

## **Proposed approval of an emergency video relay service**

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.

In June we announced our decision to introduce emergency video relay in the UK. This 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.

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.

It is important that emergency video relay is a high-quality service so that deaf BSL users have equivalence of access to the emergency services with other people in the UK. It needs to be available 24 hours a day, to use qualified and experienced interpreters and to have the highest technical and quality standards. When we announced our decision in June 2021, we published information about the standards the service would have to meet - called the approval criteria.

We asked video relay suppliers to tell us if they were interested in applying for approval, and to send formal applications for approval by 1 October. Any applications had to set out in detail how the service would meet the approval criteria.

We are proposing to approve one service which we consider meets the approval criteria: Sign Language Interactions. We have set out more detail in our written consultation document.

### **What happens next?**

We are asking people to tell us by 17 December if they agree that we are correct in our proposal to approve Sign Language Interactions' emergency video relay service. We will publish our final decision in January 2022.

Telecoms providers will then need to contract with the supplier of an approved emergency video relay service and work with the relay supplier so that the data used for emergency video relay is free of charge.

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

If you would like to respond to this consultation in BSL:

- Email a short video in BSL to [emergencyBSL@ofcom.org.uk](mailto:emergencyBSL@ofcom.org.uk)
- Upload a video in BSL to YouTube or another hosting site and send the link to [emergencyBSL@ofcom.org.uk](mailto:emergencyBSL@ofcom.org.uk)

We will translate all BSL responses into written English and publish them on our website unless you tell us you do not want this.

You can also respond in writing by emailing us at [emergencyBSL@ofcom.org.uk](mailto:emergencyBSL@ofcom.org.uk)

You can also contact Ofcom via video relay about this or any other issue. Go to our website and click on 'contact us' then on 'use our video relay service' to contact Ofcom in BSL during office hours.