

COMMUNITY ACCESS TELEPHONE EVALUATION:

The trial of a community phone for remote
areas



Picture On Cover: Rhonda, Ernest and Albert Henry of Kapalga outstation, NT

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides an initial evaluation of the Community Access Telephone trial that is taking place in 20 remote communities throughout Central and Northern Australia. The fieldwork for this evaluation was based over the four month period that the Community Access Telephones were installed. The data used includes data from a user survey, a survey of card distributors and data visual observations of the phone.

The Community Access Telephone was successfully installed and functioning well in the 20 communities under the trial. During the survey period, there was one fault reported at town camp community which was rectified within a day of reporting the fault. Clearly, the success of this trial helps to distinguish that different telephone services need to be explored for remote communities of Indigenous people. This report makes recommendations about the future proofing of the provision of Community Access Telephones for remote Indigenous communities.

- 1. Protocols need to be established for which define installation procedures and on-going support for the Community Access Telephone**
- 2. Remote communities need to be provided options from service providers**
- 3. More effective access or alternatives to prepaid cards in the remote small outstation settlements needs to be identified**
- 4. The Community Access Telephone needs to be recognised under the USO**
- 5. Capacity building and awareness raising of the maintenance of the Community Access Telephone needs to be delivered to the communities**
- 6. The Community Access Telephone should be trialled in areas without existing infrastructure**
- 7. Community members need to be consulted on the installation, location and type of service that they want**
- 8. A longitudinal evaluation should be considered to provide greater insight into the Community Access Telephone and community feedback**
- 9. That service delivery of the Community Access Telephone become a more co-ordinated approach which involves service providers, Indigenous communities and community organisations**
- 10. Community Access Telephone should be considered as a robust option for areas of high vandalism**
- 11. Diversity of approaches in delivering advertising/education promotion on using Community Access Telephone**

12. That a number of public telephones be installed in larger communities

13. Frequent contact numbers and an Indigenous Phone Directory be developed

The Community Access Telephone trial has provided important information of the community telephone services. The Community Access Telephone is one option but many communities would prefer or prioritise coin operated payphones or private home telephones. Given, the enthusiasm that has been generated from other remote communities interested in trialling the Community Access Telephone it is essential that information become available which details options for telephone services in remote areas.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Access to a telephone service is critical for people living in remote communities for the purpose of health, safety, social cohesion and accessing government and other services. In line with this, current and future economic development and enterprise in these areas also hinges on having access to reliable telecommunications. For many Indigenous residents in remote communities, public phones are the only lifeline. There is a dearth of studies on the inefficiency in the provision of telecommunications. As a result, a federal government initiative TAPRIC was formulated to address telephones services, internet services, broadband services and residents' opportunities and rights in remote communities (DCITA 2002). Service Providers have also been addressing the issues in remote communities in varying degrees. Securing a basic telephone services should take precedence over accessing other more advanced telecommunications infrastructure and services.

The Community Access Telephone trial is a technology and service project that the Centre for Appropriate Technology and Telstra are working on that seeks to address lack of public telephones in remote areas. It aims to do this by not only providing infrastructure but delivering appropriate technology and a more applicable service to target the issues behind inefficiencies in public telephone services in remote areas (e.g. lack of prepaid card service or lengthy waits for faults). The Community Access Telephone is being trialled in 20 remote communities around Central and Northern Australia. This report provides the evaluation of the first phase of the installation and is based on field that took place from March 2005 to mid July 2005.

The study area is focussed these communities. The objectives of this report are to:

- Evaluate community perspectives on the Community Access Telephone
- Report on reliability and performance of the Community Access Telephone
- Report on usage and take-up of prepaid card services
- To evaluate the project with regards to CAT's specific objectives for payphone services

The report is divided into six sections: (introduction), background in payphone services, CAT's work in telecommunications, data from surveys, the evaluation of the Community Access Telephone and finally, the conclusion and recommendations.

2.0 PHONE SERVICES TO REMOTE COMMUNITIES

2.1 Current Situation in Telephone Service Delivery

A range of inquiries initiated by government or regulators have attempted to identify issues of the provision of phone services to remote areas. The following section provides overwhelming evidence that the level of access to a standard telephone services in many remote Indigenous communities is currently poor. According to **Community Housing and Infrastructure Needs Survey (CHINS)** (ABS 2001), around 48% of discrete Indigenous communities claimed there was no basic telephone service in their community. More specifically, of the 905 communities with populations of 50 people or fewer, 54% claimed they did not have access to a telephone service. The survey also found that the average period to get a payphone repaired was three weeks, but this tended to be longer for remote communities. A total of 22 communities reported payphone faults that took a year to rectify or have never been rectified (ABS 2001).

The **National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey (NATSISS)** (ABS 2002) reinforced similar findings reporting that twice as many homes in remote areas did not have a working telephone. Less than one third of households in the NT reported having a working telephone. The Commonwealth has recognized the low penetration of the standard telephone service in remote Indigenous communities as an issue.

The **Telecommunication Service Inquiry (TSI)** (TSI 2000) reported lack of the payphone service in Indigenous communities, despite importance of this basic service (2000: 90-91). Inline with subsequent inquiries, the TSI found that Indigenous Australians are not well serviced in essential telecommunication infrastructure or services. In response to TSI, the Government announced it would conduct a major \$0.4 million study of the telecommunications requirements of remote Indigenous communities, including development of an action plan to address their needs, known as the **Telecommunication Action Plan for Remote Indigenous Communities (TAPRIC)**.

In 2002, a study for improving telecommunication services in Indigenous communities (DCITA 2002) was published. This study forms the basis of TAPRIC's projects. In relation to payphones, the study (DCITA 2004: 44) found:

There is a high demand for payphones in remote Indigenous communities; payphones suit the arrangements of remote Indigenous community because they are pay-per-use and not subject to debt-management concerns; payphones are more functionally limited than fixed phone services, both in terms of receiving calls (although some have dial-in capability) and the convenience of residential phone access; payphones are often inappropriately located and frequently out of service; payphones are expensive to install and maintain and their cost-effectiveness has been challenged, with calls to consider alternatives; and compared with call costs for standard telephone services, payphone charges are relatively expensive. This difference is accentuated where standard phone services provided plans and discounts.

The report (DCITA 2002: 46-47) goes on to suggestion that main reasons payphone appear to be lacking are:

- Communities not being aware of the USO requirements to provide a payphone or the procedures to obtain one, and therefore not formally requesting one;
- Low literacy skills impinge on the capacity of communities to understand and complete application forms;
- Extended timeframes for repair of payphones and communities unable to report faults when the payphone is the only communication tool;
- Repeated vandalism of payphones leading to eventual discontinuation of use.

These points highlights several issues in payphone usage in remote areas including vandalism, community awareness of rights and lengthy delays in repairs. Given the identification of these particular, programs within TAPRIC should be focussed on overcoming these issues.

Telecommunication Action Plan for Remote Indigenous Communities (TAPRIC) is Federal Government commitment to invest in telecommunication infrastructure and services to remote communities over the three years (2002-2005) with an aim to address phone services, internet services, broadband service and consumer awareness. TAPRIC's 2 phone services programs are the Community Phones Subsidy Program and the Community Phone Demonstration Program.

