

Telecommunications Performance Bulletin for 2008–09 released

The ACMA's *Telecommunications Performance Bulletin* reports annually on the industry's performance in meeting regulated consumer protection obligations.

The bulletin reports on industry's performance in meeting the obligations of:

- > the Customer Service Guarantee (CSG), which sets standards for the timely provision and maintenance of standard telephone services
- > the Priority Assistance scheme, which provides enhanced telephone connections and fault repair services to any person with a diagnosed, life-threatening medical condition
- > the provision of public payphones as part of the Universal Service Obligation (USO)
- > the Network Reliability Framework (NRF) under which the ACMA monitors the reliability of Telstra's fixed telephone network.

Released in January, the 2008–09 report shows connection and repair performance by Telstra, Optus and AAPT under the CSG standard generally at or above the 90 per cent benchmark used by the ACMA. While service levels dropped below the 90 per cent benchmark on occasion, performance for 2008–09 improved on the previous year. Average CSG compensation payments made over this period decreased for Telstra and Optus, but increased for AAPT.

Telstra offers priority assistance under its carrier licence condition, while AAPT voluntarily offers a priority assistance service under an industry code. The volume of Telstra's priority assistance customers increased and priority assistance connection performance improved steadily over 2008–09, reaching the 90 per cent benchmark by June 2009.



Telstra, as the universal service provider, provides the ACMA with data relating to its performance in meeting its USO obligation for payphones on a quarterly basis. The total number of payphones (Telstra and other operators) continues to decline—in 2008–09 the number fell by 12.8 per cent to 39,328.

While payphone fault repair performance was consistent and at a high level in urban and rural areas, performance in remote areas remained below the ACMA's 80 per cent benchmark. However, the average time taken to clear payphone faults improved across all states and territories in 2008–09.

The NRF is a three-tiered regulatory arrangement under which the ACMA monitors the reliability of Telstra's fixed telephone network. The ACMA uses

data supplied by Telstra to calculate the average downtime of fault-affected services in a month. For 2008–09, on average, CSG-eligible services were available 99.91 per cent of the time. ☎

The *Telecommunications Performance Bulletin* covering the period 2008–09 is available on the ACMA website at www.acma.gov.au (go to About ACMA: Publications & research > Publications > Telecommunications publications > Telecommunications industry reports > Telecommunications Performance Reports).