product)	Track data [no target] for print products
Indicator 3.2	Numbers of non print products distributed (by product)	Track data [no target] for non-print products
Strategy 4: Awareness		Performance Target
Indicator 4.1	Change in number of people that have heard of the NRS	Will set baseline data [new indicator] via survey to be agreed (likely as part of Omnibus Survey or commissioned with Council on the Ageing). Data will include specific subset of older people who have heard of the NRS
Indicator 4.2	Change in number of people who know the full range of NRS offerings	62% of respondents to Relay provider user survey know that internet relay is available
		70% of Type and Read respondents to Relay Service Provider user survey know that internet relay is available
		40% of participants at Information Sessions increased their awareness of the full range of NRS offerings when averaged across 5 items
		75% of participants at Information Sessions increased their awareness of internet relay

Indicator 4.3	Change in number of businesses that appropriately reference NRS for customer access.	Positive shift against 5 criteria of phone accessibility
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Appendix C – Terms and conditions

National Relay Service (Relay Service)

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.
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. This may lead to your access to the NRS being restricted or blocked.
5. 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.
6. 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.
7. You are responsible at your own cost for providing any equipment necessary to access the NRS, including TTYs/TDDs, modems, computers, telephone or other and for costs associated with telephone and or internet service providers for connection to the NRS.
8. 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.
9. 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.
10. 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.
11. 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.

12. 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.

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.

In these Terms and Conditions, the expressions “we”, “us” and “our” are a reference to the NRS Relay Service Provider, Australian Communication Exchange Limited, ABN 003 044 899.

National Relay Service (Outreach Service)

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

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

The NRS Outreach Service provides three main services.

1. Education and Information

An Education and Information Officer is based in the capital city of each state, and available to travel to rural and regional areas. The Education and Information team provides the following functions:

- Information sessions for potential NRS customers and intermediaries
- Training for new users (over the phone and in person if necessary)
- Support for existing users (over the phone and, on occasion, in person)
- Presentations, demonstrations and displays for key target groups
- Point of contact in each state for customers, potential customers and intermediaries

2. Helpdesk.

A national Helpdesk operates during NSW business hours and is contactable by phone, direct TTY, fax, email or internet. The Helpdesk provides the following functions:

- Responding to requests for information and support about the NRS from customers, potential customers and intermediaries
- Providing assistance for existing users (over the phone)
- Liaison point between customers and Education and Information Officers
- First point of contact for feedback, complaints and compliments about the NRS
- Information about Disability Equipment Programs and other relevant agencies

- Complaints resolution (in consultation with the Relay Provider where appropriate)

3. Marketing

A marketing team works to deliver on an agreed marketing and communication strategy which is informed by the outcomes of a continuous research and engagement strategy. The marketing team provides 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. (Note, however, that NRS Outreach is not responsible for assisting customers who request assistance with matters that lie outside the terms of the NRS Outreach Service Contract – such matters include equipment supply, telecommunication carrier arrangements, phone system configurations.)

NRS Outreach develops an annual Strategy and Budget Allocation (SABA) which identifies priority target groups and activities within the annual budget available for Outreach. The SABA guides the work of the Helpdesk, the Education and Information and the Marketing teams. The SABA also guides the delivery of fair and equitable service provision. NRS Outreach works in metropolitan, regional and rural areas as required. Service may be provided face-to-face, by phone, mail, fax or email.

Hours of service

The Helpdesk is open 9am to 5pm (Sydney time) on NSW business days. At other times, customers may leave a message by email or by voice or TTY answering machines. They will be contacted the next business day.

Education and Information officers in NSW, Victoria, Queensland and Western Australia are available 9am to 5pm on business days in their state's capital city, and according to the standard time of their state. Education officers in South Australia and Tasmania are employed part-time. Education and information officers may be available outside regular hours by prior arrangement.

Cost of using the NRS

Calls from within Australia

Call Type	Charges by Telephone Company	Charges by the Relay Service Provider
106 Text Emergency Service	Nil	Nil
Free access numbers, eg. 1800 or 013 (directory assistance)	Nil	Nil
Local or long distance numbers in Australia	About the same as a local call**	Nil
Any mobile number in Australia	About the same as a local call**	Nil
Any international number*	About the same as a local call**	Cost of the international call from Australia
Premium rate information service in Australia*	About the same as a local call**	Cost of the premium rate call

* Requires an NRS account.

** The actual cost depends on the cost of ringing a 13 number agreed with your telephone company. Timed calls from mobiles and payphones may incur a higher rate.

