

## Quarterly Disclosures – Retail Payment Service Reliability

November 2021

---

The Reserve Bank (the ‘Bank’) requires individual providers of payment services to households and businesses to publish statistics about the reliability of their services on their websites. These disclosures are intended to support transparency about retail payment service reliability.

### Who discloses this information?

The disclosures apply to institutions that provide retail payment and banking services to individual and business customers and:

- are one of the 25 largest authorised deposit-taking institutions ranked by household deposits (as at June 2019);<sup>1</sup> and/or
- operate an Exchange Settlement Account with the Bank and acquire card payments for businesses.

For financial institutions that operate multiple brands, the disclosures are made at the retail brand-level (rather than for the entire group), since it is the brand that Australian households and businesses interact with for their retail payment and banking services.

The Bank maintains on its website a list of retail payments service providers disclosing the statistics and website links to where the disclosures are located.<sup>2</sup>

### When are the disclosures made?

The quarterly disclosures are to be published by individual providers on the 15<sup>th</sup> calendar day of the second month after the calendar quarter (e.g. 15 February for the December quarter data). If this date is not a business day, then the disclosures will be made on the next business day.

### What statistics are disclosed?

The reliability information is provided in a standardised table containing statistics on service availability and significant outages in the quarter, for each service offered by the retail payments provider. The specified services are: ATMs, branches, cardholder payments, card acceptance for businesses, access to accounts using online banking, ‘fast’ account transfers and ‘next business day’ account transfers.<sup>3</sup>

The disclosure table indicates the percentage availability of individual retail payment services (defined as the percentage of time that the service is not experiencing a significant outage). It also shows the aggregate duration of significant outages to individual retail payment services, separated into outages due to problems at the retail brand, and outages due to problems at system-wide infrastructures or natural disasters (which are outside of the institution’s control). Significant outages are those that meet minimum thresholds for the duration of the outage and the proportion of customers affected.

---

1 Based on data sourced from APRA’s Monthly Authorised Deposit-taking Institution Banking Statistics.

2 This is available at: <<https://www.rba.gov.au/payments-and-infrastructure/resources/reliability-disclosures.html>>

3 An exception is for the ATM and branch services – brands are only required to disclose reliability statistics for these services if they have a national network of more than 10 ATMs or more than 10 branches, respectively.

## How are the statistics defined?

### Description of metrics

- *Service availability %*. The actual amount of time that the service is not experiencing a significant outage, as a proportion of the amount of time during which the service was planned to be available in the quarter. Planned available time excludes planned outages (e.g. for system maintenance).
- *Significant outage*. Unplanned unavailability or significant performance degradation of a service that affects at least 10 per cent of customers for 30 minutes or more, at any time in the day.<sup>4</sup> The proportion of customers affected is measured (depending on the service) as the number of customers or transactions or service points disrupted during the outage. For ATMs, branches or in-person card transactions, an outage would also be defined as significant if it disrupted a major geographical area (such as a mainland capital city or more than 50 per cent of service points in a state), for at least 30 minutes.
- *System-wide infrastructures*. Includes: payment system infrastructure provided by the RBA, card schemes, and NPPA; other central payment system infrastructure; the electricity network; and providers of telecommunications network links to the brand's operating or data centres.

### Description of services

- *Withdraw/deposit cash at ATM*. Ability to withdraw or deposit cash, and check account balances, at the brand's branded ATMs. Excludes issues relating to the cardholder's card.
- *Transact over-the-counter at a branch*. Ability to withdraw or deposit cash, or initiate account transfers or make bill payments over-the-counter in a branch. Excludes the ability to draw and deposit cheques. Excludes Bank@Post outlets.
- *Make card payments (cardholders)*. Ability to use the brand's branded debit, prepaid or credit card to make a payment either in-store, on a mobile device (e.g. through an app) or online. Outages exclude problems with the business' payments acceptance devices or payments provider, or a customer's mobile device.
- *Accept card payments (businesses)*. Ability of businesses using the payment services of the brand to accept card payments, either at point-of-sale or online/in-app. Outages exclude problems with the cardholder's bank or payment acceptance devices that are not provided by the brand.
- *Access accounts using online banking (web browser or mobile device app)*. Ability to log in, transfer between own accounts at the brand, initiate payments and/or view accurate and up to date account information. Excludes the ability to process payments, which is covered in 'make/receive account transfers - fast payments' and 'make/receive account transfers - the next business day'.
- *Make/receive account transfers – fast payments*. Ability of the brand to process fast bank account transfers. This includes account-to-account transfers (Pay Anyone) to a PayID, and other one-off or scheduled payments (for example, direct debits and payroll payments by businesses) made through NPP/Osko. Outages exclude the inability for customers to initiate transfers due to unavailability of web or app banking channels, or a branch.
- *Make/receive account transfers – next business day*. Ability of the brand to process bank account transfers, with funds becoming available to the recipient on the next business day or later. Includes

---

<sup>4</sup> The exception to this is 'next business day' account transfers, where an outage is considered significant if 10 per cent or more of the day's transactions remain unprocessed by the end of the day.

account-to-account transfers (Pay Anyone) and scheduled payments (for example, direct debits, and payroll payments by businesses) not made as fast payments through NPP/Osko, and BPAY payments. Outages exclude the inability to initiate payments due to unavailability of web or app banking channels, or a branch.