In 2002 another report, the **Regional Telecommunications Inquiry (RTI) (2002)** was released which was an independent assessment of the adequacy of telecommunication services in regional, rural and remote Australia. RTI was established to examine the effectiveness of the Government's response to the TSI in order to determine whether these and other developments addressed consumer concerns. Although noting that TAPRIC is addressing community concerns, the Inquiry (2002) concluded that:

Continuing Government support and action will be required to fully resolve some concerns, such as improving service levels in remote Indigenous communities.

The Inquiry supported the current programs in remote areas but recommended that the challenge was a long-term one that would require further funding in the future. In line with previous reports, it present similar findings on shortages of payphones and recommended the need for improvements to be made to Telstra's compliance against the USO report timeframes.

The latest inquiry by the Australian Communication Authority (ACA), **Report into Payphone Services (2004)**, notes the heavy reliance on payphones in remote communities but again stated the inadequacy in their distribution, particularly in town camps and outstations. The report suggests that consideration be given to other alternative solutions. Such as, the use of prepaid cards system rather than coin operated systems. The review emphasised that one payphone per community is inadequate and suggested new installations should enable incoming calls to be received.

The ACA recommends that a “Bushlink telephone” be trialled as an alternative. Within this, CAT’s Community Access Telephone is defined as an option for remote Indigenous communities. ACA (2004: 7) suggest the Bushlink telephone would:

...be a payphone, accessible 24 hours per day, seven days per week; usually be card-only, where that is acceptable to the community; accept incoming calls with the number advertised; accept the new prepaid calling card being developed for home phones.

This review clearly shows support to alternative approaches in payphone services for remote areas. The Community Access Telephone is one response to current telephone service delivery.

2.2 Service Regulatory Environment

Telephone services exist within a regulatory environment in Australia. The Universal Service Obligation (USO) aims to give all Australians reasonable and equitable access to standard telephone and payphone services, including provision of some loss-making services. To the extent necessary to achieve this, the obligation includes the supply, installation and maintenance of payphones in Australia. Telstra will consider providing a payphone where the potential demand/revenue earned from the service is less than depreciation and maintenance costs in small remote communities, a general rule of more than 20 adult permanent residents is necessary. A low level of home telephone ownership is also noted as a criterion. Telstra places heavy emphasis on provision being request-driven (Telstra 2001).

The Customer Service Guarantee is a measure to safe guard customer’s telephone service. It provides financial compensation to customers who are affected by delays in service connections, fault repairs and missed appointments (TIO 2000). The CSG creates legal rights for customers to telephones services and results in re-numeration if guarantee is breached.

Recently, a review in to the USO/CSG (2004) was undertaken. It recommended that Telstra:

....develop and provide telephone services under the USO that are better suited to the telecommunications needs of remote Indigenous communities. The key characteristics of such services should include the ability to allow for pre-payment for services, and to allow users the flexibility to access their pre-paid service at a number of locations.

In effect, this review supports the trial of the CAT telephone. Additionally, the review made the recommendation that new technology should support communities’ ability to maintain their telephone service.

On a federal Government level, attempts have been made to develop the USO to better suit clients needs. They have under guidance of the review removed the current network extension charge, which previously created barriers for people to access phone services and they attempted to bring competition into the provision of the USO but as yet, no service provider other than Telstra has expressed interest in providing USO services.

On the community level, in many instances people living in remote Indigenous communities are not aware of their rights under the USO and CSG (CAT 2004). A lack of information means that people are not in a position where they can actively exercise these rights. Further, community members will often not have access to information which details the process to obtain a telephone service. There is a need for improved communication on available services with people in remote communities on the part of both government and service providers.

Finally, payphones are also regulated under the Consumer Price ACT which substantiates that Telstra must have a general cap of 40 cents on the price of an untimed local call from a public payphone. Additionally, the local call pricing parity scheme requires average untimed local call prices in non-metropolitan areas to be broadly comparable to those in metropolitan areas.

2.3 Conclusion

This section has reported on the current information available on payphone situation in the context of Indigenous communities. This provides significant support that the current payphones services to Indigenous communities are inadequate. Moreover, the later of the reports documented above have suggested a move towards innovation in the service and technology of payphones, to more closely align with the social, cultural and environment settings of remote Indigenous communities.

The CAT phone is one example of technology and service that may provide an alternative option for remote areas. This trial therefore provides a pivotal role in informing future initiatives and policy in telephone services for remote areas. However, until such initiatives are implemented broadly, the fact remains that Indigenous people in remote areas experience difficulty in accessing even the most basic communications technology to get help in life-threatening medical emergencies or transport breakdowns.

3.0 CAT's WORK IN TELEPHONE SERVICES FOR REMOTE COMMUNITIES

The Centre for Appropriate Technology (CAT) is a non-profit Indigenous organisation with specialist expertise in technology for remote Indigenous communities. People living in these communities are often disadvantaged against a range of indicators, when compared to the wider Australian population (Collins and Lea 1999; HREOC 1996) . These indicators include:

- Lower average incomes
- Lower levels of numeracy and literacy skills
- High levels of unemployment
- Poor housing conditions
- Poorer health indicators

In many regions, Indigenous people have a high level of mobility. People regularly move between communities, often for cultural and family business (Petersen 2004; Hamilton 1987). Many of these communities will have a small population which may grow to a much larger number of people for several weeks or months each year as people visit (Taylor 1998). High mobility calls for a different way of thinking about the delivery of effective services to these communities.

3.1 Gaps in Service Delivery for Indigenous Australia

In the above sections, the lack of phone services to remote areas has been identified and the unique conditions of remote settlements are described. CAT has built up specific expertise and understanding of the issues surrounding phone services within the context identified above. The issues that we have identified as most problematic to phone services include:

Rights: Many people living in remote areas are unaware of the rights under the CSG and/or USO. The quote below is an example of this.

It is good to have a phone service here. Good for the community. But what we really need is a service out bush. How can I get a telephone on my outstation?

Audrey McCormack, Angkerle outstation, 2005

Lack of services: Telephones services are limited in most remote areas. Most households do not have phone services or these have been disconnected. Payphones are often damaged and have not been repaired or replaced. Daisy Campbell (2003) from Ritjinka Outstation, NT reported this about phone services:

We spoke for one year straight, nothing came of it ... You and I have waited for the telephone for a long time haven't we? We talked and talked for the telephone for a long time, but nothing. We are happy today because we are talking about it. Maybe they will put in our telephone or maybe we might be waiting for a long time again. Maybe later this will happen for us, for our family, but we would really like to

have a telephone so we can ring from here. We need help to have a telephone so we can ring from here. To talk to somebody else, someone can help us. We have spoken many times for a telephone but still today they have never given us a telephone. And this is what I'm saying...