Calls from outside Australia

Call Type	Charges by Telephone Company	Charges by the Relay Service Provider
106 Text Emergency Service	N/A	N/A
Free access numbers, eg. 1800 or 013 (directory assistance)	Time charged by telephone company	Nil
Local or long distance numbers in Australia	Time charged by telephone company	Nil
Any mobile number in Australia	Time charged by telephone company	Nil
Any international number	N/A	N/A
Premium rate information service in Australia	N/A	N/A

Appendix D – Credit management policy

NRS Relay Service Provider

Application of policy

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

Introduction

Most calls made through the Relay Service are billed through the user's telecommunications service provider (see charges in Appendix C). The Relay Service Provider only charges 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 charged 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.

Payments can be made by cheque, money order or credit card (Mastercard or Visa) by mailing 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 a reminder notice after which the account may be disconnected on the extended due date if payment is still not received. Any outstanding amount must be paid before an 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 the user to a credit rating agency to be default listed.

If there are any disputes about outstanding amounts, the provider 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 the service provider.

Appendix E – 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.

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 to 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 with new developments in the law relating to privacy.

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, the nature of your disability 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; your preferences in using the relay service; and any training or support which helps you use the relay service more easily. The relay service may collect additional information in some circumstances, like your NRS account or your PIN number.

National Privacy Principles

The Relay Service and the Outreach Service 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.

The Relay Service 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
- Provide you with the outreach service activities that you have requested such as training about your telecommunications equipment
- Respond to your enquiries or send you information about the NRS
- Investigate any complaints you have about the NRS
- Improve our customer service to you
- Gain your feedback on the service we have provided to you
- 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.

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 in any way.

If you contact the Outreach Service by TTY, the conversation may be recorded via a TTY printer. If the contents of the conversation are to be recorded for a message or kept on file, they will be handwritten as would be the case in a voice conversation and the printout will be discarded.

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 Outreach Service 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 answer 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.

TTY: 1800 555 630

Telephone: 1800 555 660

Fax: 1800 555 690

Email: helpdesk@relayservice.com.au

Mail: 88 Darling Street, East Balmain NSW 2041

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 Privacy Commissioner:

TTY: 1800 620 241

Telephone: 1300 363 992

Fax: 02 9284 9666

Email: privacy@privacy.gov.au

Mail: GPO Box 5218, Sydney NSW 2001

Appendix F – Complaints handling processes

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.

There are no charges for making a complaint to us.

If you have a problem or complaint, the NRS will make every effort to sort it out and you can expect that 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.

You can help us to give you a better service and answer your concerns 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

How can you make a complaint?

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

By phone:

1800 555 660 – and speak to our HelpDesk Officer who will take initial details of your concern or complaint.

By TTY:

1800 555 630 and our HelpDesk Officer can take your TTY call and note initial details of your concern or complaint.

By fax:

1800 555 690 to lodge your complaint by fax

In writing:

You should direct your complaint to:

NRS Complaints Coordinator
88 Darling St
East Balmain, NSW 2041

By email:

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

Online:

Via the online complaints form on our website – www.relayservice.com.au.

In person:

You can make a complaint directly to any staff person in the NRS. Or, you may want to speak to the Helpdesk officer to make a time to meet the Complaints Coordinator.

We will help you if you need assistance to make the complaint. If you need to use the relay service to make your complaint, we can ensure your privacy.

Someone else can make the complaint for you, if you wish.

Making a complaint

Please give us as much information as possible so we get a clear picture of the problem. We will ask for your name and contact details so that we can keep you informed about the progress of the resolution of your complaint.

What happens once the complaint is made?

The NRS will give careful attention to complaints. A complaints coordinator is responsible for ensuring that complaints are resolved.

The steps in the complaints handling process are:

Step 1 The NRS Complaints Coordinator will write to the complainant within five working days to tell them they have received the complaint. The letter will name the person handling the complaint and how the NRS will go about looking at your complaint and how long it is likely to be to get it sorted out.



Step 2 The NRS will investigate the complaint and keep the complainant informed about progress, with updates every two weeks.



Step 3 The NRS will report to the complainant about the complaint and aims to resolve most complaints within 30 working days. Early resolution may be possible simply by clarifying misunderstandings. If a complaint is complicated, it may take longer to sort out. The NRS will:

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

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

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

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 our Complaints Coordinator.
- If the 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.

Freecall: 1800 062 058

Freefax: 1800 630 614

TTY: 1800 675 692

Email: tio@tio.com.au

Web: www.tio.com.au

Mail: 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. 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: Level 7, 123 Pitt St, NSW

Details for contacting the Offices of Fair Trading:

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

ACT	02 6207 0400	
NT	1800 019 319	Or 08 8999 1999
NSW	133 220	Or 02 9895 0111
Queensland	131 304	
SA	08 8204 9777	
Tasmania	1300 654 499	
Victoria	1300 558 181	Or 03 9627 6444