

## Supporting access to emergency services information - Hearing Awareness Week 2013

27 August 2013

Hearing Awareness Week is an annual event, this year held from 25-31 August 2013. Hearing Awareness Week raises awareness and public acceptance of hearing loss and promotes goods and services that assist deaf and hearing impaired people.

The National Relay Service (NRS) has been provided under contract to the Australian Government since 1995. This service enables people who are deaf or who have a hearing or speech loss to communicate with anyone by phone.

To complement the existing services provided by the NRS, the A/Chief Executive of the SA Fire and Emergency Services Commission (SAFECOM), David Place, is pleased to announce a project by SAFECOM that is focussed on enhancing accessibility of deaf, hearing and speech impaired persons to emergency services and emergency information.

Mr Place said "About one in every eight Australians has some form of hearing loss and there is also a significant number of Australians with speech impairment. With this in mind, the project focusses on improving the South Australian deaf, hearing and speech impaired community's awareness of how to access emergency and recovery services."

This project has been made possible by a project grant that SAFECOM successfully applied for as part of the Natural Disaster Resilience Grant Scheme for 2012/13.

Judy Curran, Deaf Can:Do Chief Executive commented "It is vital that people who are deaf or hard of hearing have access to information in emergency situations, where often such information can be the difference between life or death. We fully support this important initiative."

The project is guided in part by the NRS steps for becoming NRS friendly for deaf, hearing and speech impaired persons. As Deborah Fullwood, Managing Director, NRS Outreach noted: "The National Relay Service is very pleased to be associated with this project."

The NRS provides reassurance in the event of an emergency. "The National Relay Service has priority call answering times for emergencies", Ms Fullwood said.



An Australian Government Initiative



A phone solution for people  
who are deaf or have a  
hearing or speech impairment

**Deaf  
Can:Do**

For further information regarding the project please call

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