



**TELECOMMUNICATIONS
DISPUTE
RESOLUTION**

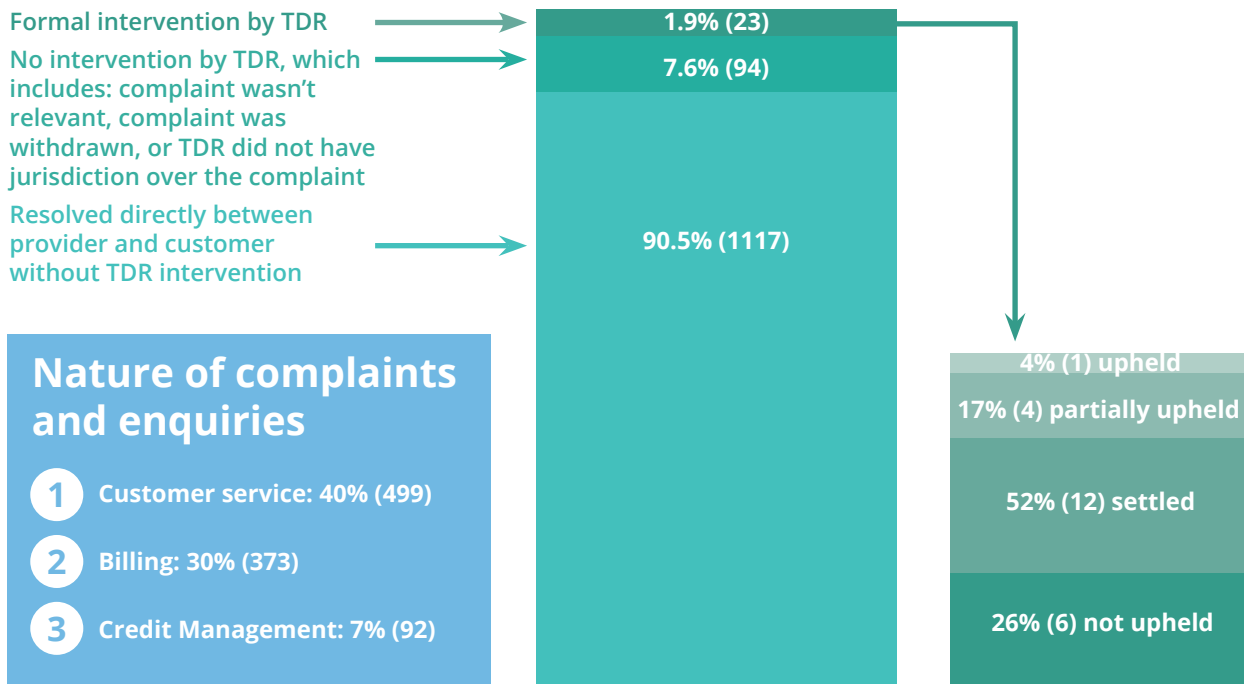
2020
Part One

**Telecommunications
Dispute Resolution**

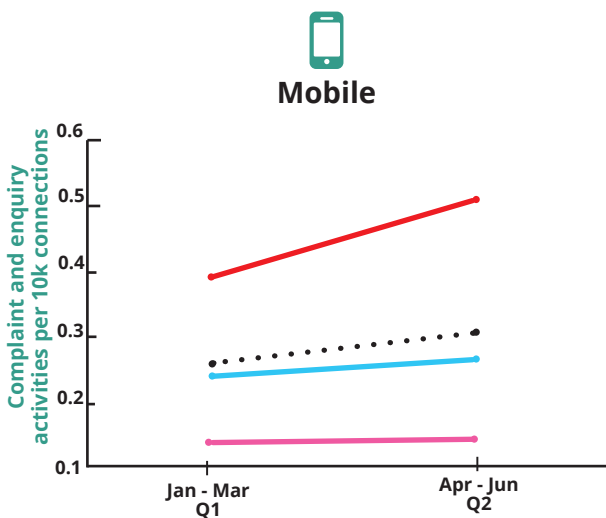
Biannual Report
January - June 2020

Updated December 2020

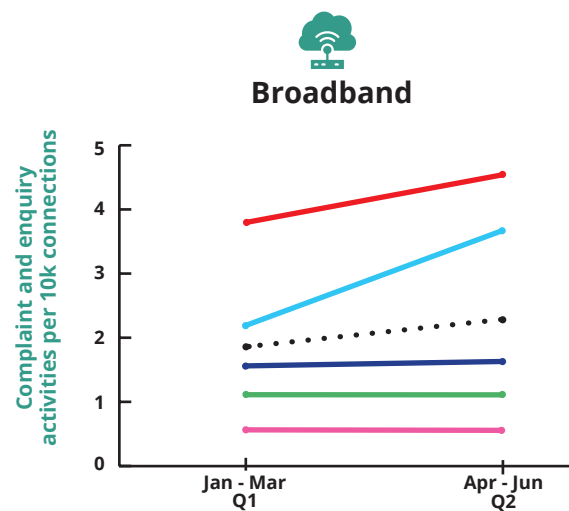
How complaints and enquiries were resolved by TDR



Complaints and enquiries per 10,000 connections



	*Complaints and enquiries per 10k connections	
Scheme member	Q1	Q2
2degrees	0.24	0.27
Spark	0.14	0.15
Vodafone	0.39	0.51
Industry average	0.26	0.31



	*Complaints and enquiries per 10k connections	
Scheme member	Q1	Q2
2degrees	2.18	3.68
Spark	0.60	0.54
Trustpower	1.11	1.10
Vocus	1.54	1.66
Vodafone	3.77	4.55
Industry average	1.84	2.31

KEY

2degrees

Spark

TrustPower

Vocus

Vodafone

Industry average

* Spark includes Spark, Skinny & Bigpipe

** Vocus includes 2Talk, Flip, Orcon, Slingshot & Vocus Communications

*IDC New Zealand supplies TDR with connection data from IDC's Telecommunications Market Tracker. Please refer to page 5 of the report for additional reporting information.



Points of interest

Welcome to our report for the first half of 2020.

In March 2020, the delivery of telecommunications services became more important than ever. When the global pandemic reached our shores, our country went into lockdown. In our bubbles, access to broadband, mobile and home phone services kept us connected and kept the nation humming.

Our free and independent service remained open during the lockdown. The FairWay and Telecommunications Dispute Resolution (TDR) team began working from home and operating our services through a virtual office. In the earlier stages of lockdown, complaints to TDR significantly reduced. We did expect to see a drop for a couple of reasons. Firstly, people had other matters front of mind in those first few weeks of lockdown. Secondly, many TDR members took extra steps to help Kiwis through the lockdown – including offering more flexibility and increasing or removing caps for some services.

