Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

Emergency Call Answering Service

Annual Review

2025

Prepared by the Department of Culture, Communications & Sport
gov.ie/en/department-of-culture-communications-and-sport/

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1 Introduction

The Emergency Call Answering Service (ECAS) is responsible for answering all 112 and 999 calls, Real-Time Texts (RTT), SMS messages (texts) and eCalls, thus providing a vital link between the caller and the Emergency Services. The ECAS seeks to establish the Emergency Service being requested, that is, An Garda Síochána (AGS), Fire Service, Ambulance Service, Irish Coast Guard (IRCG) or, in emergencies involving aircraft, AirNav Ireland. The ECAS also determines the location of the caller for the purpose of routing the communication to the most appropriate control centre for that Emergency Service. The call is then connected to the appropriate Emergency Service, or in the case of RTT or SMS, the messages are read to the Emergency Service Operator, who responds via the ECAS Operator, and then takes responsibility for the emergency.

2 Background

2.1 Basis for the Review

Section 58B of the Communications Regulation (Amendment) Act 2007 enables the Minister to enter a contract for the operation of the ECAS.

In 2018, following a public procurement process the contract was awarded to BT Communications Ireland Limited (BTCIL). On 05 February 2025, BTCIL announced that it had reached an agreement for the sale of its Irish wholesale and enterprise business unit to Speed Fibre Group. On 11 April 2025, BTCIL formally asked the Minister for consent to novate the current contract from BTCIL to BT Business Telecoms Ireland Limited (BTBTIL). The Department conducted all requisite due diligence and compliance assessments to facilitate the formal novation of the contract. These comprehensive reviews ensured that BTBTIL met all legal, financial, and operational requirements necessary for a seamless transfer of obligations. Approval of the novation of the contract was granted in June 2025.

This contract is for a period of seven years, expiring in November 2025. A competitive dialogue public procurement process is underway to appoint a new operator to deliver the ECAS. The contractual obligation on BTBTIL to provide up to 24 months of continuation services was requested by the Minister in June 2025. A new operator is expected to be in place by November 2027.

The contract provides for an annual review of the performance of the ECAS Operator including:

i. Relevant Performance Levels.

ii. Performance capabilities, including those associated with advances in technology and methods used to provide the service.

iii. Any other matters agreed for review.

This is the seventh annual review of the performance of the ECAS under the current contract.

2.2 ECAS Funding

Emergency communications are free of charge to the caller[1]. The ECAS is funded through a Call Handling Fee ("CHF") which is a fee payable by the telecommunications network operators and the telephone call service provider whenever a call or text is made to 112/999. The Commission for Communications Regulation (ComReg) reviews and determines the maximum permitted CHF on an annual basis to ensure the reasonable costs of operating the service, are recoverable within the terms of the contract. Following the consultation process, based on the reasonable cost review ComReg set the CHF at €3.93 for the 12-month period from 12 February 2025 to 11 February 2026.

[1] Regulation 5 of the European Communities (Electronic Networks and Services) (Universal Service and Users' Rights) Regulations 2011

3 Location of Call Handling

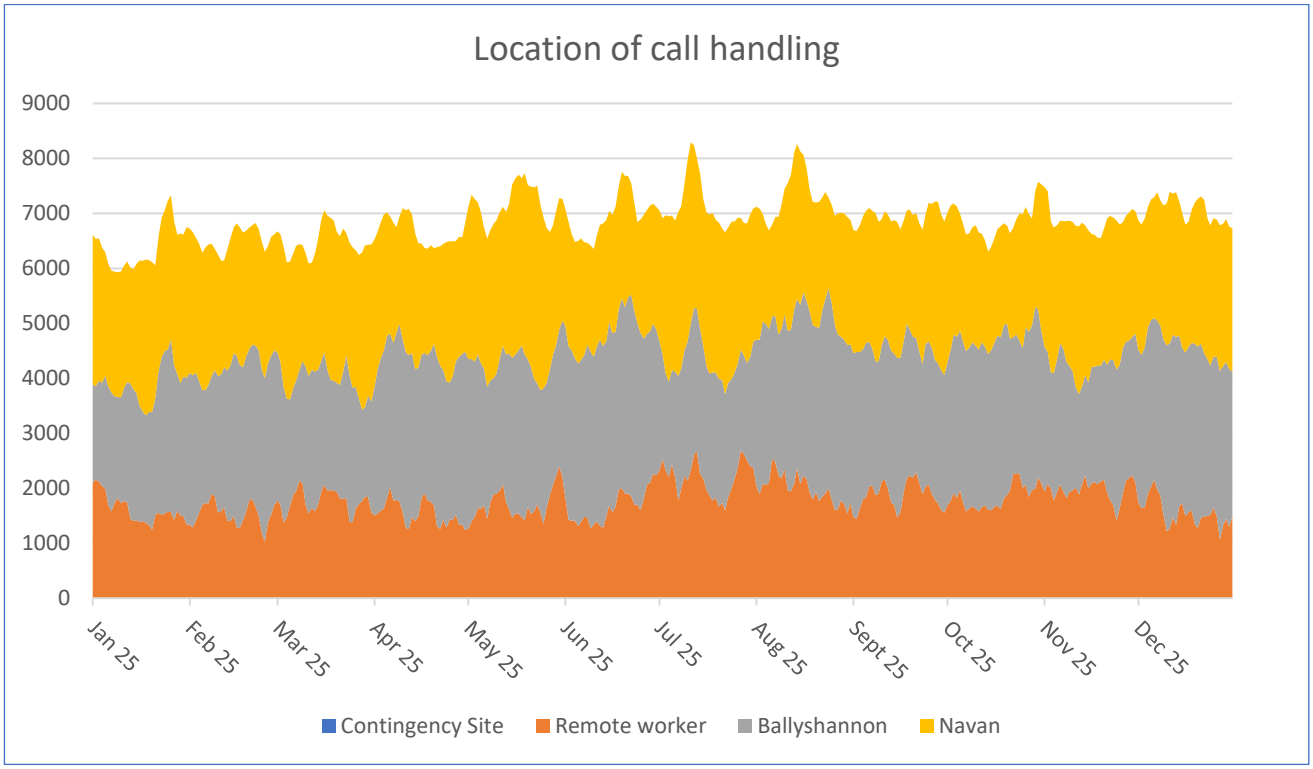
The ECAS uses two active call centres operating as one virtual centre to provide the current ECAS. These centres are located in Ballyshannon, Co. Donegal and Navan, Co. Meath.

