



**TELECOMMUNICATIONS
DISPUTE
RESOLUTION**

2019
Part one

**Telecommunications
Dispute Resolution**

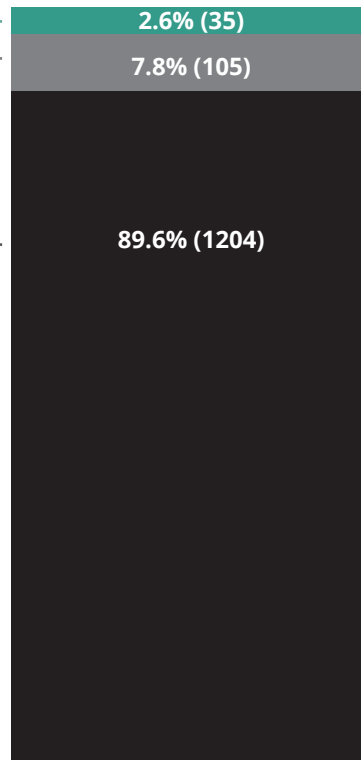
Biannual Report

January – June 2019

Updated - January 2020

How complaints and enquiries received by TDR were resolved

Formal intervention by TDR
No intervention by TDR, which includes: complaint wasn't relevant, complaint was withdrawn, or TDR did not have jurisdiction over the complaint
Resolved directly between provider and customer without TDR intervention

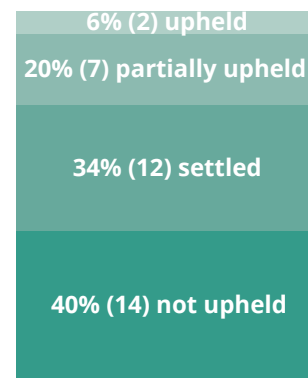


+90

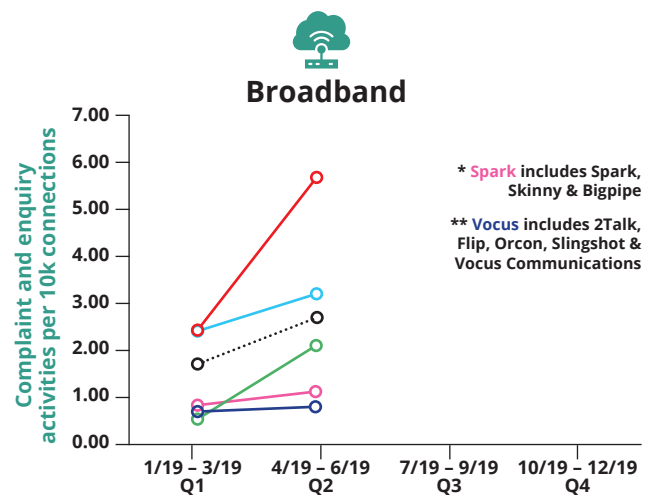
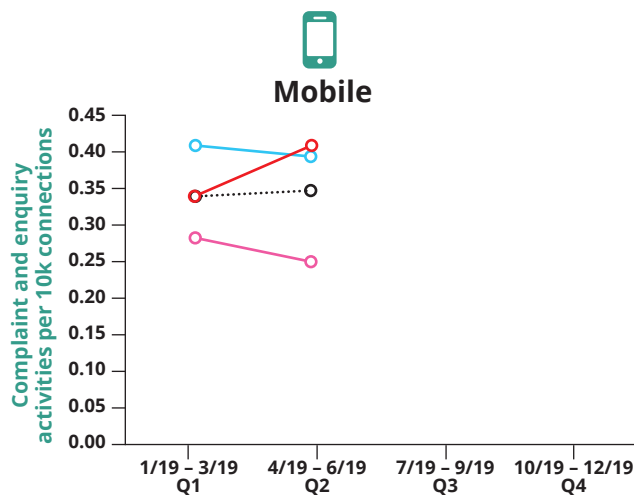
Net promoter score

Nature of complaints and enquiries

- 1 Billing: 37% (497)
- 2 Customer service: 27% (365)
- 3 Faults: 13% (170)



Complaints and enquiries per 10,000 connections



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

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

^<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
	Q1	Q2	Q1	Q2	
2degrees	2.42	3.15	20	26	5%
Spark	0.93	1.06	66	75	43%
Trustpower	1.58	2.06	13	17	5%
Vocus	1.82	1.86	39	40	13%
Vodafone	2.42	5.76	104	247	26%
TOTAL			242	405	^92%
Industry average	1.83	2.78			

^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 first report of 2019.

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.

