



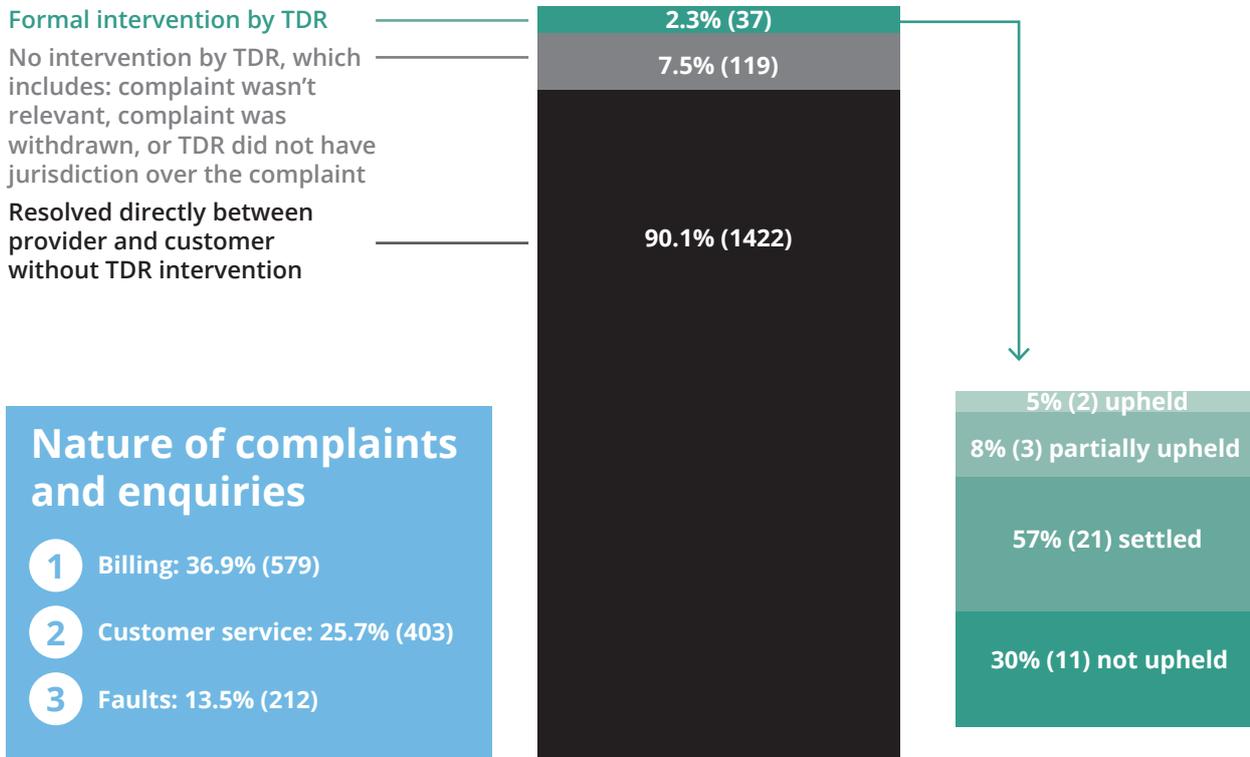
**TELECOMMUNICATIONS
DISPUTE
RESOLUTION**