The current solution also incorporates a permanent contingency site in Clonshaugh to be used in the event of either Navan or Ballyshannon being unavailable. The ECAS platform also supports the provision of a pop-up site in Carrick-on-Shannon.

In addition, the ECAS platform also supports the provision of a secure remote/home working solution. This solution is a valuable resource in the provision of continuity of service in the event of issues arising that have an impact on the availability of staff due to extreme weather conditions or the unavailability of any one, or all, of the ECAS call centres.

Figure 1 outlines the locations from where calls were handled by the ECAS during 2025.

Figure 1: Call Handling Locations 2025 [Source: BT, 2026]



4 Emergency Communications

4.1 Call Volumes

In 2025 the ECAS received a total of 2,214,481 calls which represented an increase of 23,695 calls, or approximately 1.08%, from the previous year.

Table 1: Annual Call Volume 2020 – 2025 [Source: BT, 2026]

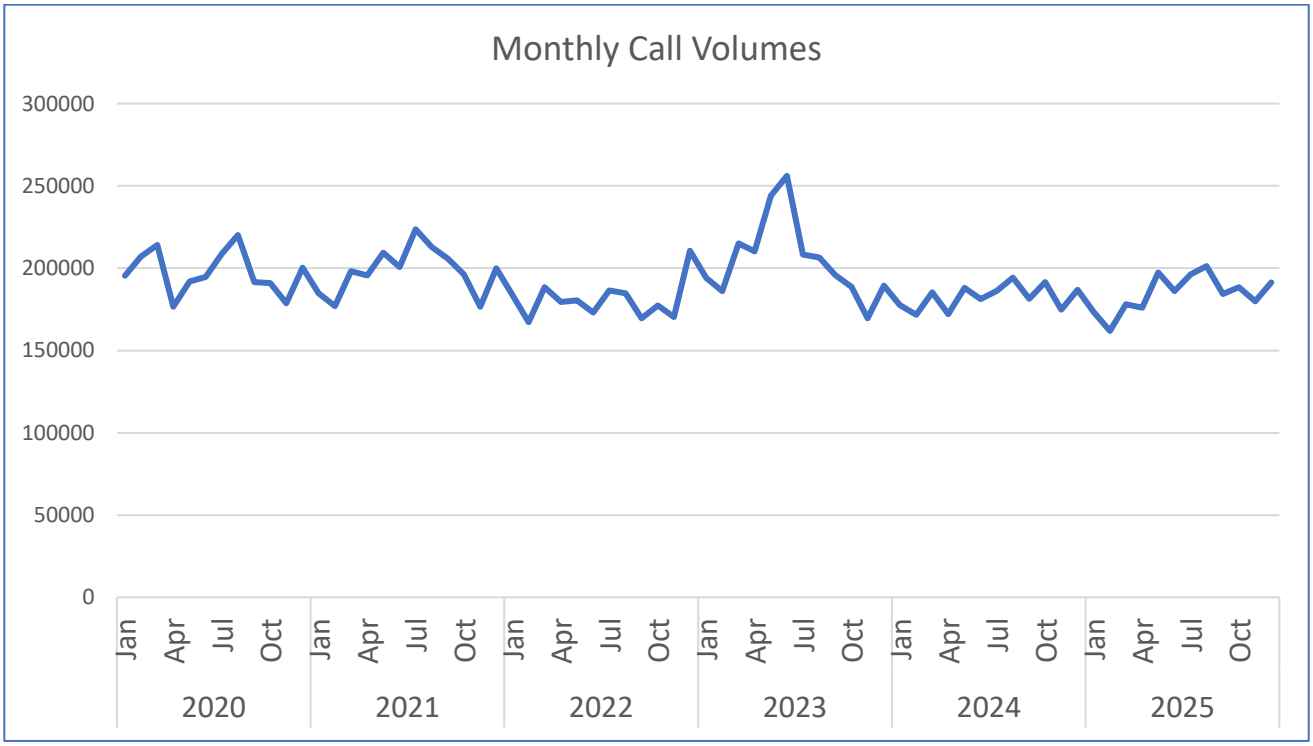
Year	Volume of Calls
2020*	2,370,268
2021	2,380,641
2022	2,170,929
2023	2,463,629
2024	2,190,786
2025	2,214,481

*** Figures include billable calls and SMS only**

It should be noted that the number of calls connected to the Emergency Services, in 2025 increased by 76,456 which represents an increase of 5.9% on last year's figure.

In 2025 the monthly average of total call volumes was 184,540 calls, as illustrated in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2: Monthly Call Volumes 2017-2025 [Source: BT, 2026]



Factors such as atypical weather, flooding, holiday periods and even the number of weekends in a month has the potential to affect call volumes in any given month.

Storm Éowyn on 24 January, saw nearly 7,500 calls being received by the ECAS. Halloween, 31 October, saw 8,534 calls received by the ECAS. The period between 10 and 13 July saw the hottest temperature last year and in this period over 30,000 calls were received. Over 8,000 of these calls were received on 12 July alone.

Figure 3 illustrates the variance in daily call volumes in 2025.

