



Media release

Embargoed Wednesday, 17 March 2010

World's most advanced telephone hearing test now in 11 languages

A new version of a telephone hearing test developed by Australian Hearing and its research arm, the National Acoustic Laboratories, is now available in 10 additional languages to English: Arabic, Cantonese, Greek, Italian, Macedonian, Mandarin, Serbian, Spanish, Turkish and Vietnamese.

Now an additional 1.273 million Australians who speak a language other than English¹ will be able to determine whether they have a hearing loss by calling a toll-free number and responding to sounds played over the telephone.

The expanded service was launched today to coincide with Harmony Day, a Federal Government initiative that promotes respect, fairness and a sense of belonging for everyone.

Managing Director of Australian Hearing, Mr Steven Grundy, said the availability of the Telscreen™ service in multiple languages will increase awareness of, and accessibility to, Australian Hearing's services for non-English speaking communities.

"This service will ensure better outcomes for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse populations," he said.

"Telscreen is the most advanced telephone hearing test in the world and a credit to Australia's ability to stay at the forefront of international research."

Professor Harvey Dillon, Director at National Acoustic Laboratories, said the development of a simple test that enables people to call a toll-free number and be told whether or not they need to seek further help for their hearing is of huge benefit to all Australians.

"The test is based on a basic hearing phenomenon that makes it equally suitable for speakers of any language," he said.

"Hearing loss can affect any Australian, regardless of their culture or language. Hearing loss causes a breakdown in communication. It can lead to social isolation and depression. With 60 per cent of Australians aged over 60 experiencing hearing problems, Telscreen offers an easy and quick way for people to check their hearing," added Professor Dillon.

People can access the service by calling **1800 826 500** and following the voice prompts. The test takes about five minutes. Australian Hearing provides interpreters at appointments on request.

Media Enquiries: Rena Richmond on 0408 863 201 or 0412 361 426
Kate Dorrell on 02 9412 6968 or 0404 691 838

1. 2006 Australian Bureau of Statistics Census of Population and Housing Australia. Language spoken at home (full classification list) by sex.