Customers usually raise matters directly with their telecommunications provider in the first instance and work through things together – so there can be a gap between when the issue occurs and when they get in touch with TDR. When the alert levels reduced, we did begin to see a slight increase in complaints coming through, including some complaints specifically about the lockdown period.

I often get asked if I have any advice for consumers. My main tip is if you experience a problem, to know that it is okay to complain and to ask questions. Don't be embarrassed if you think your issue is small or you can't fix it yourself, that's normal - you are not alone. If you continue to have issues with your provider, TDR is just a phone call or email away. 1,234 Kiwis had their matter resolved or closed with some assistance from TDR in the first half of 2020.

From our experience, billing and customer service are two of the main areas that drive complaints in the telecommunications industry. Compared to the last reporting period, customer service complaints are on the rise from 25.7% to 40.3% of enquiries received.

TDR is here to help. Whether it's a broadband, mobile and home phone issue, it's free to resolve your complaint with TDR. It's easy - most cases coming to TDR are quickly resolved allowing you to get back to normal service. In fact, only 1.9% of cases required the assistance of TDR's facilitators, mediators and adjudicators from January to June 2020.

We hope this report provides you with a useful snapshot of trends within the sector and how TDR is here to help. We welcome your suggestions on how to improve our service and reports, so please feel free to get in touch with us by email at contact@tdr.org.nz.