Figure 3: Daily call volumes in 2025. [Source: BT, 2026]

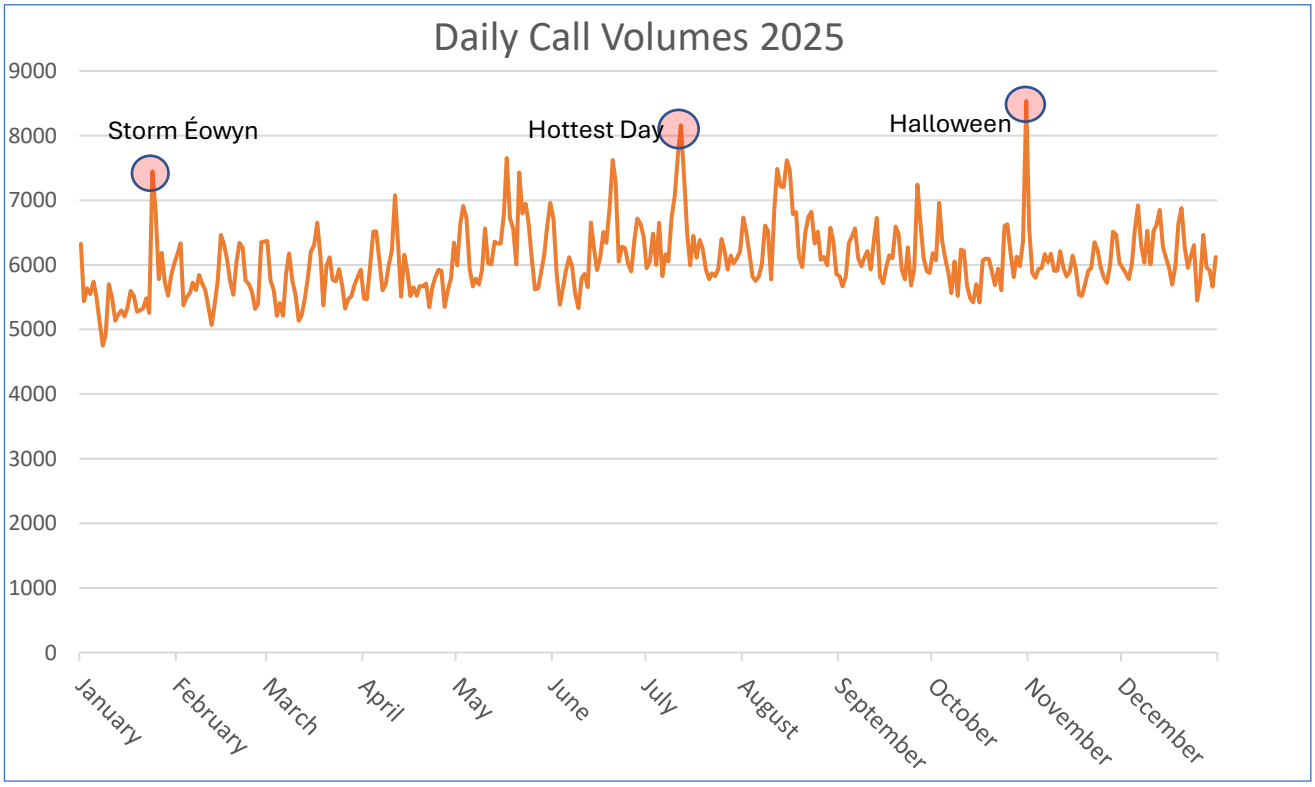
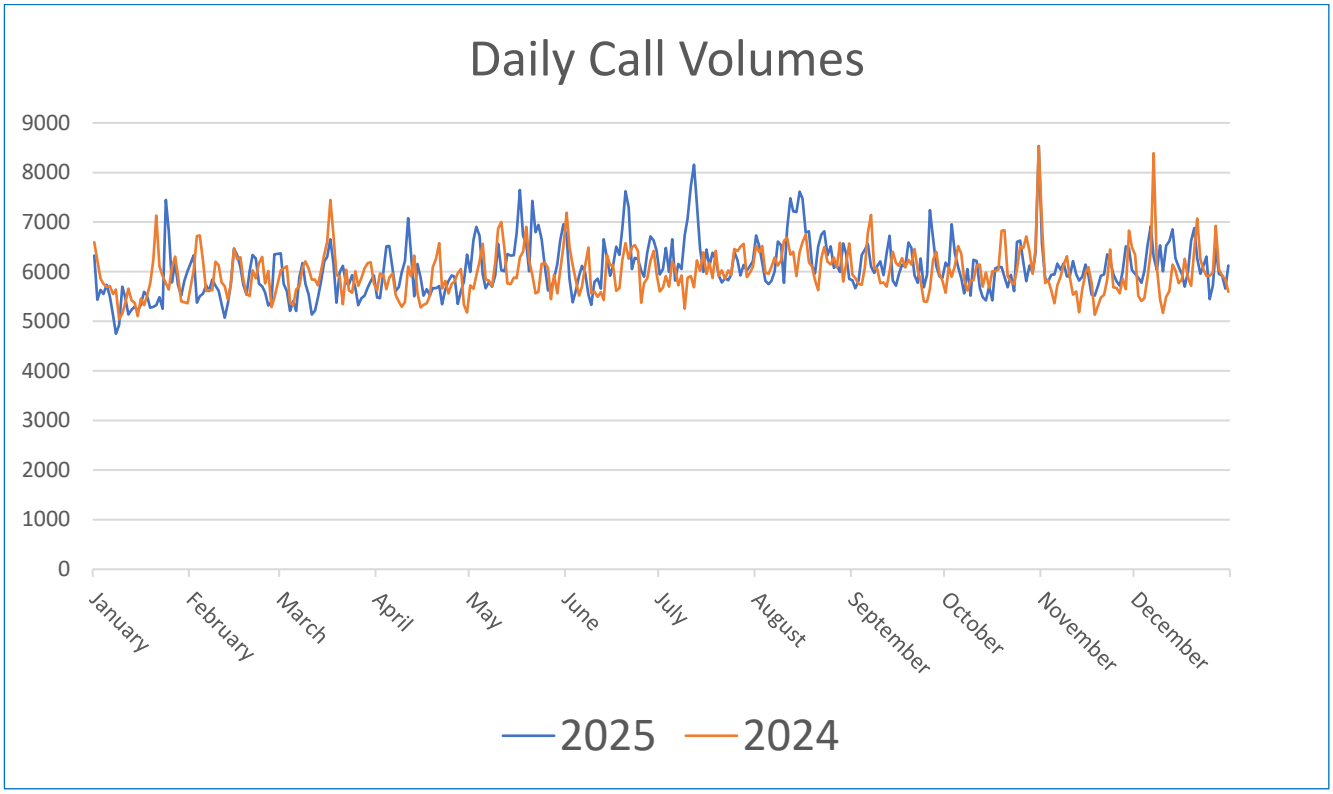