Fault Procedures: Standard pay phones often have a short life time in remote communities. Faults include blockages in coin/card tracks, handsets broken, buttons jam, etc. Additionally, the standard home phone rental handset is unable to withstand the harsh environment conditions in many remote areas. Standard phones cannot be located outside in the sun or rain. They are not strong enough for handling by many people and so the cord often breaks, keypads jam and the hand set cracks.

As noted previously, faults can take a long time to fix in remote areas. A lady from Anthelk Ewlpaye Town Camp in Alice Springs reinforces the ideas of lengthy waits saying:

When we had a phone, we'd always ask Tangentyere to get Telstra out to fix the phone. Most of the time, it took weeks to fix and eventually they just didn't come back anymore...

The length of wait is surprising, given that this is a town camp rather than a remote community. It is noted that the delays may well have been a mix between communicating the message to Telstra and the difficulties with repair. In any case, it reinforces the notion that communities can go without a lifeline service for length periods of time. One way of addressing this is to provide communities with the ability to fix their own phone when problems arise.

Billing Procedure: The post-service billing procedure adopted by carriers can often create problems for people in terms of debt management and budgeting. Pre-payment options offer a potential solution to this problem and should be made available to people under the USO, with identical call costs to those charged under post-service billing.

Accessibility: Standard coin operated pay phones are usually installed only in settlements with more than 20 permanent residents. If continuous vandalism occurs, Telstra can choose to discontinue the service. Another issue is that many phone services are not accessible 24 hours to all community members. They are often located inside a community store or council and locked up after closing hours.

In sum, there is a combination of reasons for deficiencies in phone service delivery which make it particularly difficult for many remote residents to gain access to telephone services.

3.2 The Community Access Telephone

The Community Access Telephone was designed by CAT to meet a number of telecommunication issues that are identified above. These can include the lack of phone services, inadequate services and vandalism of public phones. There are 3 parts of the telephone including a steel covering with brass buttons, a T1000 handset and a T1000S

telephone. The features of the Community Access Telephone that have been designed to reduce barriers to current deficiency in payphone services are:

The phone can be accessed by everyone in the community: The community phone can be located in a central position so that anyone can access it 24 hours a day. Unlike some public telephones, this phone is designed to be installed either on the side of a community building/residential house or in a Telstra public phone cabinet. Community members should be consulted on the most suitable placement (this is discussed further in the text).

The phone uses a prepaid card service: Previous reports have highlighted that a prepaid card service may be more appropriate in some communities than other services. The prepaid service should be competitive with other phone rates.

The phone is robust: The Community Phone includes a stainless casing with brass buttons which protect the internal phone. The protective case allows water and grit to fall through, without damaging the T1000s telephone. The protective unit is also designed so that high strength cleansing material can be used to remove any graffiti or other blockages, i.e. chewing gum. The weather resistant steel casing is designed to cope with the extreme conditions, such as dust and heavy rain.

The phone uses standard components: The Community Access Telephone uses standard Telstra components: a T1000S telephone and T1000 handset. For this factor, dysfunctional or broken parts can be obtained and changed over relatively easily. The CAT phone parts are easy to replace which reduces the need for service calls.

The phone can be maintained by a community member (without AusTel certification): The standard parts help this phone to be maintained by community without AusTel certificate. This maintenance is limited to aspects of the phone itself and does not include phone line service. The parts that can be maintained are the protective casing, the handset and the internal phone. The handset and the internal phone can be changed over relatively easily if broken (see Appendix A – phone maintenance booklet).

The appropriate information on using phone is available to communities: The Centre of Appropriate Technology (through funding by DCITA) designed an image based poster on using the phone with a prepaid card. These have been installed in the trial communities. In addition to this, practical demonstrations were also given to community members.

3.3 Conclusion

New approaches to payphone service delivery in Indigenous communities rely on having an understanding of the current shortcomings of existing services. The Community Access Telephone trial includes: the trial of a new telephone technology and delivery of applicable prepaid service, which attempt to improve payphone services. The following sections provide data and evaluation of the first trial.

4.0 RESULTS – METHODS & DATA

4.1 Methodology

The data is directly taken from the installation of 20 Community Access Telephones installed under the first phase and is based on fieldwork in these places from mid March to early July 2005. This evaluation combines a number of data sources in order to evaluate the use of the Community Access Telephone. These include:

- Answers from community survey (see appendix A for survey)
- Answers from a survey of phone card distributors
- Direct observation/visual assessments of phone

In each of the 20 communities, there was a random selection of community members chosen to answer the survey. This number of participants in the survey varied for a number of reasons including the size of population, number of community members present during fieldwork, etc. Appendix b presents a breakdown of the survey participants. The survey was a list of open-ended questions that included questions on previous phone services, usability of Community Access Telephone, etc. The topics covered during the survey are included in Appendix A. In the communities where a phone card distributor was present, their thoughts were also added into the community perspective. The survey results from the community and card providers have been summarised and included in Table 1 and 2 of this chapter.

Data was also requested from Telstra on phone usage and call history. This data would provide greater insight into phone usage, e.g. numbers be called, how often the phone is being used, this phone service in comparison to others, etc. Despite the request, no data has been made available as yet. If the data becomes available in future, CAT will attempt to update the data in this report.

This chapter briefly describes the 20 communities that included in the trial, in this section the prior payphone history is taken from community perspectives obtained during the surveys. The interview data collected is then presented in tables and is followed by the call history data. This chapter provides a useful reference for the succeeding chapters which will evaluate the community phone and offer recommendations for continuous developments in Community Access Telephone installations.