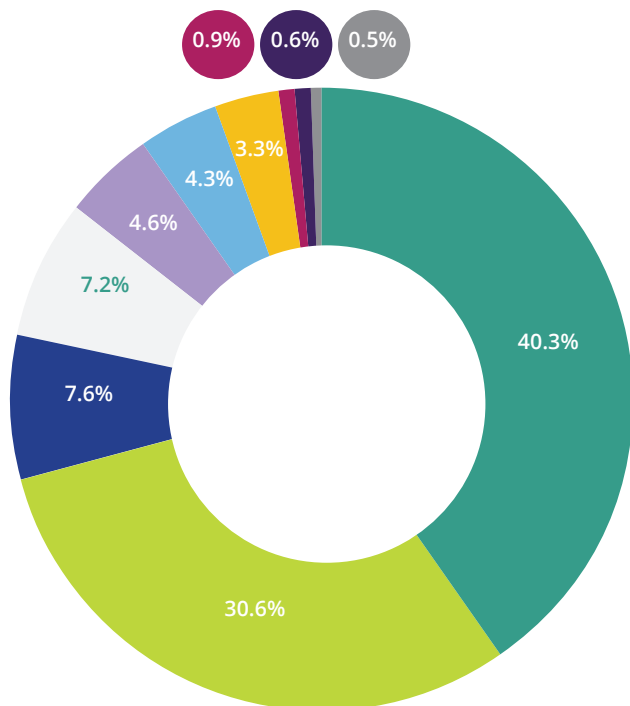


Liz Hogan

Head of FairWay's Commercial Services
Telecommunications Dispute Resolution

Nature of complaints and enquiries received

This section outlines our statistics for complaints and enquiries about TDR members that were received by TDR from 1 January to 30 June 2020, based on a total of 1231 complaints and enquiries.



KEY	#	%
Customer Service	496	40.3%
Billing	377	30.6%
Credit Management	93	7.6%
Faults	89	7.2%
UFB	57	4.6%
Contracts	53	4.3%
Network Performance	41	3.3%
Transfer	11	0.9%
Other	8	0.6%
Complaints Handling	6	0.5%

*Please note that percentages have been rounded

Complaint and enquiry activities about home phones

Voice service / home phone / landline

In this report we have reported complaints and enquiries regarding voice services and landline services under 'home phone.' These complaints are separate to those that relate to broadband / internet services. For a more detailed description, please see glossary (page 11).



110

Complaints and enquiries about home phones this period

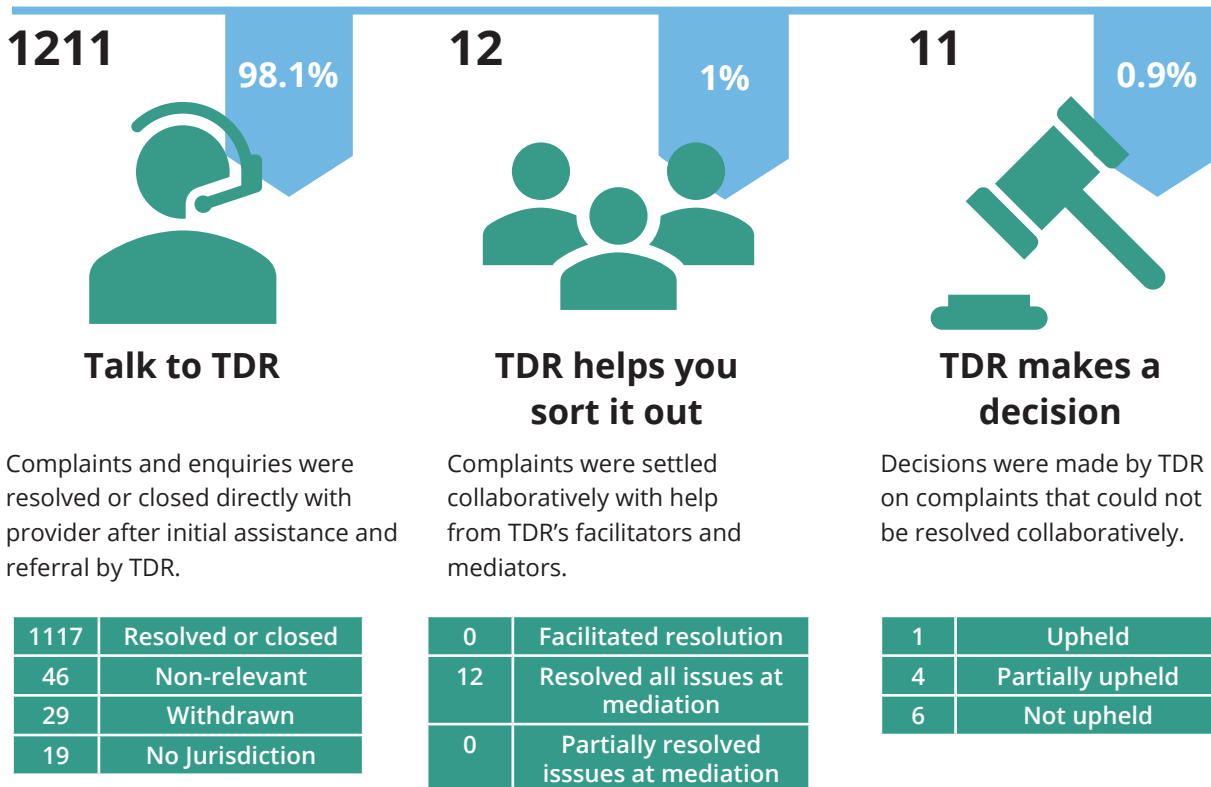
"They said local calls would be free..."

