

# New Zealand Telecommunications Relay Services Beyond 2019: Submission template

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The closing date for submissions is **5.00pm, Friday 13 April 2018**.

You can make a submission by emailing [RelayConsultation@mbie.govt.nz](mailto:RelayConsultation@mbie.govt.nz) or by posting your feedback to:

NZ Relay Project Team  
ICT Policy & Programmes  
Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment  
PO Box 1473  
Wellington 6140  
New Zealand

If you post your submission, please also send it electronically if possible (as a PDF or Microsoft Word document).

New Zealand Sign Language (NZSL) users are also able to make video submissions in NZSL. For further information please visit <http://www.mbie.govt.nz/info-services/sectors-industries/technology-communications/communications/telecommunications-relay-service/>.

**Please complete the following contact details:**

<b>Your name:</b>	<i>Information redacted as requested by respondent</i>
<b>Your email address:</b>	

**Is your submission on behalf of an organisation?**

✓ - copy and paste this symbol to mark your answer if completing on a computer

	Yes
✓	No

If yes, please write the name of the organisation and your position here:

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If you or your organisation do not wish your name to be included in any summary of submissions that the Ministry may publish, please advise here:

No, I do not want my name / organisations name published in any summary of submissions

If you or your organisation object to the release of any information contained in this submission, please advise here:

Please do not use my name but I am happy for my comments to be published.

**If completing as an individual, which region do you live in?**

√ - copy and paste this symbol to mark your answer if completing on a computer

	Northland		Wellington
√	Auckland		Tasman
	Waikato		Nelson
	Bay of Plenty		Marlborough
	Gisborne		West Coast
	Hawke's Bay		Canterbury
	Taranaki		Otago
	Manawatu-Wanganui		Southland
	Outside New Zealand. Please specify location:		

**If completing as an individual, which age bracket do you (or the person you are completing the form on behalf of) fall into?**

√ - copy and paste this symbol to mark your answer if completing on a computer

	Under 18	√	45 – 54
	18 – 24		55 – 64
	25 – 34		Over 65
	35 – 44		Prefer not to disclose

If you are comfortable doing so, please tick any communications disabilities that apply to you, the person you are completing this submission on behalf of, and/or the body of people you or your organisation represents:

√ - copy and paste this symbol to mark your answer if completing on a computer

√	Deaf
	Hearing Impaired
	Speech Impaired
	Deafblind
	Other (please specify)
	Prefer not to disclose

**Are you a hearing recipient of relay calls, or user of the VIS?**

√ - copy and paste this symbol to mark your answer if completing on a computer

	Yes
√	No

**Are you a user of New Zealand Sign Language?**

√ - copy and paste this symbol to mark your answer if completing on a computer

√	Yes
	No

**Are you a user of any of the relay services? If so, please tick which services, and the frequency with which you use them, below:**

√ - copy and paste this symbol to mark your answer if completing on a computer

	Every day	Several times a week	Once a week	1-3 times a month	Less than once a month
Teletypewriter to Voice					
Voice Carry Over		√			
Hearing Carry Over					
Mobile Text Relay					
Internet Relay					

CapTel					
Web CapTel					
Video Interpreting Service					
Speech to Speech					
Video-Assisted Speech to Speech					

If you are a user of the relay service, please describe the purposes for which you use it. For example, for social/personal calls, to conduct business, to use interpretation services for appointments:

I use it for social and personal calls, frequently for calls like making medical or other appointments or dealing with government departments, and more recently I also use it at work to perform my job.

If you are not a user of the relay service, please describe your interest in this public consultation:

Which of the current services were you aware of prior to completing this submission? Please tick the services below:

*√ - copy and paste this symbol to mark your answer if completing on a computer*

√	Teletypewriter to Voice	√	CapTel
√	Voice Carry Over		Web CapTel
√	Hearing Carry Over	√	Video Interpreting Service
	Mobile Text Relay	√	Speech to Speech
√	Internet Relay		Video-Assisted Speech to Speech

**Availability of Services – Please let us know if your comments relate to a specific service**

1. What is your view of the current availability of the relay service (i.e. are you able to access the relay service when you need it?)

There have been occasions when I have not been able to access the service when needed which is frustrating. 90% of the time I am able to access it.

2. If you have encountered problems, what are these and what impact have they had?

Sometimes the service is inexplicably down. Sometimes I have been unsure if there is a problem with my relay phone, or the service itself, and I have contacted helpdesk on these occasions. Sometimes I have been told to try again later and it usually works then.