**2019
Part Two**

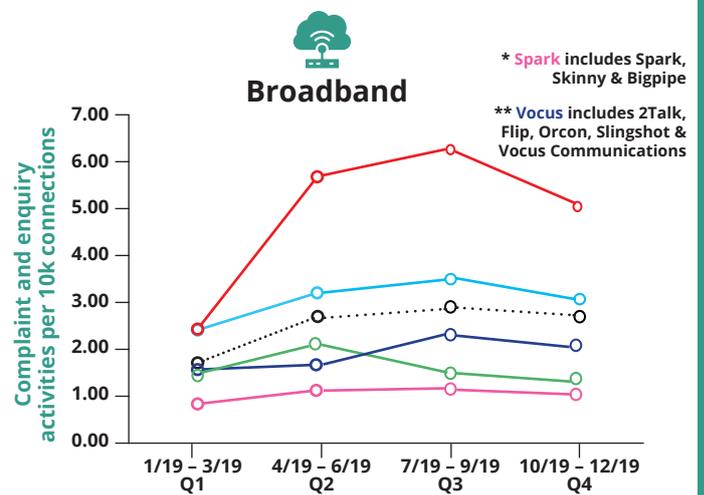
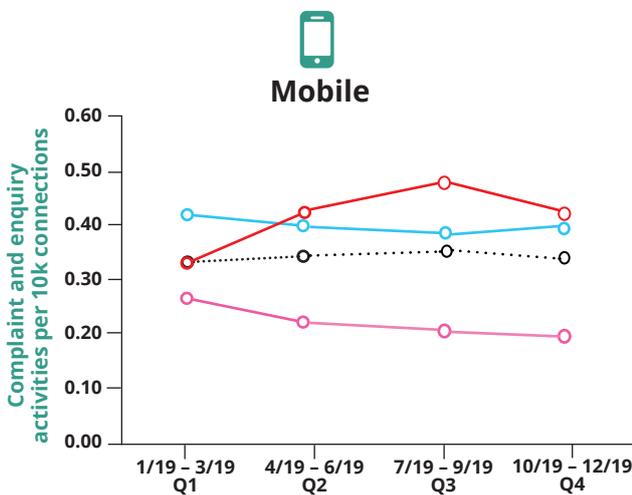
**Telecommunications
Dispute Resolution**

Biannual Report
July - December 2019

How complaints and enquiries received by TDR were resolved



Complaints and enquiries per 10,000 connections



Scheme member	Per 10k connections		Total received		*Market share
	Q3	Q4	Q3	Q4	
2degrees	0.38	0.39	51	52	21%
Spark	0.23	0.22	54	52	37%
Vodafone	0.49	0.41	128	107	41%
TOTAL			233	220	^99%
Industry average	0.37	0.34			

^<1% of mobile connections are with MVNO's which are not currently included within TDR reporting. See page 12 for MVNO description.

Scheme member	Per 10k connections		Total received		*Market share
	Q3	Q4	Q3	Q4	
2degrees	3.27	3.03	27	25	5%
Spark	1.23	1.07	87	76	43%
Trustpower	1.58	1.45	13	12	5%
Vocus	2.33	2.14	50	46	13%
Vodafone	6.32	5.10	271	219	26%
TOTAL			448	378	^92%
Industry average	2.94	2.56			

^TDR does not report on the 8% of 'Other' retail connections mentioned in the monitoring report as it includes non-scheme members.

KEY

2degrees Spark TrustPower Vocus Vodafone Industry average



Points of interest

Welcome to our report for the second half of 2019.

While most New Zealanders have no complaints about their telecommunications services, as a consumer it is reassuring to know that an independent service is there to assist if you do.

Telecommunications Dispute Resolution (TDR) is a free and independent service for broadband, home phone and mobile customers. Our purpose is to help consumers who have complaints about their telecommunications provider to swiftly and effectively resolve disputes. In July 2019 we welcomed our most recent member, My Republic, into the scheme. Our membership includes the majority of telecommunications providers, who together provide a service to over 95% of New Zealand telecommunications customers.

Compared to the same period last year, we saw a significant increase in customers using our service. 1578 complaints and enquiries were resolved or closed with assistance from TDR from 1 July to 31 December 2019, which is a 39 percent increase on the 1135 matters resolved or closed in the same period during 2018.

We continue to focus on quick or early resolution where possible, with 97.7% of complaints and enquiries sorted following initial assistance or referrals by TDR. For those remaining cases, TDR can help sort things out through collaborative processes (1.3%) or by making a final decision on the matter (1%).