"Why can't I get a copper line?"

"I changed telco, and they gave me a new number. I want my old one back!"

How complaints and enquiries were resolved or closed

This graph shows the movement through the process of the 1234 complaints resolved or closed with assistance from TDR during the reporting period



Outcome	What it means	#	%
Settlement	Complaints were settled by TDR facilitators or mediators, meaning that before TDR had to make a decision, the consumer and their telecommunications provider were able to collaboratively resolve with assistance from TDR.	12	52%
Upheld	The TDR adjudicator determined that the complaint was successful, which means that the consumer prevailed.	1	4%
Partially upheld	Some aspects of these complaints were successful, which means that the TDR adjudicator found in favor of the consumer on those points.	4	17%
Not upheld	The TDR adjudicator determined that the complaint was not successful, which means that the consumer did not prevail.	6	26%

*Please note that percentages have been rounded

Net Promoter Score this period

A Net Promoter Score measures customer satisfaction. It is the core measure for customer experience around the world. The Net Promoter Score is calculated by customer responses to the question "how likely is it that you would recommend this company, product or service to a friend or colleagues?" The measure can run from -100 to +100.

In this period, TDR achieved a Net Promoter Score of +78.

+78

Net promoter score

Customer feedback

"The staff member I dealt with was pleasant and easy to deal with and explained what I had to do clearly. Full marks!"

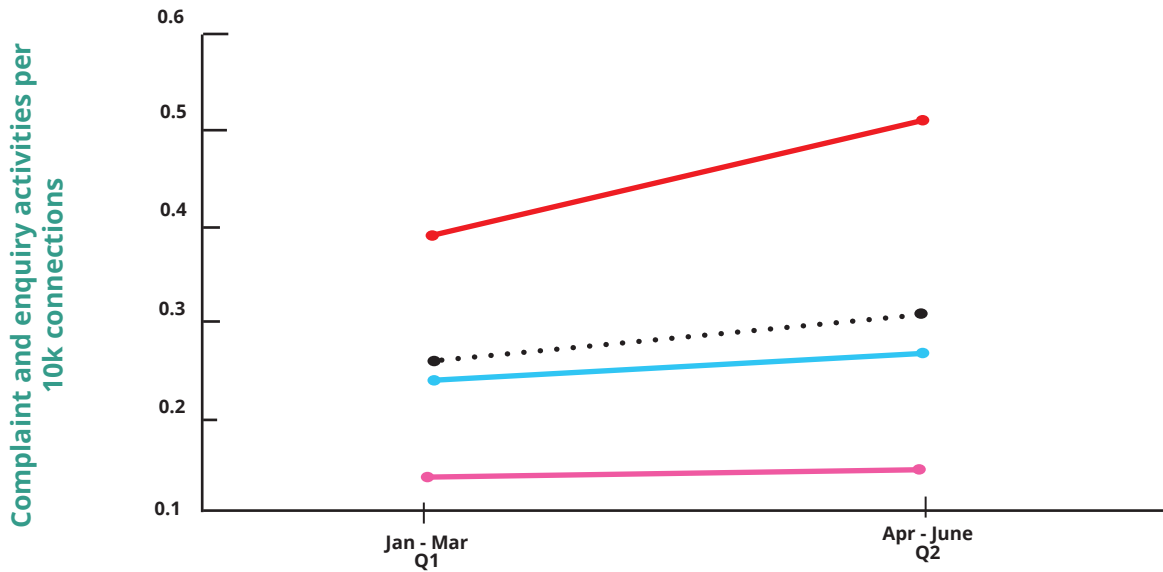
"Prompt reply from yourselves and it was all sorted with telecommunications company in around three days."