Figure 4 portrays the daily call volumes for 2024 against 2025.

Figure 4: Daily Call Volumes 2024 vs 2025. [Source: BT, 2026]



4.2 Categories of Calls

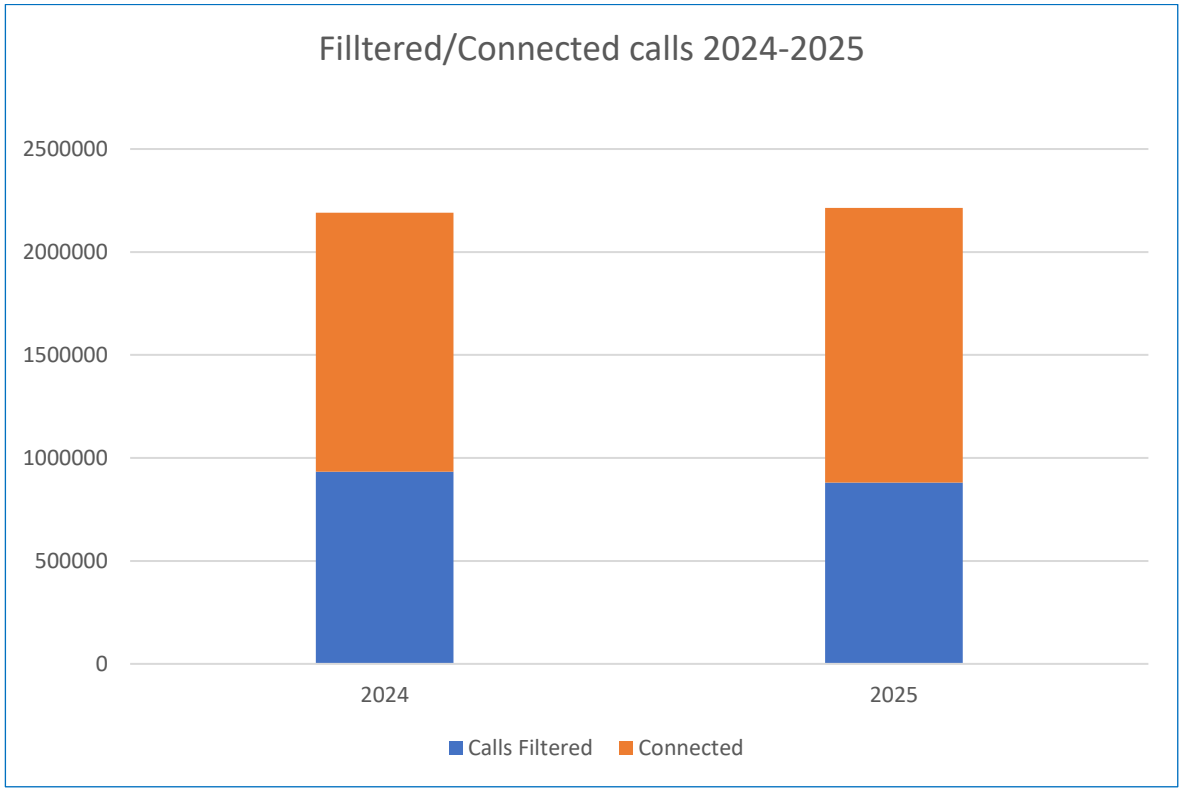
All calls to the ECAS are classified by category and a glossary of call classifications is set out in Appendix 1.

In addition to “Normal” calls, which are calls where an Emergency Service is requested and are connected accordingly, a proportion of calls from other classifications (for example, “Silent Calls”) are also forwarded to the Emergency Services, adhering to strict procedures.

Other, non-emergency calls (e.g. “Misdial”, “Customer Cancels”) are filtered out by the ECAS, ensuring only genuine emergency calls are onward connected to the Emergency Services.

In 2025 the percentage of calls filtered was 39.7% (42.6% in 2024) with 60.3% (57.4% in 2024) of calls connected to the Emergency Services (Figure 5).

Figure 5: Filtered and Connected Calls – 2024 vs 2025. [Source: BT, 2026]



Figures for 2025 saw an increase of 67,416 in the number of 'Normal Calls' received by the ECAS. This represents an increase of approximately 5.66% on the 2024 figure.

Table 2, below, outlines the percentage distribution of all calls received, broken down by classification.

Table 2: Percentage Call Volume per Classification [Source: BT, 2026]

Call Classification	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Normal Call	36.7%	34.7%	38.1%	46.9%	43.2%	54.4%	56.9%
Silent Calls	32.9%	28.6%	27.6%	32.7%	39.9%	33.9%	34.5%
Noisy Calls	16.6%	19.1%	15.9%	4.8%	1.5%	0.7%	0.3%
Other	13.8%	17.5%	18.4%	15.5%	15.4%	10.9%	8.3%

† Percentage totals may be subject to rounding

"Silent Calls" saw a slight increase in volume from 2024 to 2025. There were 765,034 silent calls received, which represents a 2.9% increase on the 2024 figure.