Complaint themes were consistent throughout 2019 – with billing, customer service and faults comprising the top three complaint categories in both halves of the year.

In each report, we share some examples which highlight the work we do. One of the case studies in this edition details an account holder who was caught out by debt incurred by a family member he had authorised on the account. Account authorities are common, for example a spouse, family member or flat mate might be authorised on an account. However, you might be surprised by what they can do, and our case study demonstrates that sometimes things can go wrong. The new year is a great time to check-in on your account - TDR has recently shared some guidance, including questions you might ask your provider about account authorities, on our website. We recommend taking a look at our website (visit <https://www.tdr.org.nz/news/account-authority>) to learn more.

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.

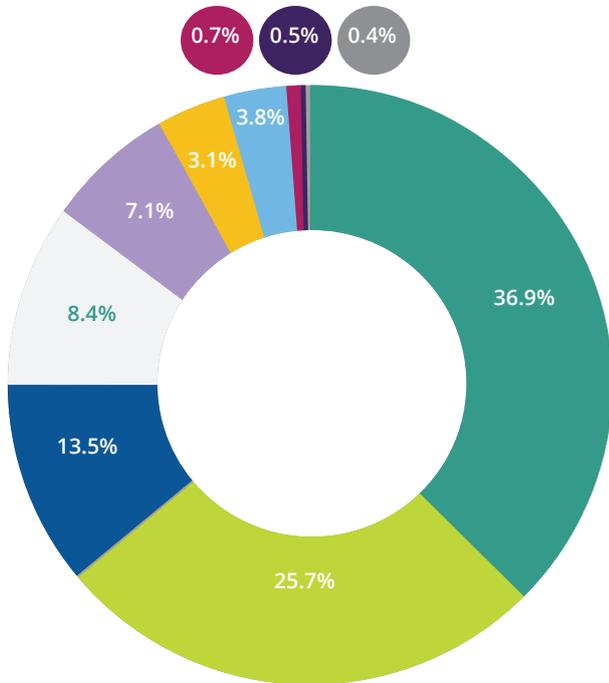


Liz Hogan

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 July to 31 December 2019, based on a total of 1571 complaints and enquiries.



KEY	#	%
Billing	579	36.9%
Customer Service	403	25.7%
Faults	212	13.5%
Contracts	132	8.4%
Credit Management	111	7.1%
UFB	60	3.8%
Network Performance	48	3.1%
Transfer	11	0.7%
Other	8	0.5%
Complaints Handling	7	0.4%

Following reporting adjustments, we have updated the figures provided for the nature of complaints and enquiries from 1 January to 30 June 2019 period. For the latest version of this report, click [here](#).

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 12).



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Complaints and enquiries about home phones this period

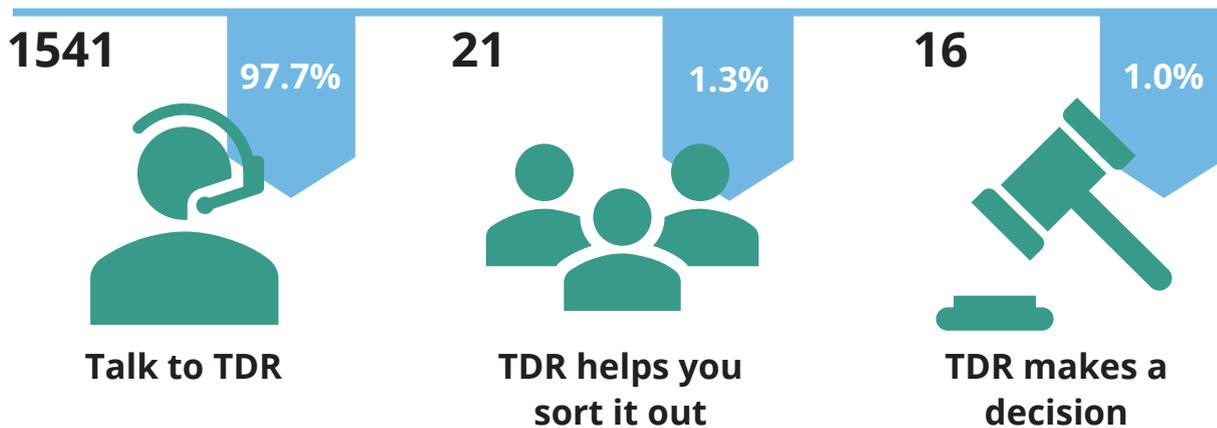
"My landline is not working and technicians have been sent out three times already!"