"They dealt with my issue promptly and in an entirely appropriate way. The end result... an apology from the company concerned plus a refund. I am very grateful for the help I was given."



Year to date data

Complaint and enquiry activities per 10,000 connections - Mobile



KEY

2degrees

Spark

* Spark includes Spark, Skinny & Bigpipe brands

Vodafone

Industry average

Q1			
Scheme member	*Per 10k connections	Total received	Based on total industry connections of 6,671,331
2degrees	0.24	38	
Spark	0.14	35	
Vodafone	0.39	100	
^Other		4	
TOTAL		173	
Industry average	0.26		

Q2			
Scheme member	*Per 10k connections	Total received	Based on total industry connections of 6,569,316
2degrees	0.27	41	
Spark	0.15	38	
Vodafone	0.51	128	
^Other		7	
TOTAL		207	
Industry average	0.31		

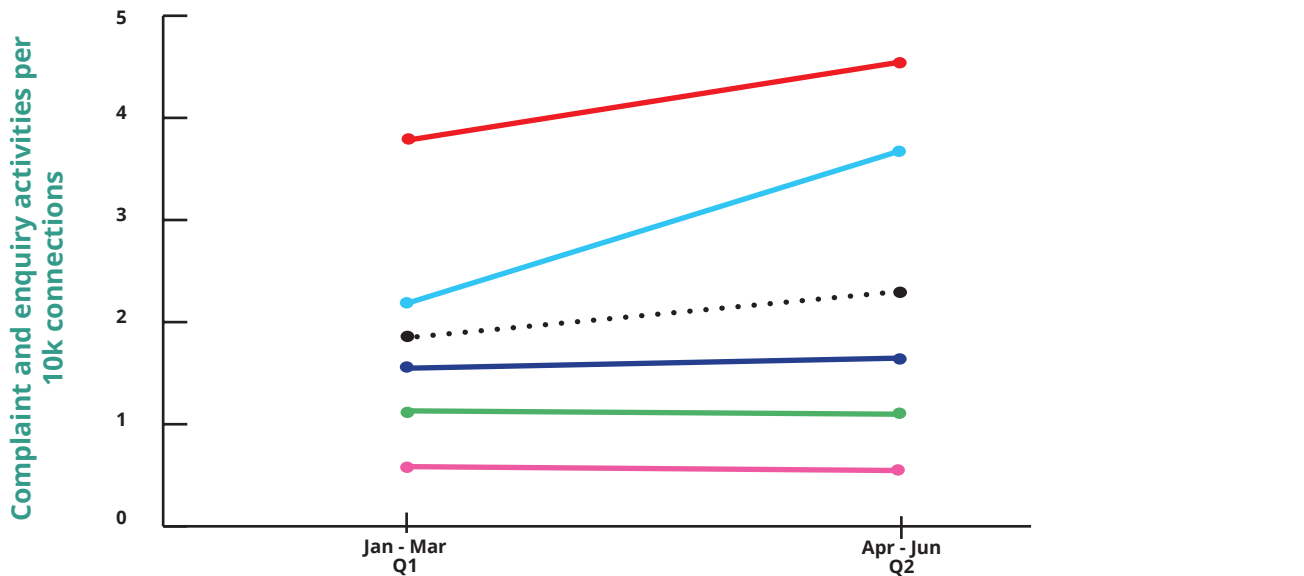
* IDC New Zealand supplies TDR with connection data from IDC's Telecommunications Market Tracker at quarterly points throughout the year. This report uses the connection data recorded at 31 March 2020 and 30 June 2020. Please refer to page 9 for additional information.

^ TDR does not calculate the per 10k connections of 'Other' scheme members, for more detail please see the FAQ on page 9.