In 2025 the volume of 'Noisy Calls' continued to decrease from 15,901 to 7,158, which represents a reduction of almost 55% in volume compared to the previous year.

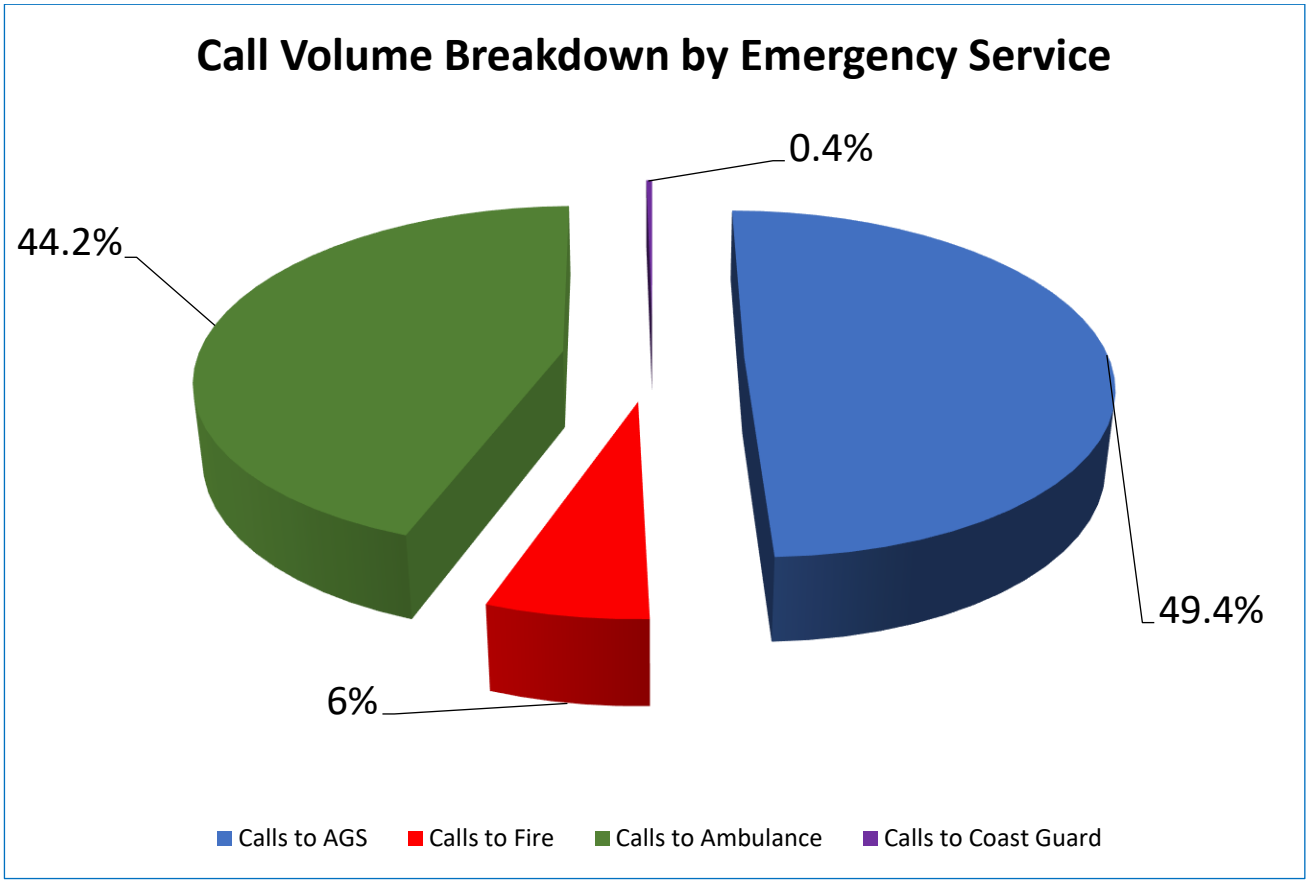
Other call categories (for example "Non-ES Help", "Cleared without speech", "Misdials") saw a decrease in call volumes of over 23.5% in 2025.

Table 3: Call Volumes per Classification [Source: BT, 2026]

Call Classification	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Normal Call	852,888	823,871	905,925	1,019,126	1,063,522	1,191,520	1,258,936
Silent Calls	763,730	679,112	656,500	710,671	981,908	743,494	765,034
Noisy Calls	385,016	452,340	379,481	103,565	38,142	15,901	7,158
Other	321,594	416,291	438,735	337,567	380,057	239,871	183,353
Total	**2,323,228**	**2,371,614**	**2,380,641**	**2,170,929**	**2,463,629**	**2,190,786**	**2,214,481**

In 2025 the majority of calls forwarded to the Emergency Services were connected to An Garda Síochána, at 49.4% of the calls, followed by the Ambulance Service with 44.2%. Fire Services and Coast Guard made up the remaining 6.4% of calls received.

Figure 6: Call Volume Breakdown 2025 [Source: BT, 2026]



† Percentage totals may be subject to rounding

4.3 eCall

eCall is an emergency call that is triggered either manually, by vehicle occupants, or automatically as soon as an in-vehicle sensor detects an impact from a serious collision. When activated, eCall establishes a voice connection with the ECAS.

All new types of cars and light commercial vehicles approved for manufacture after 31 March 2018, must have the 112-based eCall system installed. The ECAS system has the capability to enable it to receive eCalls and connect them to the Emergency Services.

In 2025 a total of 22,609 eCalls were received. 1,996 of the eCalls received were device initiated (activated automatically). 19,160 of the eCalls received were activated manually. 1,453 eCalls were received from Third Party Service Providers.