"For some reason I can't make toll calls."

"My landline has been disconnected for weeks and I don't know when it will be fixed!"

How complaints and enquiries were resolved or closed

This graph shows the movement through the process of the 1578 complaints resolved or closed with assistance from TDR during the reporting period



Complaints and enquiries were resolved or closed directly with provider after initial assistance and referral by TDR.

1422	Resolved or closed
48	Non-relevant
40	Withdrawn
31	No Jurisdiction

Complaints were settled collaboratively with help from TDR's facilitators and mediators.

6	Facilitated resolution
15	Resolved all issues at mediation
0	Partially resolved issues at mediation

Decisions were made by TDR on complaints that could not be resolved collaboratively.

2	Upheld
3	Partially upheld
11	Not upheld

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.	21	57%
Upheld	The TDR adjudicator determined that the complaint was successful, which means that the consumer prevailed.	2	5%
Partially upheld	Some aspects of these complaints were successful, which means that the TDR adjudicator found in favor of the consumer on those points.	3	8%
Not upheld	The TDR adjudicator determined that the complaint was not successful, which means that the consumer did not prevail.	11	30%

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 +69.

+69

Net promoter score

Customer feedback

"I wish I contacted you months ago."

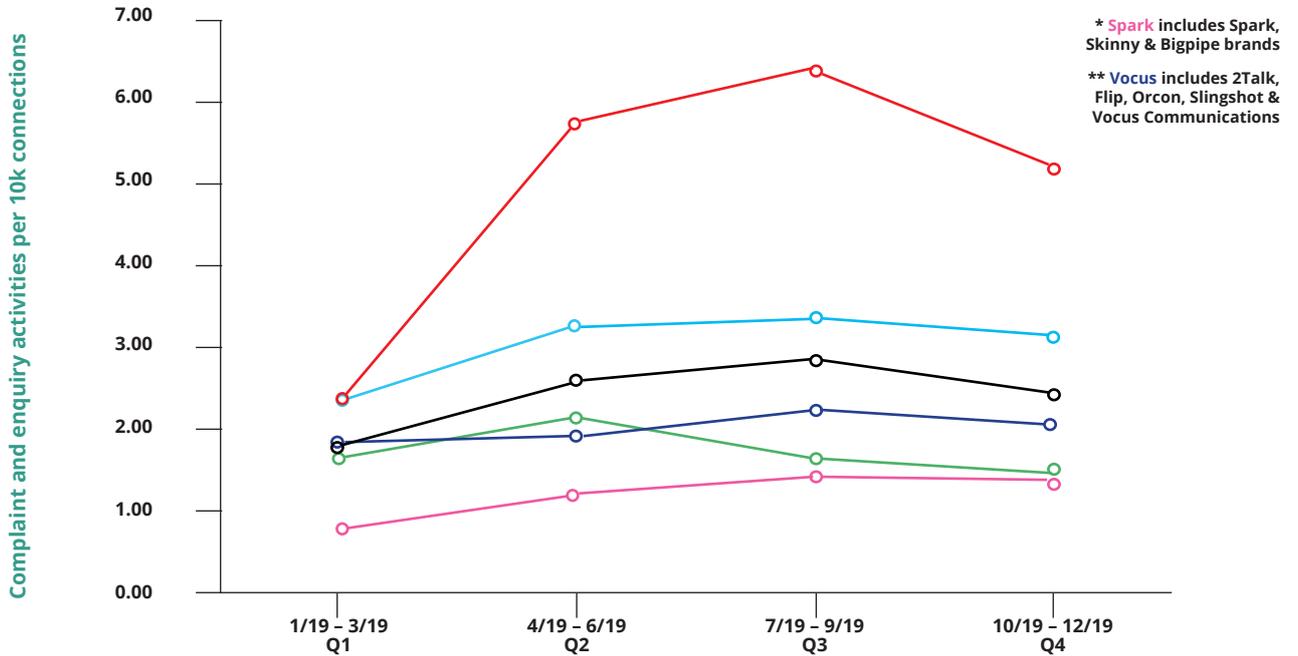
"Expert advice from TDR representative."

