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**Performance measure 6 – Achievement of telephony service level standards: average speed of answer**


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**RESULTS**

Year	Target	Result	Achieved	Change on previous year +/-
2020–21	≤16 minutes	6 minutes 2 seconds	✓	–8 minutes 9 seconds
2019–20	≤16 minutes	14 minutes 11 seconds	✓	–1 minute 21 seconds
2018–19	≤16 minutes	15 minutes 32 seconds	✓	–26 seconds

**ANALYSIS**

The agency achieved the annual target despite demand for telephony services remaining high as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The 2020–21 result is the best the agency has achieved since reporting on this measure commenced in 2012–13.

In 2020–21, the agency answered 19 million SSW calls with the average speed of answer (ASA) for customers reducing by over 8 minutes compared to the previous year.

Performance was aided by additional staff from within the agency and across government supporting the initial COVID-19 pandemic response. This momentum continued throughout the year and the results were achieved by using a mature planning and forecasting model and ensuring there was sufficient workforce available to manage the workload.

High customer contact through telephony channels was due to a number of natural disasters and the ongoing economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated by reduced face-to-face capacity. The agency successfully balanced its role in assisting with disaster responses against its business-as-usual workload, in addition to being supported by innovative solutions such as voice biometrics. For more information on *voice biometrics*, see page 15.

The table below provides a comparison of SSW calls the agency answered across the three financial years.

	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21
Disability, Sickness and Carers answered	1.1 million	1.2 million	1.5 million
Employment Services answered	1.8 million	2.5 million	3.1 million
Families and Parenting answered	3.8 million	3.4 million	3.7 million
Older Australians answered	0.8 million	0.8 million	1.2 million
Youth and Students answered	0.8 million	1.0 million	1.2 million
All other answered	8.0 million	8.5 million	8.2 million
<b>Total calls answered</b>	<b>16.2 million</b>	<b>17.4 million</b>	<b>19.0 million</b>
<b>Total customer terminated calls</b>	<b>4.2 million</b>	<b>4.1 million</b>	<b>2.0 million</b>
Disability, Sickness and Carers ASA	26 minutes 0 seconds	22 minutes 54 seconds	6 minutes 47 seconds
Employment Services ASA	21 minutes 32 seconds	19 minutes 29 seconds	7 minutes 41 seconds
Families and Parenting ASA	20 minutes 4 seconds	19 minutes 50 seconds	8 minutes 0 seconds
Older Australians ASA	24 minutes 45 seconds	20 minutes 17 seconds	8 minutes 5 seconds
Youth and Students ASA	25 minutes 20 seconds	18 minutes 44 seconds	6 minutes 7 seconds

**REFERENCE**

2020–21 Portfolio Budget Statements, page 234  
2020–21 Corporate Plan, page 15

**DATA SOURCE**

Telstra Computer Telephony Interface files.

**NOTES AND DEFINITIONS**

- Average speed of answer is measured from the time a customer enters the queue to the time their call is answered by a service officer.
- Calls transferred internally between queues are counted as separate calls with separate wait times and are included in this calculation.
- Customer terminated calls are not included in the calculation as the calculation measures how long customers have waited to be answered only.