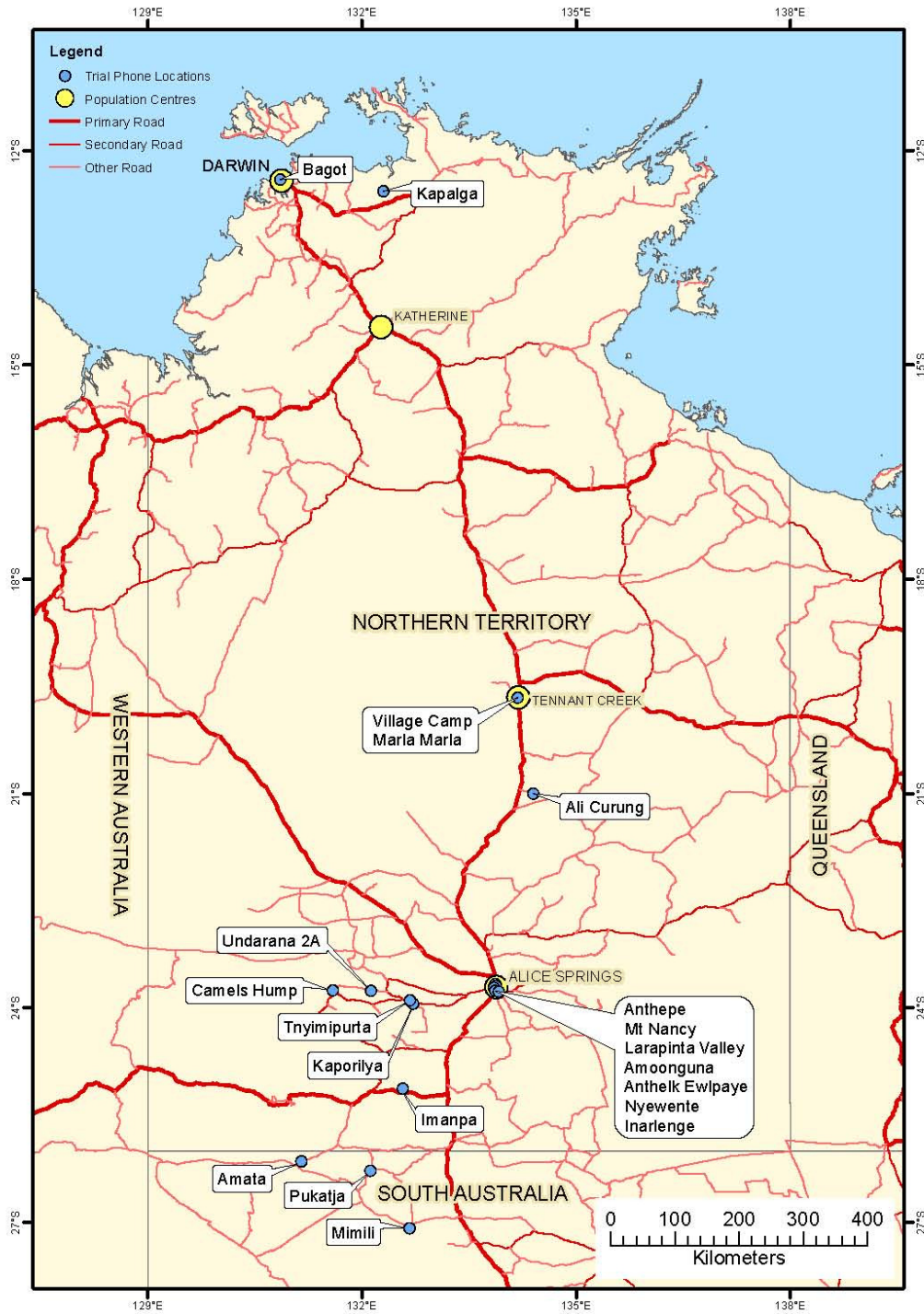
4.2 The twenty communities in the trial

20 communities were selected by Telstra to participate in the trial of the first community phone roll-out. Telstra selected these communities for the following reasons (Telstra 2004):

1. Sites were selected for their suitability to trial the Robust Telephone.
2. Sites close to town preferred to improve Telstra's ability to assess and monitor the trial.
3. In some cases the Robust Phone complements an existing payphone to allow contrasting assessment.
4. The proximity of these sites to town allows for efficient education and support on the use of the phone.

A map is presented of the twenty communities (see page over), followed by a brief description of the community and their telephone history. Communities are presented in alphabetical order and the list is not indicative of other factors.

Locations of the Communities Trialling the Community Access Telephone



Ali Curung

Ali Curung is a community 339 km north of Alice Springs. Tennant Creek, 159 km away, is the major service centre for Ali Curung residents. There are approximately 500 residents and 45 houses at Ali Curung. The community currently has access to one public phone that is located in a cabinet outside the community store. There are only 5 houses within the community currently connected to phone services. Billing has been an issue in the delivery of phones to household residents previously. The residents expressed concern for another service.

The Community Access Telephone was installed on 7.6.05 and therefore, has been only in relatively short time when field assessment was conducted. The Community Access Telephone is located in the north eastern residential area of the community, in a Telstra cabinet.

Amata

Amata is a community which is found Anangu Pitjantjatjara Lands, South Australia. The community is serviced by AP Services. The closest major service centre is Alice Springs, which is 557 km north of Amata. There are approximately 300 residents and 54 houses/shelters. The community currently had a private operated payphone that was subject to vandalism. A resident at Amata reports:

Payphones get used by community but they also get damaged and broken. The coin gets stuck, the phones are vandalised for their coins and in some cases the units have been broken beyond repair.

The payphone was stored in a lockable cabinet and could be locked up at night; this helped to reduce the damage to the phone but also left the community without access to phone during night. In addition to public phones, Amata is one community that has a reasonable level of private home phones due to the iCONNECT program. There are 36 households on the iConnect program (PY Media 2005). The community is outside mobile range.

The Community Access Telephone was installed on a wall of the community store and was installed on the 23.05.05.

Amoonguna

Amoonguna is a community to the southeast of Alice Springs. It has a resident population of between 300-350 people. There is currently one operation payphone is located close to the community store. There are 17 households who registered on iCONNECT program (PY Media 2005). Amoonguna is within mobile range and many residents also use prepaid mobile services.

The community has requested an additional payphone to be located towards the residential area. The Community Access Telephone was installed in a cabinet towards the south of the community. It was installed on the 27.05.05.

Anthelk Ewlpaye (Charles Creek)

Anthelk Ewlpaye is a town camp close to the centre of Alice Springs. There are nine houses with a population of approximately 70 people. The community is mostly Arrernte speaking family.

The Community Access Telephone is the first public phone within the community area. The other closest public telephone is located approximately 1km down the road at a restaurant, which has opening hours are 6am -10pm. Many of younger people have mobiles within the community. There are two households which have residential phone lines and community is within mobile range. The Community Access Telephone was installed on the 27.05.05 and was in only a relatively short time when the fieldwork took place.

Athepe

Athepe is a town camp on the south side of Alice Springs serviced by Tangentyere Council. There are approximately seven houses and between 30-45 people living there at any one time. There are no approximately 3 years ago but Telstra discontinue this service because of high vandalism rates. The community is within mobile range.

The Community Access Telephone was installed at the community on the 28.06.05 and has only been in operation a relatively short time when writing this report. The Community Access Telephone is located on the side of a community building.

Bagot

Bagot Community is a community located in suburbs of Darwin. The Bagot Community Council is responsible for the municipal services. The community has approximately 79 houses with a variable population of between 120 and 550 (depending on mobility and seasonal issues). The residents of the community are from a mixture language groups. There are currently no public phones or residential phones within the community. The only phones services are those at the council, health clinic and women's centre. The community is within mobile range. Residents have expressed in a number of phones being placed strategically throughout the community. A woman from Bagot community says:

We have needed a payphone for a long time here at Bagot. People here walk up to McDonalds to go to use the payphone there. McDonalds isn't always open and it's a long way to walk in emergency.

The Community Access phone was installed on 5.05.05. The Community Access Telephone is located on the side of the Community Council building at the front of the community.

Camels Hump

Camels Hump is a small outstation to the west of Alice Springs. It is approximately 420km, of which 15 km is unsealed road. There are two houses and approximately 20 residents. The community is serviced by Tjuwanpa Resource Agency. The outstation has one public phone which is coin operated. There are no residential phones. The community is outside mobile range.

The Community Access Telephone was installed on the 27.05.05 and has been in operation a couple of months. The Community Access Telephone is located on the side of one of the two houses.

Charles Creek

Charles Creek is a town camp of Alice Springs serviced by Tangentyere Community Council. There are approximately 8 houses and between 35-50 residents living there. The community is mainly Arrernte speaking families. There are two household phones in the community and no public phones. The community is within mobile range.