"I went from months of basically being ignored and hours long rabbit holes of being on hold and call transfers, to having the dispute easily resolved thanks to TDR."



Year to date data for 2019

Complaint and enquiry activities per 10,000 connections - Broadband



* Spark includes Spark, Skinny & Bigpipe brands
 ** Vocus includes 2Talk, Flip, Orcon, Slingshot & Vocus Communications

KEY

2degrees Spark TrustPower Vocus Vodafone Industry average

Q1				
Scheme member	Per 10k connections	Total received	*Market share	Broadband connections
2degrees	2.42	20	5%	82,500
Spark	0.93	66	43%	709,500
Trustpower	1.58	13	5%	82,500
Vocus	1.82	39	13%	214,500
Vodafone	2.42	104	26%	429,000
TOTAL		242	^92%	1,518,000
1.83		Industry average		
Q2				
Scheme member	Per 10k connections	Total received	*Market share	Broadband connections
2degrees	3.15	26	5%	82,500
Spark	1.06	75	43%	709,500
Trustpower	2.06	17	5%	82,500
Vocus	1.86	40	13%	214,500
Vodafone	5.76	247	26%	429,000
TOTAL		405	^92%	1,518,000
2.78		Industry average		

Q3				
Scheme member	Per 10k connections	Total received	*Market share	Broadband connections
2degrees	3.27	27	5%	82,500
Spark	1.23	87	43%	709,500
Trustpower	1.58	13	5%	82,500
Vocus	2.33	50	13%	214,500
Vodafone	6.32	271	26%	429,000
TOTAL		448	^92%	1,518,000
2.94		Industry average		
Q4				
Scheme member	Per 10k connections	Total received	*Market share	Broadband connections
2degrees	3.03	25	5%	82,500
Spark	1.07	76	43%	709,500
Trustpower	1.45	12	5%	82,500
Vocus	2.14	46	13%	214,500
Vodafone	5.10	219	26%	429,000
TOTAL		378	^92%	1,518,000
2.56		Industry average		

