

## Transcript for BSL video – emergency video relay statement

This video has been made by Ofcom. We are the UK's regulator for communications services including broadband, home phone and mobile services, as well as TV, radio and post.

Today we are announcing our decision to introduce emergency video relay in the UK.

Telecoms providers in the UK will now prepare to provide a free, 24/7 emergency video relay service, via a mobile app and a website by next summer. The service must be approved by Ofcom.

Emergency video relay will make it easier for deaf British Sign Language users to get the help they need, such as police, ambulance, or fire brigade, in emergencies. We believe this will save lives, and bring other benefits including faster treatment when people are ill or injured. Our objective is for BSL users to have equivalence of access to the emergency services with other people in the UK.

Qualified and experienced interpreters will interpret the emergency calls. Emergency video relay, and the data used to access it, will both be free of charge. It will work on any suitable device such as a smartphone, tablet, laptop or desktop computer.

We carried out public consultation about our proposals. As part of this, we published BSL videos and invited people to respond in BSL or English. A number of deaf people responded, and we were able to take account of what they told us.

For example, deaf people told us that it was important that users did not need to register or use a password to use emergency video relay. In the rules we are publishing today we have said that people will not need to register to use the service. However, we will work with the telecoms sector and organisations representing deaf people to encourage people to download the emergency video relay app to their phones in advance, as this will save time in an emergency.

Deaf people also told us that emergency text relay and emergency SMS are important and must be retained. They will both continue to be available, alongside the new emergency video relay service.

We would like to thank the deaf people who took part in the consultation.

### What happens next?

To be approved by Ofcom, an emergency video relay service will have to meet the approval criteria we have published today. We have asked potential video relay suppliers to tell us now if they are interested in applying for approval, and to send formal applications for approval by 1 October. We will then consult in November on any proposal to approve an emergency video relay service.

The telecoms sector will need to prepare for the introduction of emergency video relay. This will include deciding how the costs of emergency video relay will be shared across the sector.

When emergency video relay goes live next summer, we will make a further announcement in BSL and English.