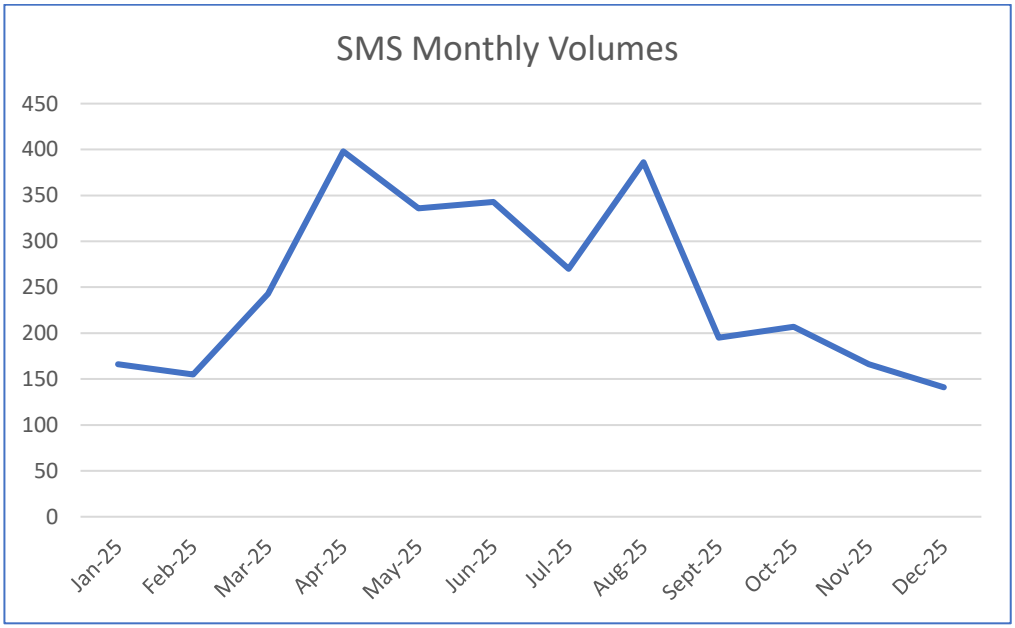
The total number of eCalls received in 2025 increased by 4,648 (26%) on those received in the previous year.

ECAS Operators spent over 550 hours dealing with eCalls in 2025.

4.4 SMS/Text Messages

The ECAS handled 3,006 SMS/Text messages in 2025, which saw an increase of approximately 61%, on the volume received in 2024. Of these messages received 1,350 were onward connected to one of the emergency services.

Figure 7: Monthly SMS/Text Volumes 2025 [Source: BT, 2026]



5 Quality of Service

5.1 Overview

The ECAS has handled over 15.9 million calls since the commencement of the current contract. In that time, they have filtered out over 8.5 million calls, freeing up the time and resources of the Emergency Services to deal with genuine emergency calls.

The Minister and BT Ireland have agreed a set of KPIs (Table 4) to measure the performance of the services and system provided by the ECAS Operator. The ECAS submit daily, monthly, and quarterly reports to the DCCS and ComReg in line with the terms of the contract.

The Department also carries out Monthly Audits of Emergency Calls, to monitor call handling procedures and quality of service. In 2025 ECAS achieved 99.80% call handling accuracy which is above the 99% threshold.

5.2 Storm Éowyn

During Storm Éowyn in January 2025, it was reported that people were unable to contact 112/999 services. It should be noted that at no time was the Emergency Call Answering Service interrupted, and the call centre remained fully operational during and in the aftermath of the storm. Where individuals had difficulty in contacting the service, this was due to a total loss of fixed line or mobile telephone service in their areas. For those individuals who had a mobile phone, but whose operator was experiencing service outages, they would have been able to contact ECAS on any other mobile operator’s network where that network was available.

Table 4: KPIs for 2025

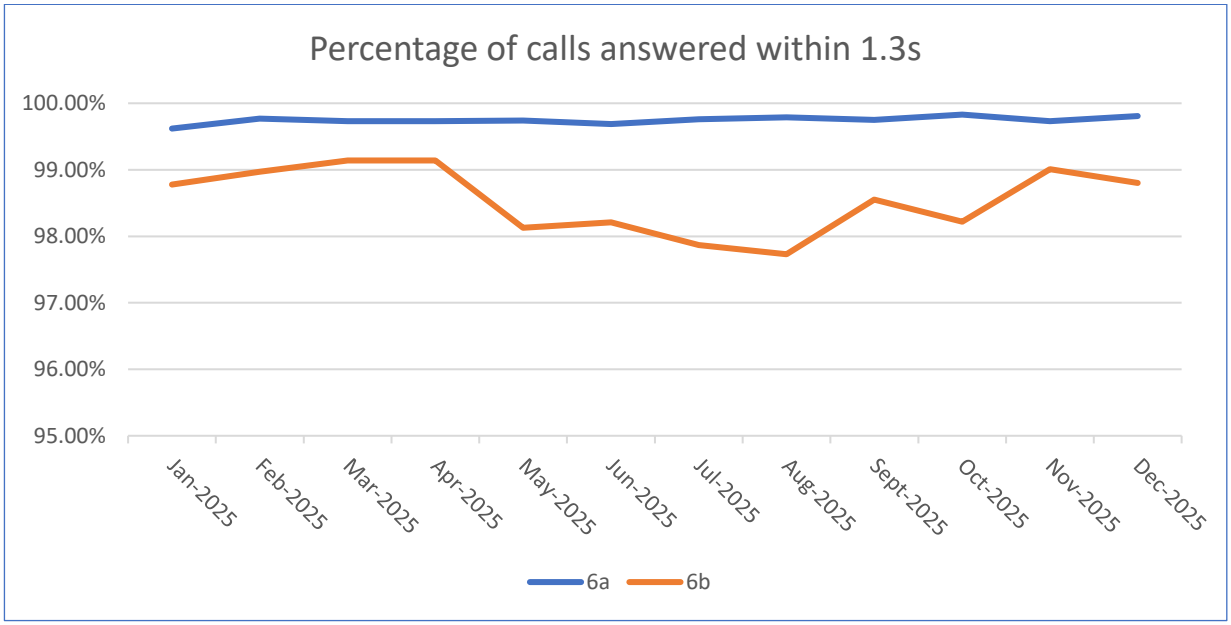
ID	KPI Title	Frequency	Performance Level	2025 average
1	ECAS Availability	Monthly	99.999%	100%
2	Missed Calls	Monthly	Zero missed calls during the measurement period	0
3	Standards Certification	Monthly	Valid / Current Certificate	Y
4	Potential Blocked Emergency Calls	Monthly	All available inbound capacity must not be fully utilised for more than two (2) seconds at any point throughout the Measurement Period.	0
5	Average Emergency Call Abandon Rate *(excl. calls <1s)*	Hourly & Daily	<5% of calls reported as a daily average.	0.35%
6a	Average Speed of Answer *(excludes delays > 10s)*	Hourly & Daily	<1.3s for 98% of calls reported as a daily average.	99.75%
6b	Average Speed of Answer	Hourly & Daily	<1.3 sec for 98% of calls reported as a daily average.	98.51%
7a	Accessibility Index (Hit Rate) *(excludes delays > 10s)*	15-minute intervals & Daily	95% of calls daily answered within 3 seconds	99.00%
7b	Accessibility Index (Hit Rate)	15-minute intervals & Daily	95% of calls daily answered within 3 seconds	94.59%
8	Connected Call – Average Call Routing Time *(excl. abandoned & unrouted calls)*	Hourly & Daily	<18 seconds for 90% of routed calls reported as daily average.	14.7
9a	Average Call Handling Time – Connected Calls *(excluding delays >10sec)*	Hourly & Daily	<55 seconds reported as a daily average.	53.2
9b	Average Call Handling Time – Calls Connected	Hourly & Daily	<60 seconds reported as a daily average.	67.6
10	Average Call Handling Time – Filtered calls	Hourly & Daily	<20 seconds reported as a daily average.	16.45
11	Transfer Accuracy	Monthly	<0.25% of hand offs routed to wrong Emergency Service	0.05%
12	Call Handling Accuracy	Random sample of 50 calls per ECAS Operator per month.	At least 99% per ECAS Operator Centre	99.73%
13	Caller or Emergency Service complaints against the ECAS.	Monthly	2 per month or 1 for every 200,000 calls	0

