CONVERSING BY TTY (TELEPHONE TYPEWRITER)

WHAT IS A TTY?
A telephone typewriter (TTY) is a telecommunication device that enables people who are Deaf, hard of hearing or speech impaired to use the telephone system.

Hearing TTY users should use short simple sentences and should be guided by the language level of the person they are conversing with. It is not necessary to use full stops and commas; however other punctuation may be used to enhance the conversation, as in the examples below.

During a TTY conversation, tone of voice, laughter or vocal expressions conveying emotion or emphasis etc. are not able to be sent and received by those conversing. This may sometimes lead to a bland conversation or in extreme cases confusion or misunderstanding.

Common techniques used to convey extra meaning or emotion are:

- Use of punctuation: !!!! ????
- Use of spacing and pauses: .......... …
- Use of words to convey amusement: hahaha,
- Or other emotions: umm, ohhhh

There are common rules of etiquette that apply to both a voice and a TTY conversation. These include:

- Using your usual greeting:
  “Good morning this is Mary from Citypower GA”.
- Explaining if you need the person to hold or wait:
  “Hold pls” or “wait pls”.
- When you return to the phone, make this clear to the person you are talking to: “Back now GA”.

COMMON RULES AND ABBREVIATIONS USED IN A TTY CONVERSATION

GA (go ahead): Always use GA to indicate that you have finished typing and it is the other person’s turn to respond.

GA to SK: This signals that you are ready to finish the conversation. The person you are conversing with will then add to the conversation or reply with GA to SK in the same way, to indicate that he or she is also ready to terminate the phone call.

SK (Stop keying): This is usually typed as SK SK and indicates that you have definitely finished your conversation. The other person will then also respond with SK.

Never finish a conversation with SK alone. It will be interpreted as very abrupt. Always start to terminate a conversation with GA to SK or Bye to SK, as mentioned above.

Common Optional Abbreviations

XXX indicates a typing or wording error or error in conversation
U = you
PLS = please
Q or Q? = question
PLS HLD = please hold
ASAP = as soon as possible
TMW = tomorrow
DR = doctor
NBR = number
THRU = through
MELB = Melbourne

THE NATIONAL RELAY SERVICE

The National Relay Service (NRS) is an Australia-wide telephone service available to everyone, at no extra charge.

People who are Deaf or have a hearing or speech impairment can contact anyone through the NRS, using a TTY or a computer with a modem.
Customer hotlines are open 9.00am to 5pm (Eastern Standard Time) Monday to Friday. An account may be required for some calls.

Contact Helpdesk to discuss your requirements.

TTY: 1800 555 630
Voice: 1800 555 660
Fax: 1800 555 690
Email: helpdesk@relayservice.com.au
Web: www.relayservice.com.au

NRS: 13 3 677
NRS Tollfree: 1800 555 677
EMERGENCY TEXT RELAY SERVICE: 106

SSR: (Speech to Speech Relay) 1300 555 727
SSR – Tollfree: 1800 555 727

Other Related Fact Sheet Titles:

- Communicating with People who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing
- Devices for People with a Hearing Impairment
- Manual Communication and Sign Language
- Working with an Australian Sign Language Interpreter

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