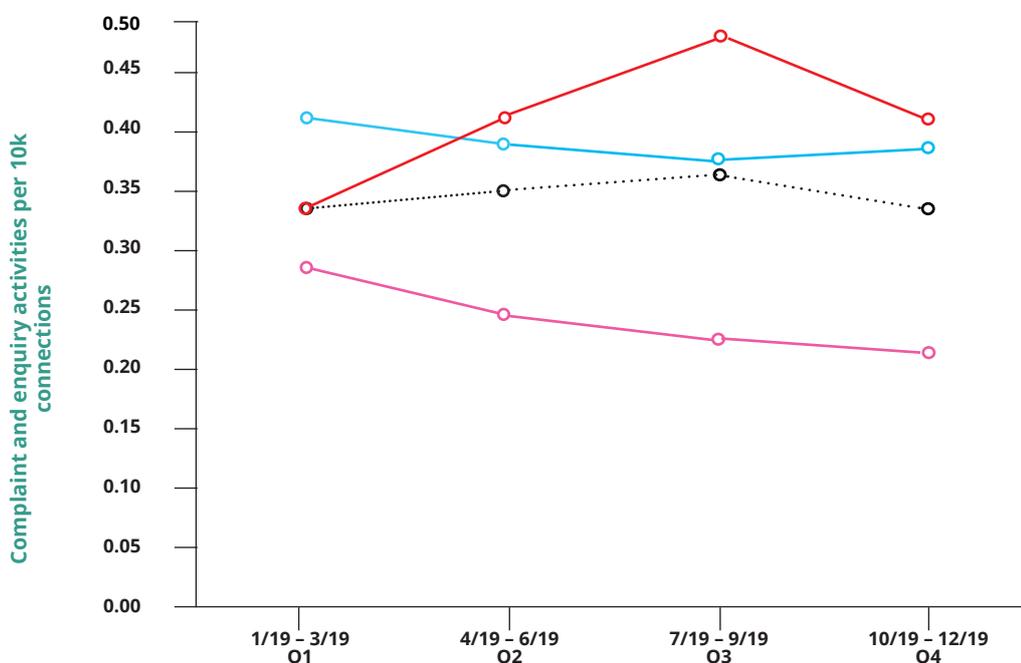
^TDR does not report on the 8% of 'Other' retail connections mentioned in the monitoring report as it includes non-scheme members.

*Connection numbers are based on the Commerce Commission's Annual Telecommunications Monitoring Report.



Year to date data for 2019

Complaint and enquiry activities per 10,000 connections - Mobile



KEY

2degrees

Spark

TrustPower

Vocus

Vodafone

Industry average

Q1				
Scheme member	Per 10k connections	Total received	*Market share	Mobile connections
2degrees	0.41	55	21%	1,344,000
Spark	0.27	65	37%	2,368,000
Vodafone	0.34	88	41%	2,624,000
TOTAL		208	^99%	6,336,000
0.34		Industry average		
Q2				
Scheme member	Per 10k connections	Total received	*Market share	Mobile connections
2degrees	0.39	53	21%	1,334,000
Spark	0.24	56	37%	2,368,000
Vodafone	0.42	111	41%	2,624,000
TOTAL		220	^99%	6,336,000
0.35		Industry average		

Q3				
Scheme member	Per 10k connections	Total received	*Market share	Mobile connections
2degrees	0.38	51	21%	1,334,000
Spark	0.23	54	37%	2,368,000
Vodafone	0.49	128	41%	2,624,000
TOTAL		233	^99%	6,336,000
0.37		Industry average		
Q4				
Scheme member	Per 10k connections	Total received	*Market share	Mobile connections
2degrees	0.39	52	21%	1,334,000
Spark	0.22	52	37%	2,368,000
Vodafone	0.41	107	41%	2,624,000
TOTAL		211	^99%	6,336,000
0.34		Industry average		

^<1% of mobile connections are with MVNO's who are not currently included within TDR reporting.

*Connection numbers are based on the Commerce Commission's Annual Telecommunications Monitoring Report.

Tim, Tina and the Telco dilemma

Account holder caught out by debt incurred by family member authorised on the account.

Tim* authorised his cousin Tina* to have full access to his telco account. Tim subsequently stopped using that particular account but did not change who was authorised or what their level of authority was. Unbeknownst to Tim, Tina used the account for mobile services and to purchase several expensive handsets. Tina also changed the email address and contact telephone number on the account so that only she would get the bills and any contact from the telco. Then, Tina fell behind on the account and stopped paying.

Tim had no idea anything had happened with the account until he received a letter from a debt collection agency for approximately \$2,000 worth of unpaid charges that Tina had spent on the account. Tim explained to his telco what had happened, but according to the terms and conditions of Tim's contract, he was responsible for whatever anyone authorised on the account did. Tim disputed that he should be responsible for what Tina did.

