

# 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>	Catherine Soper
<b>Your email address:</b>	

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

✓

✓	Yes
	No

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

Vodafone New Zealand Limited Government Relations Manager
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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:

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

√

<input type="checkbox"/>	Northland	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wellington
<input type="checkbox"/>	Auckland	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tasman
<input type="checkbox"/>	Waikato	<input type="checkbox"/>	Nelson
<input type="checkbox"/>	Bay of Plenty	<input type="checkbox"/>	Marlborough
<input type="checkbox"/>	Gisborne	<input type="checkbox"/>	West Coast
<input type="checkbox"/>	Hawke's Bay	<input type="checkbox"/>	Canterbury
<input type="checkbox"/>	Taranaki	<input type="checkbox"/>	Otago
<input type="checkbox"/>	Manawatu-Wanganui	<input type="checkbox"/>	Southland
<input type="checkbox"/>	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?**

√

<input type="checkbox"/>	Under 18	<input type="checkbox"/>	45 – 54
<input type="checkbox"/>	18 – 24	<input type="checkbox"/>	55 – 64
<input type="checkbox"/>	25 – 34	<input type="checkbox"/>	Over 65
<input type="checkbox"/>	35 – 44	<input type="checkbox"/>	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:**

√

<input type="checkbox"/>	Deaf
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	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?**

√

	Yes
	No

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

√

	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:**

√

	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:

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

As a telecommunications provider, Vodafone New Zealand Limited is in the business of connecting people. We provide Relay Services for our customers through a dedicated call centre number and have a long-standing interest in the policy settings of connecting deaf/hearing impaired New Zealanders.

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

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<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Teletypewriter to Voice	<input type="checkbox"/>	CapTel
<input type="checkbox"/>	Voice Carry Over	<input type="checkbox"/>	Web CapTel
<input type="checkbox"/>	Hearing Carry Over	<input type="checkbox"/>	Video Interpreting Service
<input type="checkbox"/>	Mobile Text Relay	<input type="checkbox"/>	Speech to Speech
<input type="checkbox"/>	Internet Relay	<input type="checkbox"/>	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?)

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

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

**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?

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?

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

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?

**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?

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?

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?

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

**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?

Vodafone supports the Government’s provision of the Telecommunications Relay Service for deaf, hearing impaired, speech impaired and deafblind New Zealanders. We acknowledge the competing choices that the Government has to balance when considering funding of equipment and services to create a non-disabling nation.

To enable our deaf and hearing impaired customers to engage with our customer care staff, Vodafone has a dedicated 0800 number available to the NZ Relay Service. Providing this dedicated line has allowed us to reduce call wait times and improve customer experience for Relay Service users.

As a telecommunication service provider, we operate in a sector characterised by rapid technology change. We note the following trends observed within MBIEs consultation:

- Decline in traditional or legacy services (voice), towards text and video
- Increase in use of mobile and tablets away from fixed line services
- Increase in communications apps such as ‘TexMee’ (mobile text relay) alongside other ‘mainstream’ communication apps such as Facetime, Skype etc

While these trends have been raised in the specific context of relay service users, we note their applicability to the general population.

With regard to future provision of relay services, we encourage MBIE to consider how bespoke relay services can integrate with mainstream communication apps. We highlight the word integration, rather than replacement as we are conscious that removing any bespoke relay services in favour of mainstream communication apps creates a vulnerability for end-users

regarding guaranteed provision of tools and platforms.

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to this consultation. We look forward to future engagement as appropriate.

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

## **Publication of submissions**

Written submissions may be published at [www.mbie.govt.nz](http://www.mbie.govt.nz). We will consider you to have consented to publication by making a submission, unless you clearly specify otherwise in your submissions.

In any case, all information provided to the Ministry in response to this discussion document is subject to the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA). **Please advise if you have any objection to the release of any information contained in a submission**, and in particular, which part(s) you consider should be withheld, together with reason(s) for withholding the information.

**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.**

The Ministry will consider all such objections when responding to requests for copies and information on submissions to this document under the OIA. Please note that in certain circumstances information you have provided us may be required to be released to a requester under the OIA, even if you would prefer it to be withheld.

The Privacy Act 1993 establishes certain principles with respect to the collection, use, and disclosure of information about individuals by various agencies including the Ministry. It governs access by individuals to information about themselves held by agencies. Please contact us if you would like a copy of, or to correct, any of your personal information. Any personal information you supply in the course of making a submission will be used by the Ministry only in conjunction with the matters covered by the documents.