Resolving SMS issues within Pastoral Care

SMS transmission issues can occur due to unforeseen events, the purpose of this document is to go through possible problems to isolate how to resolve the situation. The description of the issues described within this document refer to the Pastoral Care 12 SMS manager, most of what is described here can be used in assisting with issues in the Pastoral Care Communicator program, Pastoral Care Personal SMS program and the Pastoral Care Directory Program.

Through all our testing of Pastoral Care SMS we found just about all of the messages sent where received within seconds from leaving Pastoral Care, some of the messages where received 5 to 10 minutes after being sent and only a couple had a longer delay because of technical issues with the SMS provider which where promptly resolved.

When starting the Pastoral Care SMS program and choosing the 'Compose SMS Message' you may receive a message in the 'Smsglobal Status' box saying 'Unable to Connect' with this message highlighted with a red background.

Before any messages can be transmitted to the SMS provider you must be able to connect to them over the internet, this message is informing you that you are not able to connect to them.

Possible reasons include:-

1) A glitch either on your system or through the internet at that very moment you attempted your connection. Exit the SMS area and then enter it again to reconnect to the SMS provider.
2) Someone is downloading a large file using up all your internet bandwidth. If so then wait until they have completed the download to free up some bandwidth.
3) Your internet connection is down. Confirm that your internet connection to the computer is working by browsing to a known internet page.
4) You have a firewall program installed which is blocking Pastoral Care from accessing the internet. Confirm any firewall program installed gives Pastoral Care access to the internet.
5) You have the incorrect password and or user name entered into Pastoral Care for accessing the SMS provider's server. Please confirm you have the correct details entered into Pastoral Care. Please note that a password and username for the SMS provider can be entered into the 'Global Settings' Setup area as well as in the 'Security' area of Pastoral Care. The reason a username and passwords can be set up in the security area is so a person can have their own individual account with the SMS provider when they enter the program and enter their password. If a

person doesn't have this set up in the security area then the username and password for the SMS provider is picked up in the 'Global Settings' area. To know which username a person is using when you enter the PC12 SMS manager you will see in the top caption of the window the persons username used with the SMS provider. To test your username and password manually access the SmsGlobal web site and log you're your account to confirm you have the correct details.

6) The SMS provider's server may be down, if there is a major outage then you will be unable to connect to the SMS provider, although this would be a rare event in today's technology this is a reality for any business. First thing to do is confirm their website is operational, if its off line then wait until it comes back on line before sending any messages.

7) As a last resort it is always worth waiting a period and trying again, just incase there is an issue with the SMS provider which they need to resolve. During this wait cycle it is always worth rebooting your computer and or your modem just to ensure there isn't an issue on your end.

When sending an SMS message the message isn't delivered within 30 seconds.

SMS Messages sent travel directly through the Australian SMS gateway to the appropriate telecommunications provider which then sends the message to the persons mobile.

Possible reasons include:-

1) The most obvious reason which does occur is that the mobile telephone number you have sent the message to is an incorrect mobile number or is someone else's, so please check the person's mobile number is correct. To confirm the number you sent to a person press the 'History' button in the toolbar to view both the messages sent and all the phone numbers the message was sent to.

2) The next most obvious reasons for a message being delayed or not received at all is that you have run out available credit for sending SMS, confirm you have enough credit which you will see in the 'Statistics' area of the SMS area within Pastoral Care. The simple solution if this is the case is to recharge your credit.

3) Another reason the message is delayed is because you used the schedule option for the message to be sent on a specific date at a specific time. To confirm this open the 'History' option in the toolbar of the Pastoral Care SMS area and look at the message to see if it has been scheduled, if it has you will see the schedule date and time at the top of the message.

4) The SMS provider has a technical issue which they are resolving meaning the messages sent are going to be delayed, through the testing and development phase of Pastoral Care SMS we experienced on one

occasion a delay of a couple of hours, this was due a technical issue the SMS provider where working on. On another occasion we experience another long delay which happened because they where doing a major upgrade to their hardware. Each time the messages got through but where just delayed.

5) There could be a technical issue with the Australian SMS gateway. We experience on one occasion a break down in communication with one telecommunication provider on the gateway where all the other telecommunication providers where working fine. This would result in a delay to the SMS's getting through for people using that telecommunication provider while the gateway issue is fixed.

6) Regardless of which telecommunication provider you use to receive SMS on your mobile and how you send them an SMS message, via a mobile or through Pastoral Care we have experience delays in messages from telecommunication providers themselves. Once we experienced a delay of days in receiving a SMS message sent from a Telstra mobile to another Telstra mobile, although this is very rare and was due to a major breakdown in Telstra the simple answer to the problem is just wait for the messages to come through.

7) If the problem is still occurring then it is recommended that you send a test SMS message just to your mobile before going to the next section of tracking the message to see where the problem is.

I notice that my available credit with the SMS provider is reducing when I go into the SMS program yet I haven't sent any SMS messages recently.

This will occur when you have scheduled a message. Scheduled messages sit on the SMS provider's server until the date and time you set for them to leave to go to the persons mobile and at the time they are sent from their server your credit goes down by the appropriate amount. It is suggested to always keep a reasonable amount of credit on your account so that all your scheduled messages will be sent.

To help resolve any change to your account log onto the SMS providers web site and view all the messages sent from the provider to work out what messages have been sent that you are not aware of.

How do I track SMS messages that I have sent to confirm that have got through the system?

Tracking of messages is a two fold level of operation. The first tracking method is within Pastoral Care itself then once the message leaves Pastoral Care the second method of tracking with the SMS provider.