Tim contacted the TDR for help in sorting out the issue. Working with a TDR practitioner, Tim and his telco reached an agreed solution. The practitioner was able to help both Tim and Tim's telco see each other's perspectives. Tim's telco agreed to waive most of the late charges on the account, leaving approximately \$1,300, which Tim agreed to pay. Tim's telco also set up a reasonable repayment plan for Tim and provided documents which Tim could use to pursue a separate claim against Tina.

This case study highlights the importance of understanding what it means when you authorise someone on your account. In most cases, this means that the person can charge hardware (new phones, etc.); enter into plans/use the services; change where bills are going; and, change passwords. However, there are different levels of authorisation and you can set different timeframes for authorisation. Talk to your telco first and understand what authorisation means before you authorise anyone on your account.

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



Incorrect Invoice

Early TDR intervention facilitates good outcome.

Putariki* had been a customer of his provider for three years. He noticed his monthly invoice increased, so he called his provider to find out what was going on. He was informed that the term of his fixed contract was over, so some discounts no longer applied. He was told that he would have to agree to a new plan and contract term to receive further discounts. After this conversation, Putariki agreed to an amount of \$62.99 per month for home phone and broadband services. He was advised that everything was confirmed and all he had to do was wait for the new invoice which would show the new price. Unfortunately, the next month's invoice did not match the agreed amount.

Putariki spent the next four weeks contacting his provider advising them that the amount was wrong, and it should be corrected. The representatives he spoke to were unable to confirm that the pricing was wrong and did not understand there was an issue. Putariki was promised that his complaint would be escalated, and he would be called back, but this did not occur. After the constant toing and froing, and receiving another month of incorrect billing, Putariki felt like he was not being heard and decided to submit a complaint through TDR.

Because it had only been four weeks since Putariki had first raised the billing issue with his provider, TDR gathered the complaint details from Putariki and forwarded the information to his provider to respond to. TDR scheme members have up to six weeks to resolve a complaint directly with their customers before a complaint is 'deadlocked' and can enter TDR's formal complaint process. TDR explained the timeframes allowed under the Customer Complaints Code and advised Putariki to expect contact from his provider within five working days.

Two days after receiving the complaint from TDR, the provider contacted Putariki acknowledging that the invoices were incorrect and the customer service he had received was unsatisfactory, noting that Putariki should not have had to contact TDR to resolve the issue.

Putariki was extremely pleased with the quick turnaround from his provider after contacting TDR.

In the second half of 2019, 90.1% of complaints were resolved directly by scheme members after being notified of the complaint by TDR.

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



Termination? What termination?

A customer thinks her account is closed. Telco says otherwise.

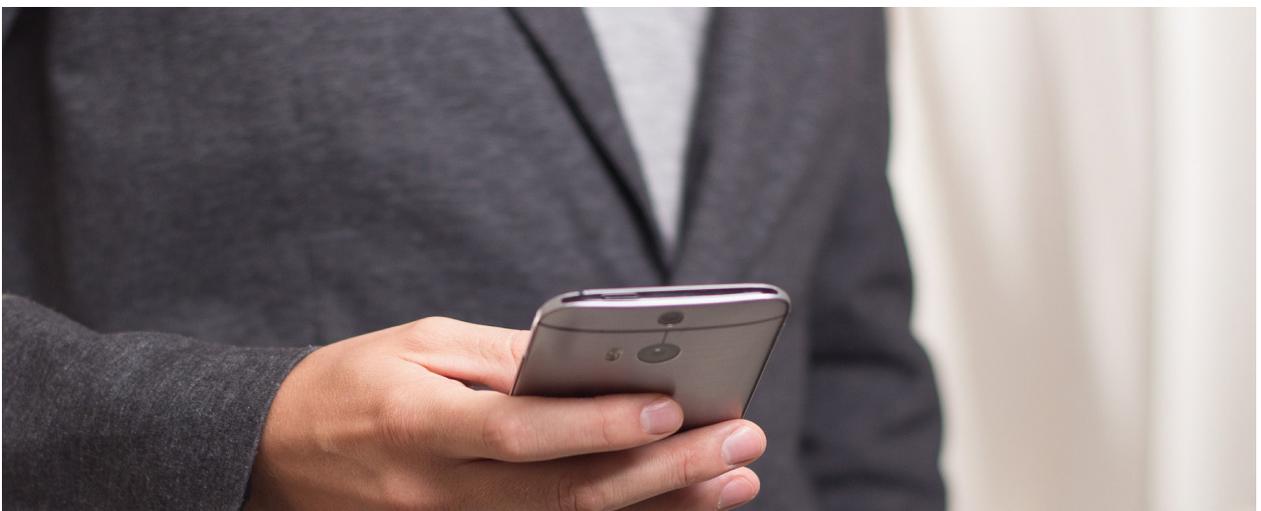
Susie* decided it was time for a new broadband service. She talked with a telco about what was involved and also discovered that she could have both broadband and mobile phone services with the same provider. This sounded like a great idea to her!

