



Media release

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World's first telephone hearing test for Chinese speakers

A new version of a telephone hearing test developed by Australian Hearing and its research arm, the National Acoustic Laboratories, is now available in Cantonese and Mandarin.

More than half a million Chinese-speaking Australians 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 news service was launched today to coincide with Harmony Day, a federal government initiative that promotes respect, fairness and a sense of belonging for everyone.

The Minister for Human Services, Senator Ludwig, said the new telephone service, which uses breakthrough technology, would make it easy for the thousands of Australians who suffer from a hearing loss to determine whether or not their loss is severe enough to seek further treatment.

"Telscreen has been developed in Australia by the country's largest provider of hearing services, Australian Hearing, and its research arm, the National Acoustic Laboratories," Senator Ludwig 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 new test is based on a basic hearing phenomenon that makes it equally suitable for speakers of any language. I anticipate that Australian Hearing will progressively roll it out to all the major language groups in Australia", 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," Sen Ludwig .

People can access the service by calling **1800 826 500** toll-free and following the voice prompts. The test takes about five minutes.

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