Year to date data

Complaint and enquiry activities per 10,000 connections - Broadband



KEY

2degrees

Spark

* Spark includes Spark, Skinny & Bigpipe brands

TrustPower

Vocus

** Vocus includes 2Talk, Flip, Orcon, Slingshot & Vocus Communications

Vodafone

Industry average

Q1			Based on total industry connections of 1,807,803
Scheme member	Per 10k connections	Total received	
2degrees	2.18	25	
Spark	0.60	42	
Trustpower	1.11	11	
Vocus	1.54	35	
Vodafone	3.77	163	
^Other		44	
TOTAL		276	
Industry average	1.84		

Q2			Based on total industry connections of 1,842,004
Scheme member	Per 10k connections	Total received	
2degrees	3.68	44	
Spark	0.54	38	
Trustpower	1.10	11	
Vocus	1.66	41	
Vodafone	4.55	196	
^Other		31	
TOTAL		330	
Industry average	2.31		

* IDC New Zealand supplies TDR with connection data from IDC's Telecommunications Market Tracker at quarterly points throughout the year. This report uses the connection data recorded at 31 March 2020 and 30 June 2020. Please refer to page 9 for additional information.

^ TDR does not calculate the per 10k connections of 'Other' scheme members, for more detail please see the FAQ on page 9.

I am the authority!

Barry's new broadband plan backfires when his friend is added as an account authority

Barry* wanted to change his internet service so he went to see a provider in store. Barry brought his friend Pete along to help him pick which broadband plan he should change to. Pete also assisted in the conversation with the provider's representative. An agreement was reached between Barry and the provider, and they also agreed for Pete to pick up the modem as Barry was going overseas. When Barry returned from his trip, he received a very large and unexpected bill from his provider for a phone, broadband connection and mobile services which had been added to his account. Barry called his provider and was told that Pete, who they advised was added as an authority to the account when the account was set up in store, had made the purchases. Pete had also requested the invoices be sent to his own personal email.

Barry disputed both the charges and that Pete had been added as an authority on his account - saying he had not given Pete the authority to make purchases or changes to his account, only to pick up the modem. The provider advised that Barry must have added Pete as an authority as this was how Pete was able to pick up the modem and subsequently that Barry, being the account holder, was responsible for the charges.

Barry and his provider were unable to work out the differences themselves and the matter was deadlocked.** Barry brought his complaint to TDR who assigned the matter to a Resolution Practitioner.

Both parties requested the matter be adjudicated as they had been unable to resolve the matter and were steadfast in their positions. The Resolution Practitioner agreed to adjudicate the matter and accepted further submissions from Barry and his provider. Based on the information provided, TDR's Resolution Practitioner issued a determination.

The Resolution Practitioner summarised that the primary dispute in the case was whether Pete did in fact have Barry's authority to act on the account. They agreed that while it is common practice among New Zealand telco providers to allow an account holder to nominate a person or persons to act on the account, it is up to the provider to prove that they have received that authority and provide that evidence when required. The telco did not provide any record of the communication between the Barry and the provider to note exactly what allocating authority to an account allows. On the basis of the information provided, there was insufficient evidence that supported the provider's claim that Barry had given Pete full authority on the account.

Therefore, the complaint was upheld and the provider was ordered to reverse any charges raised against Barry for the products and services obtained by Pete.

**Names have been changed to protect our customers' identities.*

*** Deadlock is where a complaint has been raised with a telecommunications company and has come to the end of the company's internal complaints procedure without being resolved, or when it's been six weeks or more since the customer contacted the company and the customer still doesn't have a resolution they are happy with, whichever comes first.*



Gimme what I paid for

This customer believed he wasn't getting what he signed up for

Paddy* was looking to switch to a new provider, so he called around to see what they could offer. The provider he chose confirmed that they would match the deal Paddy was currently receiving and in addition, would provide him with a welcome gift.

At initial sign up Paddy chose a Naked broadband option**, however a couple of months later he decided to include a home line. This increased his total bill, however he believed it shouldn't have as it now did not 'match or better' his previous provider's deal which had included national calling.

Paddy contacted his provider and they confirmed that the new plan he signed up to did not include a landline, however he had the option to include it later for an additional cost. Paddy argued that the provider's sales representative had, at point of sale, promised him 'better' than what he already had, however the provider responded that this was subjective. The matter was raised with TDR by the customer and after lengthy communication between the customer and provider, deadlocked.***

A Resolution Practitioner was assigned to work with both parties. During the process, it was made clear that the provider had 'bent over backwards' for Paddy in resolving this and other issues raised. A swap of welcome gift had occurred, credits were added towards Paddy's previous supplier's early termination fee, as well as being offered half price options for calling plans. The Resolution Practitioner stepped Paddy through all the goodwill offered and effort the provider had made, and Paddy did reflect that they had attempted to look after him.

