



new zealand relay

www.nzrelay.co.nz

Newsletter No. 1, March 05

Welcome to our first NZ Relay Service Newsletter, I hope you will find it useful and informative

I would like to begin by acknowledging the contribution made by the Deaf Association NZ, Victoria Manning and Kim Robinson, in establishing the NZ Relay Service. Their tenacity and refusal to accept 'no' for answer was pivotal to the relay service being established.

We have now had the Relay Service running for 4 months and though there were some initial teething problems with the Internet Relay, this issue seems to have been resolved.

Advisory Group

We have made the decision to extend the deadline for positions on the Advisory Group until 28th March 2005. It will be the responsibility of this group to offer feedback and recommendations to the M.E.D (Ministry of Economic Development) and the NZ Relay Service on further improvements and new initiatives. This group will play a vital role in any future developments of the service. For more information and applications please contact Chris.

LOGO Competition

There were a number of entries received for the LOGO competition and these were judged by a panel of 6 (representatives of Deaf organizations). The panel made the decision to combine parts of the two entries and these have been given to 3 professional design companies.

The 3 companies will present their concepts to the same panel in Mid-March. All going well we will have our newly designed logo ready by the end of March. I would like to congratulate both Vikkie Wright and Daniel Greenwood for their winning entries and hope they enjoy their prize.

We plan to launch the new NZ Relay Logo as soon as possible



Achieving a New Zealand Relay Service

The establishment of the NZ Relay service is largely a result of a Human Rights Commission case that began in 1995.

Kim Robinson and Victoria Manning made individual complaints to the Human Rights Commission claiming that not being able to access the phone was a breach of our human rights under our Human Rights Act 1993.

Kim and Victoria worked very hard to help people understand their vision of a NZ relay service and to convince people that access to the phone for deaf people *was* possible. In the first few years of their case people (deaf and hearing people alike) did not understand what a relay service was or how it might work in NZ. Many people believed it was impossible to establish a relay service in NZ for variety of reasons.

Kim and Victoria researched information on international relay services. They also came to know the Human Rights Act (1993) inside out and learnt how the Act might apply to disability issues and the telecommunications sector. They spent many hours studying information and other similar human rights cases. Kim and Victoria also made use of friends and contacts in NZ and around the world, including contacts in the legal sector.

In the first few years of their case Kim and Victoria were well ahead of their time and up against a lot, ie: NZ's largest company, complicated bureaucratic processes, the political situation at the time, and a lack of belief in a NZ relay service.

Early in 2002 the Human Rights Commission released a statement saying that the key telecommunication company was in breach of the Human Rights Act for not providing access to Deaf people, and that it was reasonable for them to provide a relay service. After a few more months and after putting some more pressure on Government, in May 2002 the Government announced that they would establish a relay service under the Telecommunications Act 2001. Finally, after 6 years we had our victory and the promise of access to the phone!

The Government then set about implementing a NZ Relay service, drafting up a service specification and preparing for the tender process.

Kim's and Victoria's persistence and determination in the face of much adversity kept alive the dream of a NZ relay service. Kim and Victoria did not succeed without support and would like to acknowledge the assistance of the Disabled Persons Assembly, and the Australian relay service providers, the Chief Human Rights Commissioner, Rosslyn Noonan, and other Human Rights Commission staff.

Kim and Victoria applaud the establishment of the NZ Relay Service. This service will have a tremendous impact of improving our quality of life, independence and participation in society.



Phone Cards

Pre-paid phone cards are available for purchase from the NZ Relay Service. These cards can be used if you are wanting to make an International, 0900 or landline to mobile call. Phone cards can be purchased by contacting Help Desk on:

Email: Helpdesk@nzrelay.co.nz

Fax: 0800 4 329 697



The Privacy Act

I know that there have been a few difficulties for some people when they have tried to use the Relay Service to access personal information. There are few organizations e.g. Banks and Government Departments (IRD (Inland Revenue Department) – who refuse to pass on personal information via a third party, in this case the Relay Service). The obligations on these organizations under the Privacy Act prevents the disclosure of personal information to a third party without written consent of the respective person concerned. I would like you to know that we are aware of this problem and are currently working with Ministry of Economic Development to try and resolve this issue as soon as possible. If this situation arises for anyone trying to access personal information via Relay Service can you please send me the details of the call e.g..

Name of organization (Bank, IRD, WINZ)

Date & time of call

Name of the person you spoke to (not the Relay Assistant)

New Zealand Relay ROAD SHOW

Over the next few months I will be traveling to various regions throughout New Zealand to promote NZ Relay.

4th March 2005	Napier/Hawkes Bay	Deaf & Hearing Impaired Community
10th – 13th March 2005	Christchurch	125th Year Jubilee – Van Asch Deaf Education Center
1st April 2005	Wellington	Deaf Mental Health Service – Open Day
2nd April 2005	Wellington	Hearing Association National Conference

If you would like further details of the presentations please contact me. Also, if you would like a presentation in your area, let me know!!

It is my intention to produce a NZ Relay Service newsletter quarterly and I would appreciate your contributions, relay stories & jokes etc.

Keep Dialling: TTY: 0800 4 711 711 or Voice: 0800 4 712 712

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