3. What changes could be made to relay services to improve their availability, and why?

I can't answer this as I do not know the reason the service sometimes has problems.

**Accessibility – Please let us know if your comments relate to a specific service**

4. What additional measures or initiatives could be introduced to increase awareness of the relay service and its benefits to users of the service and the wider community?

I think wider use could be made of promotional material. I think promotional material should be available to users of the service at their request (we often know the organisations/services that we want to contact or to have improved awareness of the service). I also think that in cases of refused calls, which happen from time to time, service users should be asked for contact details of the place refusing the call so the relay service can contact them to provide education about the service and try to prevent future refusals (eg –the old “don't hang up on relay!” pamphlet).

5. If you had the choice between accessing a relay service from a fixed device at home or from your mobile, laptop or tablet, which would you prefer and why?

Ideally I would like to have access to both, not to have to choose. In some situations I might prefer one, in other situations I might prefer another way of accessing the service.

6. What specific relay services would you like to see available on your mobile, laptop or tablet and why?

I would love to be able to use VCO on my mobile. As far as I am aware this is simply not possible so I always use a fixed device at home or work.

7. For those relay services that are available on your mobile, laptop or tablet already, are there any improvements that could be made that would make them easier to use and why?

8. Are there any other issues related to ease of access and use with the current relay service that we should consider?

Yes, access to charged calls such as ringing a mobile, or international calls. I have tried to access these in the past using a prepay service and pin number etc, but I found this way of accessing charge calls so prohibitive, time consuming, difficult and wasteful that I stopped using relay for charge calls altogether. (eg – on prepay you never know the correct amount of credit to purchase, you cannot load credit under \$20.00, and your credit also expires if not used in a short set amount of time). I would love to be able to pay for charge calls the same way hearing people do – ie – have them added to my telephone bill without having to go through an extra time-consuming process, remembering pin numbers, and all that hassle.

**Affordability – Please let us know if your comments relate to a specific service**

9. Are the costs of connectivity a barrier to you accessing and using the relay service?

No, not currently.

10. If so, what are the specific problems you have encountered and what impact has this had?

11. What changes could be made to the relay service to improve its affordability and why?

**Fit for Purpose – Please let us know if your comments relate to a specific service**

12. Are there any particular features or changes that you think should be made to the relay service to ensure it continues to offer a good experience to users and why?

Yes I would love there to be an easy-to-use service for charged calls, not involving the use of prepay, as previously explained.

13. Are there any relay services or equipment that you consider are no longer relevant and could be phased out or discontinued? If so, what measures or support would need to be provided to transition users to other services or mainstream devices?

No, I am also worried that some who don't use the service or understand the need for it may say to phase out VCO. I couldn't function without the VCO service.

14. Have you ever discontinued use of any of the relay services? If so which service or services, and why?

I have tried internet relay, and also did a trial of the Captel service to see if it would work for me. In my case I prefer to use my voice as English is my first language, NZSL is my second. For this reason I found the VCO service easier to use than internet relay. My trial of Captel showed that this service is not suitable for me. I think that Captel is more suitable for people who have a little residual hearing. I have no residual hearing. Captel was therefore very difficult for me, I couldn't tell whether the signal light was indicating a phone beeping or a voice for example, and I didn't know when to start speaking. I can provide more details about

my experience trialling Captel if needed to explain the problems I had in more detail (I am happy to be contacted), but for now I will just say that I do not believe that Captel is suitable for people like me who use their voice, but have no hearing at all.

**Any Other Comments – *Please let us know if your comments relate to a specific service***

**15. What other comments do you have about New Zealand Telecommunications Relay Services?**

Just that I am so thankful that it is there. It makes a huge difference to my life quality overall, and for the first time recently, I started using VCO for work related calls. This enables me to work on a more equal basis with hearing colleagues, and now that I have tried it at work and know how well it works, I think it can improve my future employability and open up new work options as well. So the importance of this service shouldn't be underestimated. The relay assistants are usually really good, they are patient and provide a great service. The helpdesk service is great too and it's been good to have this option to approach if I experience difficulties or have an issue to resolve.

**Thank you for taking the time to complete this submission. Your feedback is appreciated.**

## **Publication of submissions**

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**In particular, please clearly indicate in your submission if you do not wish your name and any other identifying details to be included in any summary of submissions that the Ministry may publish, or in any responses to OIA requests.**

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