After further discussion with TDR, the provider offered an additional small credit to help Paddy feel he was 'getting something' and Paddy agreed to settle the matter by taking a discounted landline offer with a nominated 'favourite number'.

**Names have been changed to protect our customers' identities.*

*** Naked broadband is a commonly used term to describe a fixed broadband or wireless connection without landline services.*

**** Deadlock is where a complaint has been raised with a telecommunications company and has come to the end of the company's internal complaints procedure without being resolved, or when it's been six weeks or more since the customer contacted the company and the customer still doesn't have a resolution they are happy with, whichever comes first.*



FAQs

Who is Telecommunications Dispute Resolution?

Telecommunications Dispute Resolution (TDR) is a free and independent service to help consumers manage complaints about any product or service from their telecommunications provider.

What is the purpose of this report?

This report is designed to improve transparency in the telecommunications sector and to keep the public informed of issues that come to TDR.

How often do you report this data?

The data in this report is reported on a six-monthly basis.

My provider does not appear in this report, why not?

The TDR scheme is mandatory for Telecommunications Forum (TCF) members and voluntary for non-TCF members. The TDR scheme covers the majority of telecommunications providers in New Zealand (over 95% by revenue share).

We report on members who are identified in IDC New Zealand's Telecommunication Market Tracker which is presented at parent company level. A full list of our members can be found on page 14. If your provider does not appear in the list of members it means they are not a member of the TDR scheme.

Why is the data reported per 10,000 connections?

Each member's complaints and enquiries are reported per 10,000 connections to provide a fair comparison between different size members.

How did you work out how many connections each member has?

IDC New Zealand supplies TDR with connection data from IDC's Telecommunications Market Tracker. You can find more about IDC [here](#).

Why do you report at parent company level?

Reporting at parent company level is consistent with IDC New Zealand's Telecommunications Market Tracker. A full list of our members can be found on page 13.

Does the volume of complaints and enquiries represent performance of the member?

There are many factors that can be taken into account when considering the overall performance of a member. Our reporting reflects the total volume of complaints and enquiries made to TDR during each quarter. Each member's complaints and enquiries are reported per 10,000 connections to provide a fair comparison between different size members.

Some members may have lots of consumers contact us, for example if an issue has been in the media, if there has been a migration of services, or it may reflect a greater level of promotion of the TDR scheme by the member. This report captures the total volume of complaints and enquiries we receive. At this stage, there are too few formal complaints to report on outcome of cases by individual members. However we do report on the combined outcome of all complaints that require TDR's formal intervention across all members and report on this (see page 3 for more information).

How is the nature of complaints recorded?

A complaint or enquiry may feature several issues. The primary nature of the matter is



FAQs continued

recorded by TDR under generalised categories.

As an example, the network performance category could include issues such as coverage, service interruptions, or speed for mobile or internet connections.

What is the difference between complaints received and resolved?

When a customer contacts TDR about their home phone, mobile or broadband provider, we record this as a complaint or enquiry that has been 'received.'

TDR will then assist the customer and their provider. We keep track of their progress, and record when the complaint or enquiry has been 'resolved or closed.'

In any reporting period, there is often a difference between the numbers of complaints or enquiries 'received' compared to 'resolved or closed' as these progress through the TDR process.

Methodology

This report provides information about complaints and enquiries made to TDR about mobile, home phone and broadband services from residential and small business customers.

TDR's internal systems record data from initial contact to final resolution. This information is detailed in this report.

This report is designed to provide information on complaints and enquiries within context so some of the information is published as a proportion of telecommunications connections in operation per provider. Providers' connection data is supplied by IDC New Zealand.

The data count for previous periods may change from report to report. This reflects the lifecycle of complaints, which may have since reopened. For this reason, we provide the latest information in each report which portrays an accurate snapshot at that point in time.



Glossary

Broadband

Broadband refers to high-speed internet access. The most common broadband technologies available are fibre, copper, mobile, fixed-wireless and satellite. For the purposes of this report “broadband” means high-speed internet access delivered to a home or small business over fibre, copper, fixed-wireless or satellite.

Mobile

Mobile refers to mobile networks that are used for voice and data communications through wireless transmission technologies. Mobile services allow customers to make calls, send texts and access broadband to and from a mobile [cellular] handset when in range of a wireless transmission signal.

Mobile Network Operator (MNO)

A MNO is an operator that owns or controls all the elements necessary to deliver mobile services to consumers, including radio spectrum and the wireless network infrastructure.