5.3 Percentage of Calls Answered within 1.3 seconds.

The ECAS are required to answer 98% of calls within 1.3 seconds as per KPI 6 in Table 4 above. In June 2023 a change request was approved whereby KPI 6 was amended to provide the true measure of the ECAS performance by essentially removing the impact caused by external factors from the calculation.

The Department continues to monitor both measurements regularly.

Figure 8: Percentage of calls answered within 1.3 seconds [Source: BT, 2026]



5.4 Accessibility Index

KPI 7, Accessibility Index ("Hit Rate"), requires that 95% of 15-minute segments in a day meet the criteria where 95% of Emergency Calls are answered within 3 seconds in each segment. Changes were made to this KPI, in line with those of KPI6, to better measure the KPI while discounting external issues that are outside the control of the ECAS.

The average 'Hit Rate' for 2025 was 94.59% which is below the allowable threshold of 95%. When external factors, such as the time taken to connect to the Emergency Services, were considered, the average Hit Rate was 99.00%.

The Department continues to monitor both measurements regularly.

5.5 Call Handling Time

Call handling time performance is monitored by a number of KPI's, which are set out in Table 4 (above). Connected calls take significantly longer to handle on average than other categories of calls due to the time taken to obtain details from the callers and ensuring the correct handover procedures are followed to accurately connect the caller to the correct Emergency Services Control Centre.

KPI 9 measures the average length of time taken from when an emergency call is answered by the ECAS Operator until monitoring, by the ECAS Operator, ceases. This KPI has, since 2020 been reported on as KPI 9a which excludes the time it takes the Emergency Services to answer (ring time) the emergency call and KPI 9b which includes the ring time to the Emergency Services.

In 2025 the average time to connect to the Emergency Services was 67.6 seconds, not meeting the performance level of 60 seconds. The Department took actions to raise this with the relevant emergency services. When external factors were discounted, calls were monitored for an average of 53.2 seconds which is within the KPI performance threshold of 55 seconds.

6 Service Enhancements

6.1 Device location

6.1.1 Advanced Mobile Location (AML)

Advanced Mobile Location (AML) is a technology on smart phones that works automatically by identifying the smart phone's co-ordinates and sending the details within an SMS when an emergency number (112/999) is called. The availability of AML sent with mobile Emergency Calls that terminate at the ECAS has steadily increased since its formal launch in Ireland in October 2017. When an Emergency Communication is made, on a compatible Android or Apple device, AML is activated and the caller's location details are automatically passed to the relevant Emergency Service.

ECAS received 1,862,882, calls from mobile phones in 2025. AML was available on 73% of these phone calls, and an average of 73% of all SMS messages received.

6.1.2 Presence Information Data Format Location Object (PIDF-LO)

Presence Information Data Format Location Object (PIDF-LO) is a standardised digital format used to send a person's exact location to the ECAS when they call 112 or 999 from a modern device (4G/5G compatible).

With the 2025 deployment of native 4G/5G emergency calling, device locations can now be sent directly via industry-standard signalling. This standardised approach is compatible across all manufacturers, mobile networks, and Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs).

To support this, the ECAS platform and associated networks were upgraded to transport, decode, and store PIDF-LO location data. Since December 2025, the ECAS has been successfully processing these PIDF-LO sourced locations and providing them to Emergency Services when available.

6.2 NG-eCall

Under Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2024/1084, Ireland's ECAS is required to support Next Generation eCall (NG-eCall) reception by 01 January 2026. Additionally, the Department must submit a status report on this implementation to the Commission by 01 April 2026.

NG-eCall is an evolution of the existing eCall service that is based on Internet Protocol Multimedia System (IMS) using 4G/5G technology.