The aim of this report is to provide a snapshot of the telecommunications industry from our unique perspective resolving telecommunications complaints. We have introduced a number of changes to how we present our data and to the reporting periods covered in our reports.

The biggest change that you will notice is that we now report on a calendar year, rather than financial year. We have made this transition to better align with Commerce Commission's connection data, which is released in mid-December each year. We use this data to calculate the proportion of complaints per provider so we can provide consumers with a meaningful reference point for our complaint statistics.

We have also moved to reporting on a six-monthly basis, rather than quarterly. Due to the relatively low number of complaints and enquiries each quarter, we have found that moving to a six-monthly basis provides more robust data and will allow us to provide a more substantive commentary around the complaints themes that we are seeing.

So with that, what have we seen in the first half of 2019? In terms of specific complaint categories, we note:

Nearly all complaint and enquiry categories measured by TDR increased in the first half of 2019 compared to the first half of 2018. This follows a noticeable increase in certain kinds of customer service complaints (customer approach) in the previous years.

Billing continues to be the most complained about category at 37% of all complaints received.

Customer service complaints and enquiries increased by 71.2% compared to the same period in 2018 (365 versus 231) with the largest increases in customer approach, failure to action requests, and installation issues (not exclusive to fibre/Ultra-Fast Broadband).

Complaints about faults increased, with most of the increase due to perceived equipment failure.

Ultra-Fast Broadband related complaints are substantially lower than in the previous two financial years.

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.

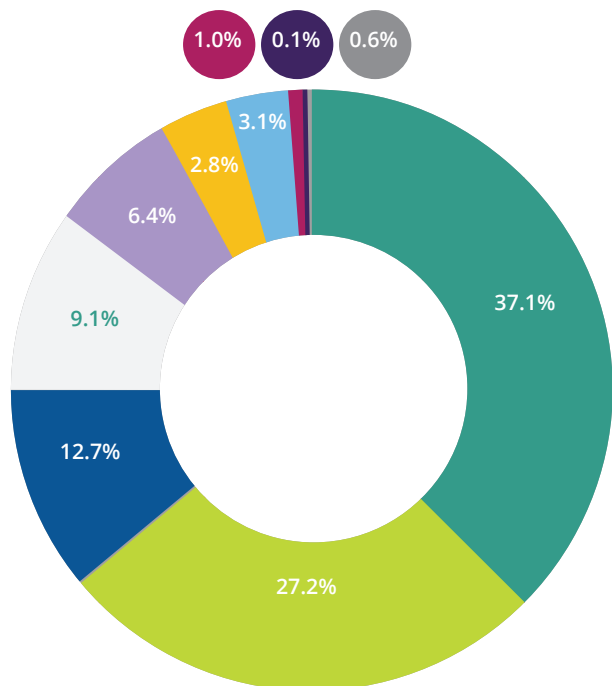


Liz Hogan

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 2019, based on a total of 1341 complaints and enquiries.



KEY	#	%
Billings	497	37.1%
Customer Service	365	27.2%
Faults	170	12.7%
Credit Management	122	9.1%
Contracts	86	6.4%
Network Performance	37	2.8%
Fibre Installation	41	3.1%
Transfer	13	1.0%
Other	8	0.6%
Complaints Handling	2	0.1%

Please note these figures were updated in January 2020, following reporting adjustments.

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).



161

Complaints and enquiries about home phones this period

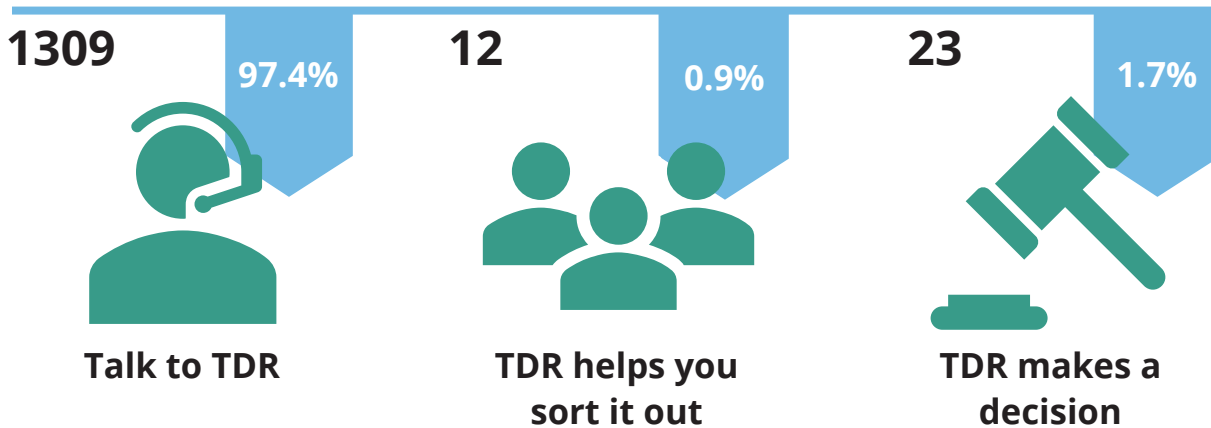
"There are \$4000 worth of unexpected 0900 calls on my landline bill."