Previously, community members would have to walk to a public phone within Alice Springs district. The closest of these is 2 km to west at a restaurant (opening hours 6-10am). The Community Access Telephone was installed on the 27.05.05 and is located in a Telstra cabinet, in the middle of the community.

Inarlenge (Little Sisters)

Inarlenge is a town camp of Alice Springs serviced by Tangentyere Community Council. There are approximately 15 houses and between 65-100 residents living there. The community has residents from a range of different linguistic background. There are at least two household phones within the community and in the past, there have been a number of public telephones. These have all been vandalised. The community is within mobile phone range and many residents used pre-paid mobiles.

The Community Access Telephone was installed on the 2.04.05. It is located in a Telstra cabinet, towards the east of the community.

Imanpa

Imanpa is a community to the southeast of Alice Springs in the Northern Territory in the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Lands (AP Lands). The community is serviced by AP Services. There are approximately 186-250 residents and 25 houses. The community has previously had public phones service but these services were discontinued because of vandalism. There are 4 households on the iCONNECT program. The community is outside mobile range.

The Community Access Telephone was installed on 21.04.05. It is located in a Telstra cabinet, opposite the community council building.

Kapalga

Kapalga is a small outstation of 2 houses and 15 people north of Jabiru. A small family resides there on a permanent basis. It is approximately 170 km from Darwin and 45 km from Jabiru. The residents have had a household phone but was broken and not replaced.

The Community Access Telephone was installed on the 2.6.05. The Community Access Telephone is located on the side of one of houses.

Kaporilya

Kaporilya is a small outstation to the west of Alice Springs. It is approximately 155 km from Alice Springs and 7 km from Hermannsburg. There are 4 houses at Kaporilya and approximately 20 residents. The community is serviced by Tjuwanpa Resource Agency.

The outstation has had residential phone but that was cut off because of billing disputes. The community is within CDMA mobile range and a number of residents own CDMA prepaid mobiles which can be purchased at Hermannsburg community store. The Community Access Telephone is located on the side of a house and was installed on 21.04.05.

Larapinta Valley

Larapinta Valley is a town of Alice Springs serviced by Tangentyere Community Council. There are approximately twelve houses and between 60-70 residents living there. The community has residents from a range of different linguistic background. The community has in the past had payphones in the residential area but these were vandalised on a continuous basis and Telstra choose to discontinue the service.

The Community Access Telephone was installed on the 30.06.05 and on the date of writing this report had only been in operation a short time. The Community Access Telephone is located in a Telstra cabinet close to the Community Learning Centre which is approximately 30 m from the residential area.

Marla Marla

Marla Marla is a town camp in Tennant Creek serviced by Jilalkari Resource Agency. There are 35-40 residents who reside in eight houses. There are no phone services within the community, although there had been services previously (no-one within the community could provide a specific timeframe as to how the community had been without telephone services). The closest public phone is approximately 3 km from the community. The community is within mobile phone range.

The Community Access Telephone was installed on the 23.05.05 and is located at the entrance of the community in a Telstra cabinet.

Mimili

Mimili is a community in the west corner of South Australia in the AP lands. The community is serviced by AP Services. The closest major service centre is Alice Springs, which is 550 km of Mimili. The community's residents are Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjarra speaking. There are approximately 250-300 residents and 57 houses/shelters. The community currently has two public phone services. This CAT phone is an additional service because of the high maintenance level of the current systems. There are 38 households on the iConnect program. The community is outside mobile phone range.

The Community Access Telephone was installed on the 12.04.05 and is located on the side of the council building.

Mt Nancy

Mt Nancy is a town camp in the northern side of Alice Springs serviced by Tangentyere Community Council. There are approximately eight houses and population is approximately 40 people. The community has residents from a range of different linguistic background.

Previously, the community has had no access to telecommunication services within there camp. The Community Access Telephone is the first public payphone and there are no houses connected to telephone services. The Community Access Telephone is located with a Telstra cabinet and was installed on 01.07.05.

Nywente (Trucking Yard)

Nywente community is a town camp of Alice Springs serviced by Tangentyere Council. There are approximately fifteen houses and between 50-150 people living there at any one time. The community is mainly Arrernte speaking. There is one household phone within the community. Previously, the community has had a number of issues with vandalism of the public phone. The community is within mobile phone range and many community members used prepaid mobiles.

The Community Access Telephone was installed on the 18.02.5 and this phone has been in operation the longest. The Community Access Telephone is located on the side on community building in the community.

Undarana 2A

Undarana 2A is a small outstation to the west of Alice Springs. It is approximately 340km, of which 15 km is dirt road. There are 2 houses at Undarana 2A and approximately twelve residents. The community is serviced by Tjuwanpa Resource Agency.

The outstation has had residential phone but that was cut off because of billing disputes. The Community Access Telephone is located on the side of a house and was installed on 21.04.05.

Pukatja

Pukatja is a community in the west corner of South Australia in the AP lands. It is approximately 450 km from Alice Springs. The community is serviced by AP Services. There are approximately 500 residents. The community currently has another public phone services. This CAT phone is an additional service because of the high maintenance level of the current systems. There are 38 households on the iConnect program (PY Media 2005). The community is outside mobile range.

The Community Access Telephone is located in a Telstra cabinet, close to the community council office and was installed on the 23.05.05.

Tnyimipurta

Tnyimipurta is a small outstation to the west of Alice Springs. It is approximately 174 km from Alice Springs and 24 km from Hermannsburg community. The homeland is serviced by Tjuwanpa Resource Agency. There are 3 houses at the outstation and approximately twelve people living there. One house has a household telephone line. One of the other houses has previously had the phone connected, but it was disconnected because of issues with billing.

The Community Access Telephone was installed on the 21.04.05 and is located on the side one of the houses.

Village Camp

Village Camp is a town camp in Tennant Creek serviced by Jilalkari Resource Agency. There are 39-56 residents and residing in twelve houses. There are no phone services within the community, although there had been services previously (no-one within the community could provide a specific timeframe as to how the community had been without telephone services). The closest public phone is approximately 2km from the community. The community has residents from a range of different linguistic background.

The Community Access Telephone was installed on the 27.05.05 and is located in a Telstra cabinet at the entrance of the community.

4.3 Data from the field

The following section provides the tabular results of the data for the evaluation of the Community Access Telephone. This data was taken from community interviews and discussion and through direct observation. This is broken up into basic data and a summary on the user perspectives.

NOTE: This table is based on field work from mid March to early July 2005 and does not include faults reported subsequently.