As of December 2025, the ECAS, is available to receive NG-eCalls. Work is ongoing by the Mobile Network Operators (MNO) to provide the additional functionality required to roll out NG-eCall in live operations. Once the MNOs complete their roll out further testing will be completed in the production environment and will be assessed by ComReg.

7 Services for Persons with Disabilities

The Department is committed to enabling access by persons with disabilities to the Emergency Services. The Department, along with the ECAS, regularly monitors advances in technology as part of a continuous improvement process to develop the 112/999 services, particularly for persons with disabilities.

Over the coming years, new means of communicating with the ECAS will be facilitated to ensure compatibility, interoperability, quality, reliability, and continuity of emergency communications in the European Union.

7.1 112 SMS/Text

SMS/Text messages are received and answered by the ECAS Operator and where necessary the Emergency Service requested is contacted and the ECAS Operator acts as a relay between the texter and the Emergency Service Operator using the text message service.

112 SMS texts are free of charge to the texter. There is no longer a requirement to pre-register for the service.

7.1.1 Limitations of 112 SMS/Text Service

There are, however, some inherent limitations with the use of SMS/Text technology as it is not a real-time service and there is no guarantee of delivery. Therefore, if no reply is received to an SMS/Text within 2 minutes, the ECAS recommends that a texter sends a second 112 SMS/Text. However, if a person is in a position to make a voice call to 112 or 999, then it is advised that the person does so.

Further information is available on the website Emergency Text Service - ECAS 112.IE.

7.2 Real Time Text

Real Time Text (RTT) is a requirement of the European Accessibility Act (EAA) (Directive 2019/882/EU)[2] and was due to be supported by the existing ECAS and available to all users by June 2025.

RTT is seen as an enhancement of the current text-based service allowing the recipient (the ECAS) to see immediately what the sender is typing character by character. RTT calls from devices include an audio channel at the same time. Compared to traditional text-based services RTT will allow for greater interaction, interpretation, and anticipation between the caller and the Operator. In effect an RTT communication can be considered as a voice conversation in typed format. It allows for instantaneous text communication with real-time interaction between users and the ECAS.

[2] Directive - 2019/882 - EN - EUR-Lex (europa.eu)

Ireland was the first country in Europe to make native device RTT available for emergency calls in line with the EAA requirement.

Further information is available on the website Real-Time Text - ECAS 112.IE

8 ECAS Certification

The ECAS has secured and maintained the following certifications:

- **ISO9001** - sets out the steps necessary to adopt a quality management system. It is designed to help organisations ensure they meet the needs and expectations of both customers and other interested parties, based on internationally recognised quality management principles set out by the International Standards Organisation (ISO). BTBTIL have continued to maintain ISO9001 accreditation throughout 2025.
- **ISO27001** - is the globally recognized standard for an Information Security Management Systems (ISMS). It provides a comprehensive framework for establishing, implementing, maintaining, and continually improving an organisation's information security management. This standard helps ECAS manage the security of assets such as employee data, customer information, business continuity plans, IT infrastructure, software applications, databases, and physical records. By adhering to this certification, the ECAS can enhance their resilience to cyber-attacks, ensure data integrity, confidentiality, and availability.

  Throughout the reporting period, the ECAS have continued to maintain the high standards prescribed by this framework. This is mainly due to the rigorous controls in place, strict management of these controls and tight audit schedule which consists of two internal audits and two external audits annually. ECAS maintained this certification throughout 2025, conducting internal audits in May and October, and external audits in July and November.
- **ISO22301** - is an international standard for Business Continuity Management (BCM), which provides a documented management framework to protect against or reduce the likelihood of disruptive events. The ISO22301 standard permits the ECAS to prepare for, respond to, and recover from such disruptive events when they arise.

  The ECAS has continued to manage and maintain accreditation for ISO22301 throughout 2025, with an internal audit conducted in May and an external audit conducted in July.

9 Governance

The ECAS is managed through a number of forums: the ECAS Emergency Services Forum, the ECAS Liaison Forum and the Industry Forum. Each group meets quarterly throughout the year.

The **ECAS Emergency Services Forum** acts as the Project Board for the ECAS and is chaired by the Department. It consists of representatives of An Garda Síochána, the National Ambulance Service, the Fire Service, the Irish Coast Guard, AirNav Ireland, the Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage and the ECAS. Its role is to act as an advisory board and advise the Minister for Culture, Communications and Sport on the management of the Emergency Call Answering Service.

The **ECAS Liaison Forum** consists of officials from the Department and the management team of the ECAS. They review operational performance, operational matters arising, and service enhancements.

The **ECAS Industry Forum** is chaired by ComReg, and consists of representatives of ComReg, the Department, the ECAS Operator and the Telecoms Industry. This Forum facilitates discussion on telecommunications issues relating to the ECAS.

Appendix 1

Call Classification	Definition	Speech Present?
Normal	A normal call where a person makes a service request, and the call is connected to an Emergency Service.	Yes
Cleared Without Speech	A call where the caller clears the call without making a service request.	No
Silent Calls	A call which remains open without the caller speaking. These calls are triaged according to the Silent Calls procedures.	No
Repeat Silent Calls	'Silent Calls' which present to the ECAS a number of times within a given timeframe and are onward connected to AGS in line with procedures.	No
Noisy Calls	A false call which is generated on a fixed line network, which tend to be weather related. Noise on the line, no communication possible.	No
Abusive	A call from members of the public that are abusive to the ECAS Operator where no request for an Emergency Service is made.	Yes
Non-ES Help	A call where the caller makes a request for a service outside of the four named Emergency Services.	Yes
Misdials	A call where the caller indicates that they have made an error in calling the ECAS.	Yes
Customer Cancels	A call where the customer speaks and cancels the call.	Yes
Abandoned	A call that terminates before it can be presented to the next available ECAS Operator.	No