Mobile Virtual Network Operator (MVNO)

A MVNO is an operator that provides mobile services but does not generally have its own radio spectrum or much of the infrastructure required to provide mobile services. It therefore relies on buying services from an MNO. The amount of control it has over the services it offers will vary according to the nature of its agreement.

Voice service / home phone/ landline

For the purposes of this report these terms mean voice services delivered to residential or small business consumers through a non-mobile device. Voice services can be delivered either over a traditional public switched telephone network (PSTN) or a digital network referred to as voice over internet protocol (VoIP).

How your provider delivers your home phone or small business phone service is evolving as the technology in this area is changing. TDR is reviewing the way complaints about voice services / home phones / landlines will be reported in the future. In this report we have reported complaints and enquiries regarding voice services under ‘home phone.’ These complaints are separate to those that relate to broadband / internet services.

TDR's complaint process

There's a problem

1



Let your provider know there's a problem

Contact your telecommunications service provider directly and make your complaint.

Your provider will work with you to find a solution.

Typical issues raised include:

- My plan isn't working the way I thought it would (cost, service, etc.)
- There are charges on my bill I dispute/have questions about
- I raised an issue with my provider and I haven't gotten a response
- There has been an unreasonable/unexplained delay in installing my fibre/internet
- I have a complaint about how my fibre/broadband was (or is being) installed.

My complaint is with my provider and we're trying to work it out

2



Talk to TDR

If you make your complaint directly with your provider, you can still contact TDR. TDR will have a chat with you about how we can help and what you can expect from the process. TDR will ask you questions to help you clarify issues, identify options you want to talk about with your provider, and help you work out what you think will resolve the issue.

TDR does not step in at this point. This is the chance for you and your provider to work together. Most complaints are resolved at this stage. However, TDR is always here to provide information to both of you and to answer questions. A little help from TDR can often make a big difference.

We need TDR's help to fix this

3



Collaborate

You and your provider haven't been able to sort out the issue?

Or six weeks has passed since you made your complaint?

Then one of TDR's expert team members will step in and help. If you can't resolve the complaint through mediation, a TDR adjudicator will decide the outcome. The outcome may be that the TDR adjudicator agrees with either all or some of your complaint or does not agree with your complaint. If you accept the outcome, your provider is required to accept it too.

Before TDR steps in, TDR makes sure that your complaint is something it can consider. This is called jurisdiction. Reasons TDR may not be able to help include:

- Your complaint is about a provider who isn't a member of TDR
- Your complaint is valued at more than \$15,000
- Your complaint is about equipment or applications that your provider doesn't support
- Your complaint is about network speeds or coverage.

Outcomes can include things like:

- Written apologies
- Plan changes
- Invoice corrections
- Refunds or account credits
- Withdrawal of accounts from collection.



Contact details for TDR members

If you have any questions or concerns about your current services and would like to discuss them with your telecommunications provider, or you would like to sign up with one of the companies that belongs to TDR, please see their contact details below.

	2degrees	0800 022 022
	2Talk	09 281 4357
	BigPipe	www.bigpipe.co.nz
	Chorus	0800 600 100
	DTS	0508 387 669
	Enable Networks Limited	0800 4 FIBRE (0800 43 42 73)
	Flip	0800 60 SALES (0800 60 72 53)
	Northpower Fibre	0800 667 847
	NOW	0800 GET NOW (0800 43 86 69)
	Orcon	0800 131 415
	Primo Wireless	0800 123 PRIMO (0800 12 37 74)
	MyRepublic	0508 MYFIBRE (0508 693 4273)
	Sedacom	www.sedacom.co.nz
	Skinny Direct	0800 44 00 11
	Skinny Mobile	0800 4 SKINNY (0800 475 4669)
	Slingshot	0800 892 000
	Spark	0800 800 123
	TNZ Group Ltd	0800 000 860
	Trust Power	0800 878 787
	Ultrafast Fibre	0800 FIBRE LTD (0800 34 27 35)
	Unison Fibre	0800 286 476
	Vector Limited	0800 826 436
	Vocus Communications	0800 895 000
	Vodafone	0800 800 021
	VoIPcloud Wholesale	09 222 4699
	VoiPline Telecommunications	09 222 1000
	Warehouse Mobile	0800 284 800



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