Table 1: Basic community information

Community	Phone Number	Installation Date	Approximate distance from nearest Phone Away Retailer	Reported Faults
Nyewente	08 89532580	23.02.05	3.3km	n/a
Mt Nancy	08 89538912	01.07.05	6km	n/a
Anthelk	08 89538907	27.05.05	2km	n/a
Ewlpaye				
Larapinta Valley	08 89537864	28.06.05	3.7km	n/a
Anthepe	08 89537864	28.06.05	11.2km	n/a
Amoonguna	08 89538906	27.05.05	In the community	n/a
Inarlinge (Little Sisters)	08 89531988	2.04.05	5.5km	Handset has been cracked Phone button was jammed
Camels Hump	0889567719	27.05.05	195km	n/a
Undarana 2A	08 89567768	21.04.05	110km	n/a
Kaporilya	08 89567771	21.04.05	10km	n/a
Tnyimipurta	08 89549173	21.04.05	15km	n/a
Imanpa	08 89567457	22.04.05	In the community	n/a
Pukatja	08 89562965	23.05.05	In the community	n/a
Amata	0889562926	23.05.05	In the community	n/a
Mimili	08 89549127	12.04.05	In the community	n/a
Ali Curung Village	08 89641607	7.6.05	In the community	n/a
Camp	0889622456	27.05.05	4km	n/a
Marla	08 89621117	23.05.05	5.1km	n/a
Marla				
Kapalga	08 89793102	2.06.05		n/a
Bagot	08 89854210	5.05.05	11km	n/a

Table 2: Community feedback and visual inspection data

Community	Technology	Service	Access	Other
Nyewente	*No lighting above the phone *Loudness of phone ring *T button doesn't work	*Old people can't see numbers on the card		*Phone is really important for emergencies *Useful to have a phone that everyone in the community can access
Mt Nancy	*Height of phone *Loudness of phone ring	*The cards are too hard for children to understand		*Useful to have a phone that everyone in the community can access *Indigenous calling card number programmed on T button
Anthelk Ewlpaye	*Height of phone *Loudness of phone ring	*Would like to see relevant phone numbers displayed beside the phone, i.e. Congress Call Centre, Tangentyere Night Patrol, CLC, etc.		*Kids calling 000 *Need the phone to call if sick *Phone is important to talk with relatives
Larapinta Valley	*Height of phone *No lighting in the cabinet *Loudness of phone ring		*Location of phone: distance from community	*Indigenous calling card number programmed on T button
Anthepe	*No lighting above phone *Loudness of phone ring			*Indigenous calling card number programmed on T button
Amoonguna	*Height of phone *Loudness of phone ring			
Inarlenge	*Loudness of phone ring *Height of phone		*Location of phone: some community members don't feel comfortable using the phone	*Phone is really important to contact taxi, transport *People use the phone to call relatives

Community	Technology	Service	Access	Other
Camels Hump	*Cabling on side *Loudness of phone ring	*Too many numbers to insert into the phone *Old people can't see the numbers	*Location of the phone: There is household ownership	
Undarana 2A	*Cabling on side	* Still need options for other services		
Kaporilya	*Cabling above is only covered by plastic tube *Loudness of phone ring	*Too many phone products and didn't know which card to purchase	*Access to cards problematic *Location of the phone: There is household ownership	
Tnyimipurta	*Cabling on side *Loudness of phone ring		*Access to cards problematic *Location of the phone: There is household ownership	
Imanpa	*Height of phone *Loudness of phone ring		*Access to cards problematic	
Pukatja	*Height of phone *Loudness of phone ring			
Amata	*Phone in box *Loudness of phone ring	*Would like the coin blue phone reconnected *Older people would prefer to use coin phones *Coin phones are cheaper than phone away		* This phone is in a good spot cause kids can't play with it * People use phone away cards with I-CONNECT, so they know how to use them
Mimili	*Loudness of phone ring	* Administratively easier for council		* Having a public phone will stop the Council staff being hassled to use their phones

Community	Technology	Service	Access	Other
Ali Curung	*Loudness of phone ring *Height of phone *Cable hanging out the bottom of phone	*Some residents would prefer normal pay phone *Administratively easier for council	*The phone is good for residents in this area	*Some people prefer to use the phone located by the community store
Marla Marla	*Height of phone *Loudness of phone ring	*Still need options for other services		*Phone is really important for emergency and sick people
Kapalga	*Cabling on side * Static when talking on the telephone	*Still need options for other services *The card system is too hard for old and young people to follow	*Access to cards problematic	*Phone is really important if someone gets sick
Bagot	*Cabling on side	*Still need options for other services	*Access to cards problematic	*Our relatives can ring us

5.0 DISCUSSION

Overwhelming support was shown in all communities for the new telephone service. It was providing a lifeline service particularly in the areas where there were no other services. A woman at Trucking Yards says:

The phone has connected me with my family, health services and police. Before we had to walk out of the community to get this (service).

This enthusiasm for the Community Access Telephone is difficult to distinguish from phone services in general. Clearly, any service is better than none.

Where survey respondents did distinguish the CAT from other services, the most appealing factors were the robustness, communal access and the reliability of the service. One man from Amata says:

We glad we got this phone and CAT helped us. The phone doesn't get damaged like the old one cause there are no coins in it...

The success of the telephone service can also be measured in the little number of reported faults. Of the 20 phones installed only one was not functioning at one point during the fieldwork timeframes and this fault was fixed within a day of the fault being recorded. However, despite the success as with all new products being trialled there were a number of issues that need reflecting and discussing in more detail. These are discussed under 5 themes: technology, service, accessibility, availability of directory information, supportive capacity building and phone usage.

5.1 Technology

The Community Access Telephone has been successfully installed in all 20 communities with only 1 fault reported during the lifespan of this reporting period. This was fixed within a day of reporting the incidence. Given this in regards to robustness, the Community Access Telephone seems to be working as well, if not better than other payphones installed in remote areas where there is a recorded history of vandalism. This design is particularly appropriate for communities that Telstra defines as high vandalism risk. There were several factors that have led to this success, these include:

- The telephone is designed for high usage
- The telephone does not take coins. A one man from Pukatja describes “Young people in the community are interested in the smashing this phone. It has no coins”.
- The telephone is designed to suit a variety of environmental conditions

However, there were a number of technical issues raised in several communities that should take into consideration when the Community Access Telephone is installed in future works.

Firstly, the loudness of the ring was an issue for every community that was visited during the evaluation. Residents were not able to hear the telephone unless they were standing beside it.

This is a particular an issue for telephones that are located in a cabinet or community building some distance from the residential areas. Future work should look at providing options for a speaker to be attached to the telephone (see picture 2). However, in line with this it is pertinent to consider ways of protecting this speaker for vandalism or misuse.

Picture 2: Telephone Speaker at Wada Warra outstation, Borroloola NT



Community Access Telephones that were installed on the side of the building often had phone lines protected by a plastic rod. The effects the robustness of the system and additionally, in some cases impinges on opening the protective case. This will be a i particular issue when community members are trained on maintaining their own Community Access Telephone. The pictures below provide a visual that shows where the phone lines enter. To safe proof the phone line, the best option it have them entering directly through the back of the phone.

Picture 3 & 4: Phones lines entering Community Access Telephone which impinges on opening the protective case



The Community Access Telephones were at different heights. Communities where the phone was installed in the cabinet suggested that the phone was too low down and that many of the taller residents have to bend over to reach to talk on the handset. This was not an issue for phones installed on the wall, as it was in higher position. A standard height for the telephone needs to be defined so that it is appropriate for all users. Telstra have suggested that position of Community Access Telephone is correctly measured against other payphone heights, that is the T button is at the height that people in a wheelchair can still use the phone. In order to overcome this, design features such as increased handset cord length or change in the position of the T button could be assessed.