To track each individual message you send from Pastoral Care Go into the SMS Queue program and then press the Log button in the toolbar

To determine if you have an issue locate the phone number you are having a problem with in the log area and see the response back column from the SMS provider. If it says 'SMSGLOBAL DELAY MSGID:XXXXXXX' then this message was sent correctly and this is a schedule message which will be sent at the scheduled time you have set it up fort. If it says 'OK: 0; Sent queued message ID: 70555573e4d50078 SMSGlobalMsgID:6127814849555271' ignore the numbers as they are unique to each message sent but this message was also correctly sent. What's important here is at the beginning of this string it has 'OK:' in the string, this means the message has been correctly sent.

If you have any other message in the 'Response Back' field then this will then tell you of what the problem was as the SMS provider sends back to Pastoral Care the issue it is having with message you are attempting to send.

The next level of tracking is within the SMS provider's website where you need to log into your account. To access your account press the 'Account' button in the SMS Pastoral Care area you are in, this will open their web site, then log into your account by entering your username and password details. Once in you account area choose the 'Outgoing SMS report' option available on the right hand side of their web site. By pressing the view button you will see the default option of the last 50 messages sent, you can change the options here to view any of the messages you have sent.

Now you can see the messages sent from Pastoral Care to the SMS provider, track down the message you are having a problem with and see what the 'Status' field says, the most common response is 'Delivrd'. This means the message has successfully been sent from the SMS provider to the telecommunication provider in which the telecommunication provider sends back a message it has been received. This return message can take a few minutes to update the SMS provider's website even after the SMS message has been received on the person's mobile, so it is best to wait at least 10 minutes and watch this status field by refreshing the screen by pressing the 'View' button in this area.

What are some standard error messages that can be returned from the SMS provider and is found in the 'Response Back' field in the Log window?

The Log window is found by pressing the 'History' button in the SMS area then pressing the 'Log' button. In this area you will find the last 10,000 messages you have sent, each message sent has a 'Response Back' field which is what the SMS providers server sent back to Pastoral Care after receiving the message. The common error numbers are automatically converted within Pastoral Care to

the following messages which is placed into the 'Response Back' field so you know what went wrong.

Error 401 = "Smsglobal Temporarily disable, try again latter"

Error 11 = "Invalid destination phone number"

Error 10 = "Invalid source phone, ie change your return ID"

Error 69 = "SMS that was submitted to Smsglobal failed"

Error 102 = "Destination not covered by the phone number"

Error 88 = "Run out of credit on your Smsglobal account"

Why are my messages arriving either an hour before or an hour after the schedule time that I set them to arrive?

SMS that are scheduled sit on the SMS provider's server until they need to be sent, this server is located in Melbourne Australia. If Melbourne is on Daylight saving time and the location you are sending the SMS from is not on daylight saving time then there will be a difference in time of an hour from which you set the SMS to be sent. To fix this problem where you have scheduled the SMS message a Daylight Saving button exists where you can fix up that missing hour.

Everything is setup correctly; Pastoral Care is running on a network but yet is unable to send any SMS messages, what could be wrong?

Depending on how large your network is and how it is setup you might have the system restricting your access so that you are only able to view internet pages and send emails via the email server application. It is suggested to talk to your network administrator to discuss any internet restrictions placed on your user account. As a general rule you should be able to run a FTP (file transfer protocol) program with your user account to run Pastoral Care SMS, your network administrator will understand what this is.

So what do I do if the SMS message sent from Pastoral Care doesn't get through?

1) Confirm the Smsglobal Status description in the SMS area of Pastoral Care says Connection Active no messages will get through unless Pastoral Care can speak to the SMS providers server. If the status description says 'Unable to Connect' then confirm firstly the internet connection to your computer is working then confirm the password and username to access the SMS providers server is correctly entered into Pastoral Care.

2) Confirm the message was sent to the correct phone number.
3) Confirm that you have available credit to send the message.
4) Confirm in the log window that the message has been correctly sent, ie it has OK in the Response Back string.
5) Confirm on the SMS providers web site in your account that the message has been received, and has a Status of Delivered if it doesn't then take note what the response is as you might have to wait for the message to get through.
6) Send a test SMS to a mobile phone you know doesn't have a problem.
7) If a test message from Pastoral Care doesn't get through send a test SMS message directly from the SMS providers web site by logging into your account then choose the option to send a SMS message.

Our experience when an SMS issue happened the problem was either due to entering the wrong phone number, lack of credit or there was an issue on the SMS providers server which just meant you needed to wait for the message to get through. This rarely occurred but did happen on a couple of occasions.

We recommend you wait by giving it a couple of hours for the messages to get though, if there is an issue, then ring the SMS provider to ask for advice as to the possible reasons the message didn't get through.

The SMS provider does not give any technical advice on the Pastoral Care software, to rule out any problems with Pastoral Care you need to quote them the 'Response Back' string which comes back from their server after sending them a message which then enables the SMS provider to track the message on their system ruling out any issues with Pastoral Care. The Best way to view this situation is its like a hand shake between two people, the 'Response Back' string is the acknowledgment on their end to Pastoral Care of receiving the message. As a reminder if the response back string says 'SMSGLOBAL DELAY MSGID:137306' (Ignoring the MSGID numbers) then this message was correctly sent, it is just a message that has been scheduled by you to be sent on a specific date and time.

Also as a reminder this 'Response Back' string is found by pressing the 'Log' button in the toolbar within the SMS Queue. Find the message you sent and then see the 'Response Back' field to see what has come back from the SMS provider's server.