Susie thought that she was getting a bundled service—one where there are multiple services through one account and contract. However, in this case, Susie signed separate contracts with different terms for broadband and mobile.

A year later, Susie didn't feel like she was getting a good deal, given that she'd had problems with her broadband and didn't feel as though she'd gotten good service. She decided to switch providers. However, Susie didn't advise her telco that she wished to terminate both her broadband and her mobile services. Further, she continued to use the mobile service for several months but had stopped paying the bill.

After being sent notices from a debt collection agency, Susie contacted TDR for help. When Susie and her telco couldn't resolve the issue collaboratively, TDR's practitioner made a decision on the complaint. The practitioner considered that there had been some communication from Susie that certainly indicated that she was unhappy and that she considered herself an ex-customer. However, Susie had continued to use the mobile service until the account was suspended for non-payment. On that basis, the practitioner dismissed the complaint.

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



Bendy phone

Customer discovers that her phone has bent after a year of use. Was the phone damaged by impact or did it have a manufacture issue?

Kathryn* bought a mobile phone from her prepay phone provider's store. She had no issues with the phone for over a year until she removed the phone from its protective casing and noticed there was a visible bend in the phone. Kathryn called her provider who offered to send it away for assessment by their authorised technicians, however, when she went to the store to hand it over was advised that it was doubtful that the phone would be replaced as Kathryn could not prove that the phone had not been damaged by an impact. Kathryn retained her phone and submitted a complaint to TDR.

During the initial steps of contact with TDR, Kathryn agreed to send her phone to the authorised phone technicians as neither her provider nor TDR staff have the technical skills to assess a damaged phone. A report was provided which claimed the damage caused to the phone was not manufacture related, and the phone had suffered impact damage.

Kathryn disputed that she had dropped her phone and did not accept the technicians report. The complaint was deadlocked and a TDR Resolution Practitioner was assigned.

The Resolution Practitioner discussed the complaint with both parties. They received further clarification regarding this model's manufacture issues from the provider and clarified the provider's obligations under the Consumer Guarantees Act to Kathryn. Through these discussions both parties were able to reach an agreement on how to proceed and the matter was settled.

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





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 have only been able to report on members who are identified in the Commerce Commission's Annual Telecommunications Monitoring Report 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?

We used estimated data from the Commerce Commission's Annual Telecommunications Monitoring Report. The most recent one is for 2018 and can be found [here](#). We have only been able to report on members who are identified in the Commerce Commission's Report.

Why do you report at parent company level?

Reporting at parent company level is consistent with the Commerce Commission's monitoring report. A full list of our members can be found on page 14.

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).



FAQs continued

How is the nature of complaints recorded?

A complaint or enquiry may feature several issues. The primary nature of the matter is 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 calculated using information from the Commerce Commission Annual Telecommunications Monitoring Report – December 2018.

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)
	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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