Many of the Community Access Telephone did not have adequate lighting above the telephone. This was particularly so for telephones that had been installed on the sides of the wall, but was also the case for one phone in a cabinet. The communities where lighting was an issue include: Bagot, Kapalga, Kaporilya, Undarana 2A, Tnyimpurta, Camels Hump, Larapinta Valley, Nywente and Mimili. The Community Access Telephone should be given the same service delivery standards as payphones in general.

5.2 Service

The service used in the trial was the prepaid PhoneAway and this is evaluated from a user perspective. The Indigenous Call Card was not on the market during the installation. The issues with the service were centred on cost, the complexity required to dial a number, access to card dealers and availability of options.

Many community residents said that PhoneAway card is an expensive option in comparison with coin operated service or home phones. The phone rates for the phone away cards are:

- Local call – 49c
- STD call – 49c connection + 21c/minute
- Mobile – 49c connection + 44c/minute

These costs are substantially higher than most home phone lines and slightly higher than payphone coin operated and does not take in account for Consumer Price Act which prescribes a price cap of 40c. This point reflects the need for the Community Access Telephone to have defined protocols for delivery and the incorporation into the USO.

In addition, the PhoneAway does not take into account extended zones. A person from Bagot community says:

I don't mind using the card, but it is expensive. When I ring my family down in Arnhem Land, I can only talk for a short time and yet, I pay \$10.00 to talk.

The prepaid phone cards should be similar to other payphone costs and should include the extended area zone. The extended area was a policy designed for remote and rural areas, but most people in remote areas cannot make use of this policy because it does not apply to payphone services.

Another issue that emerged during the survey was the lack of access to purchase prepaid cards. This was particularly apparent in remoter outstations where the distances have to be travelled to purchase cards. One man for Camels Hump reported:

I have to go all the way to Hermannsburg to get a card. That is a long drive across a dirt road. If I forget the card when I do my weekly shopping than I have to forget using the phone altogether. That is why coin phones are easier and better for communities a long way away.

This quote relieves not only the frustration of lack of access to cards, but also that options still need to be given to communities on the type of telephone service.

The Community Access Telephone is not the magic bullet to solving payphone deficiencies in remote communities. Most communities interviewed still wanted information on the options available (such as residential phones and other payphones). The store owner at Amata said the Community Access Telephone was a good design however:

Many people still want to use coin operated telephones. Particularly, visitors to the community who don't want to pay \$10 to make 1 or 2 phone calls.

However, in other communities, such as Ali Curung the option for cards was not only preferred by many of the residents but also administratively easier for Council staff. One staff member said:

Selling prepaid cards is much easier than going round collecting coins. Money doesn't going missing as easily. All the sales are out of the Council office.

The Community Access Telephone is a robust option for communities but it should not over-ride or supersede other telecommunications that may be of interest to remote communities.

Communities need to be actively engaged to decide the most appropriate telephone service for their community.

Another factor in the service was the preprogrammed call number. In three communities: Mt Nancy; Larapinta Valley; and Anthepe; the T button had been pre-programmed with the Indigenous Call card phone number despite the prepaid card not being available on the market during the fieldwork time. This is confusing for community members using the phone as: the poster instructions do not correlate, the service is not available and the cards are not available. This example shows the importance of co-ordinating service delivery more succinctly. In effect, many of the issues raised in evaluation of the PhoneAway service may be significantly reduced if the Indigenous Calling card had been on the market at the beginning of the project. It also suggests that a strategic and directed plan is required to market the Indigenous Calling Card to remote areas. The recommendations in section 6.0 of this report provide ways of achieving this delivery.

5.3 Accessibility

The Australia Government Information Management Office reported “access cannot be confined to questions of opportunities to physical infrastructure nor can it be separated from usability.... access is co-produced in the making of the technology” (Dugdale et al. 2004: 1-2). The above sections are therefore directly related to accessibility issues, e.g the accessibility of cards or how user friendly the telephone is. However, this section focuses primarily on the location and degree of remoteness with regards to accessibility.

There were two predominant issues that arose in regards to location of the phone. Firstly for large communities with a mix of language groups the location of the phone can be problematic. For example, one town camp who has a large mix of language groups reported that many of the residents would not use the phone because it was located in an area that was another language group. In this case, the number of phones and their locations should be planned with the community to overcome issues with using the phone.

Secondly, in small outstation where there are more than two family groups and the phone is located on a house, the residents where the phone is located can take ownership. Other families often do not feel comfortable entering the property during certain times. This is particular an issue for many Indigenous groups, where cultural obligations and relationship mean that certain relatives or people must avoid each other (Munn 1996). In these cases, it would be preferential if the phone were located in central part of the community rather than on the sides of someone’s household. Both these issues of location reflect the importance of planning with community members and in addition, it suggests standard of 1 telephone per 50 people may not reflect the priorities of remote communities.

Above community phone location accessibility is discussed, another issue in regards to accessibility is the degree of remoteness. In this trial, there were 5 locations that were very isolated small outstation communities. It is in these situations where the Community Access Telephone was playing a lifeline service for the remote community. For larger communities with other telephone service, the Community Access Telephone is unlikely to take prioritisation over other telephone services. Payphones or home phones are likely to take preference in these cases because people are more aware of these phones. This suggests that Community Access Telephone should continue to be installed in areas where there is demand

and particularly, those very remote communities whom have little or no telecommunication infrastructure. This idea suggests that degree of remoteness just as important an indicator for telephone services as population of the community.

5.4 Availability of directory information

Additionally, many residents in a variety of communities suggested that information on telephone numbers need also be delivered when infrastructure is rolled out. In direct relation to the Community Access Telephone, one woman from Charles Creek community suggests:

We need to have important contact numbers displayed by the phone, particularly those that are emergency or 1800 free call numbers. Things such as Night Patrol, Congress Health Centre, and Emergency numbers should be put beside the phone.

Indigenous people are engaging in telephone services for their own needs and aspirations, but appropriate directories and important contacts should be provided with these services.

5.5 Supportive capacity building

An important aspect of the Community Access Telephone, that has not been taken advantage of, is that simple replacement of standard parts which can be undertaken by community members without the need for ACMA accreditation. The awareness raising was not delivered in conjunction with the project, despite CAT's support for this delivery. Capacity building is best delivered during installation of the Community Access Telephone where community enthusiasm for the technology is high. Appropriate resources have been developed by CAT to support a resident of the community to develop knowledge on how to change defective parts (e.g. internal phone and handset). Any future initiatives to delivery maintenance knowledge to the trial communities should be undertaken as soon as possible. However, organisations that delivery this should have an understanding of appropriate communication and training for Indigenous people, as well as a good understanding of the Community Access Telephone. Community Access Telephone maintenance instructions should be developed so that a certain awareness level is reached within each community.

5.5 Phone usage

This section would have benefited from data from the service provider, detailing telephone usage. Despite request from Telstra, CAT was unable to obtain such information. Future reports or evaluations should consider obtaining this data, as it provides a comparison for information obtained in the community surveys. From the surveys, it is suggested that phone usage varied for different communities, depending on the access to other phone services, the size and mobility of the community and the access to prepaid phone cards. However, as one woman from Bagot community suggests:

This phone may not get used much but it is important service. People will use it now they know that it takes phone cards. They will use it to call health services, family and friends.

In most communities, the ability to call emergency numbers and night patrol was predominantly the most important aspect of the phone's operation. Audrey McCormack describes one situation at Nywente:

We had a situation on the weekend where there was a big fight in the community. Some of the people got hurt and it was good to be able to call an ambulance and Night Patrol from the telephone.

The responses on the importance and usefulness of the Community Access Telephone service were more pronounced in communities where no other services were available. Therefore, it could be assumed that this is likely to correlate with where the highest usage is occurring. Data from service providers would help to provide more insight into phone usage patterns.

6.0 CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

The Community Access Telephone trial provided important information of the community telephone services. The Community Access Telephone has been successful installed in 20 communities across Central and Northern Australian. Indigenous people in these communities are engaging in this new technology for their own ends, including to contact family and friends, emergency, health care facilities and to support livelihood options. These however, are not necessarily exchangeable in a policy or project objective but are fundamentals in community development, viability and livelihood aspirations. Despite the initial success, the Community Access Telephone is no magic bullet to telephone services in remote areas. Many issues have been highlighted during the first phase of installations which have generated a number of recommendations (see below) for future delivery of the technology and service.

The Community Access Telephone is one option for telephone services but many communities in the trial preferred or prioritised coin operated payphones or private home telephones. Given, the enthusiasm that has been generated from other remote communities interested in trialling the Community Access Telephone it is critical that information become available which details options for telephone services in remote areas.

1. Protocols need to be established for which define installation procedures and on-going support for the Community Access Telephone

Such protocols should establish design features such an appropriate height, clear signage on usage, provisioning of lighting, options for speakers on ringers, appropriate position (in covered area) and the process for defining the placement of Community Access Telephone. The protocols should also incorporate user involvement so that options on telephone services and location of services can be agreed by the community and service providers. Protocols need also to substantiate the terms of on-going support for the community, in regards to servicing telephone faults and raising awareness of using the Community Access Telephone.

2. Remote communities need to be provided options from service providers

The Community Access Telephone should not be the only option for remote communities. They need to given the opportunity to choose other coin payphone services, household services or mobile services. Raising awareness of consumer's rights and opportunities for telephone services should continue to develop as different options become available on the market. CAT recommends that an appropriate guide be developed that compares the Community Access Telephone with other telephone services (such as payphones and home line services).

3. More effective access or alternatives to prepaid cards in the remote small outstation settlements needs to be identified

Residents in small, isolated outstations often have difficult accessing prepaid cards. Larger communities have greater options because prepaid cards are available in the community.

4. The Community Access Telephone needs to be recognised under the USO

The Community Access Telephone needs to be recognised under the USO, to safe guard the service for remote communities. However, a set of criteria needs also to be identified, so that the service is delivered appropriately. This means that the technology is at the correct height, that lighting is provided with the service, appropriate guides, etc.

The current operation of the USO is failing to provide reasonable access to telephone services for many people living in remote Indigenous communities. For example, remote communities lie within “extended zones” but the extended zones in not applicable on many prepaid cards (such as the PhoneAway card).

USO needs also recognise the importance of providing options to communities; the Community Access Telephone should be identified through a demand at community level and not driven by service providers or government.

5. Capacity building and awareness raising of the maintenance of the Community Access Telephone needs to be delivered to the communities

One important benefit of the Community Access Telephone is that community members can replace the standard parts. However, the training of maintenance is currently not occurring. It is recommended that future capacity building initiatives begin as soon as possible. These should make use of the skills, resources and knowledge on the Community Access Telephone already developed at CAT.

6. The Community Access Telephone should be trialled in areas without existing infrastructure

The trial of 20 communities did not include communities without existing infrastructure. If Government, Regulators and Private Industries are committed to develop appropriate services then these services need also to be “rolled-out” to communities that currently have no telephone services.

7. Community members need to be consulted on the installation, location and type of service that they want

In several areas the location of the phone has impacted on the usage of the phone by particular residents. Location public telephone services needs to be discussed with the community involved. A set of criteria needs to develop which identifies who should be consulted, how and at what level.

In addition, service providers need to be aware of the appropriate service delivery techniques. Indigenous communities have particular social and cultural activities that need to be considering in service delivery approaches. In many cases, residents were unhappy with the time service delivery arrived in the community.

8. A longitudinal evaluation should be considered to provide greater insight into the Community Access Telephone and community feedback

This evaluation was based on four months fieldwork; some telephones had been in less than a week when the evaluation took place. A follow up study should be conducted after of year of installation and should include data on technical problems, user

feedback, and phone usage. Some areas that require particular follow up include: Is the phone service still working? Are people getting into the habit of purchasing prepaid cards when they go to the shop? Are people using the PhoneAway card or the Indigenous Calling Card? How effective was the transfer of maintenance skills? The longitudinal evaluation should consider using similar methods as study.

During this evaluation, we attempted to obtain data on the telephone usage from the service provider. This would have been useful to align with community surveys. Future evaluations should consider obtaining and using this data.

9. That service delivery of the Community Access Telephone become a more co-ordinated approach which involves service providers, Indigenous communities and community organisations

This project involved Telstra, CAT, DCITA and 20 communities. There were no dedicated timeframes or installation dates provided at the start of the project. Whilst it is acknowledged that delivery can often be delayed, these dates provide an appropriate indication for future planning. In a number of cases, the delivery of Community Access Telephone posters was delayed because of poor communication between the organisations. Many communities that were approached by CAT reported that the community had not been given advance warning of the service provider's arrival.

10. Community Access Telephone should be considered as a robust option for areas of high vandalism

The Community Access Telephone has been working for lengthy periods of time in areas defined by Telstra as high vandalism locations. Communities should be able to determine whether the Community Access Telephone is an appropriate option.

11. Diversity of approaches in delivering advertising/education promotion on using Community Access Telephone

The 20 trial sites were provided with a practical demonstrations on using the phone for interested residents and appropriate image based poster was installed. The continual roll-out of the Community Access Telephone should include such promotion. In addition, it is recommended that other appropriate advertising medians be considered, including the use of Indigenous media units who have the ability to promote material in appropriate language which would reach a large audience.

12. That a number of public telephones be installed in larger communities

In larger communities, a number of public telephones should be strategically placed. It is recommended that a 1 payphone installed per 50 residents.

13. Frequent contact numbers and an Indigenous Phone Directory be developed

The Community Access Telephone should have frequent call numbers displayed beside the telephone. This is particularly important to raise awareness of the free call numbers (1800 and emergency numbers) relevant for the community location. In addition, more appropriate information and a directory should be developed on phone numbers relevant to Indigenous people.

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