"There is a clicking noise on the phone!"

"My phone drops out and no one can call me."

How complaints and enquiries were resolved or closed

This graph shows the movement through the process of the 1344 complaints resolved or closed with assistance from TDR during the reporting period



Talk to TDR

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

1204	Resolved or closed
36	Non-relevant
38	Withdrawn
31	No Jurisdiction

TDR helps you sort it out

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

3	Facilitated resolution
9	Resolved all issues at mediation
0	Partially resolved issues at mediation

TDR makes a decision

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

2	Upheld
7	Partially upheld
14	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.	12	34%
Upheld	The TDR adjudicator determined that the complaint was successful, which means that the consumer prevailed.	2	6%
Partially upheld	Some aspects of these complaints were successful, which means that the TDR adjudicator found in favor of the consumer on those points.	7	20%
Not upheld	The TDR adjudicator determined that the complaint was not successful, which means that the consumer did not prevail.	14	40%

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 +90 which demonstrates an exceptionally high level of customer satisfaction.

+90

Net promoter score

Customer feedback

"Very prompt response from TDR who were quick to appreciate the situation and offered to take it up on my behalf. Good interpersonal skills (warm, helpful, professional) from TDR. From there the service provider responded quite differently than they had to my direct communication with them."

"I felt like my complaint was dealt with in a very friendly and fair way rather than 'oh just another nuisance.'... Jason (from TDR) came across as really wanting to help me not just with his initial email but with his prompt follow-ups. If Jason is an example of the rest of your staff you are very lucky and have a great department."

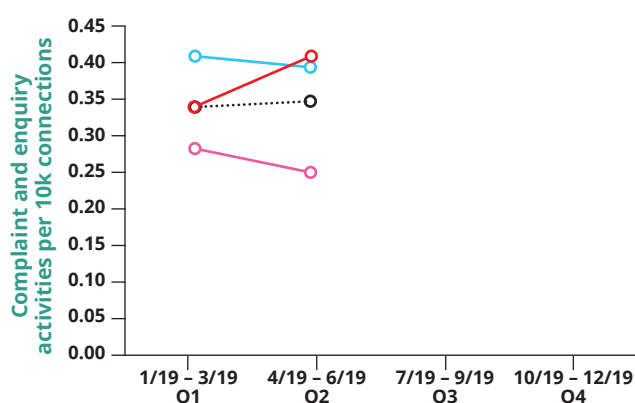
"My first attempt to resolve my issue did not go very well, once my complaint was received from TDR then the most helpful (service provider) employee rang and quickly assisted me to a mutual solution. I do not think that this would have happened if not for TDR."

Year to date data for 2019

Complaint and enquiry activities per 10,000 connections



Mobile

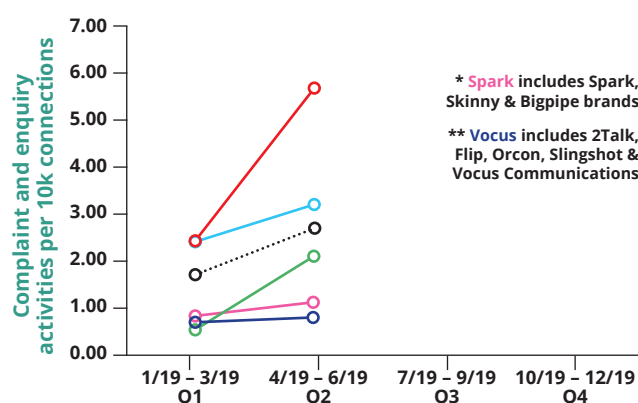


Q1

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		



Broadband



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	Mobile connections
2degrees	0.39	53	21%	1,344,000
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		

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		

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

^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

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

When in roam

Network fault while a customer was overseas with a new phone.

Just before heading off on his holiday to Italy, Harry* decided to upgrade his mobile phone. He bought a new phone from his provider on a monthly repayment plan and signed up for an international roaming pack.

When Harry arrived in Italy, his new phone would not work. Unable to call the provider, he contacted his wife online and asked her to call them on his behalf. However, his wife was not authorised on the account and was not able to sort the issue for him.

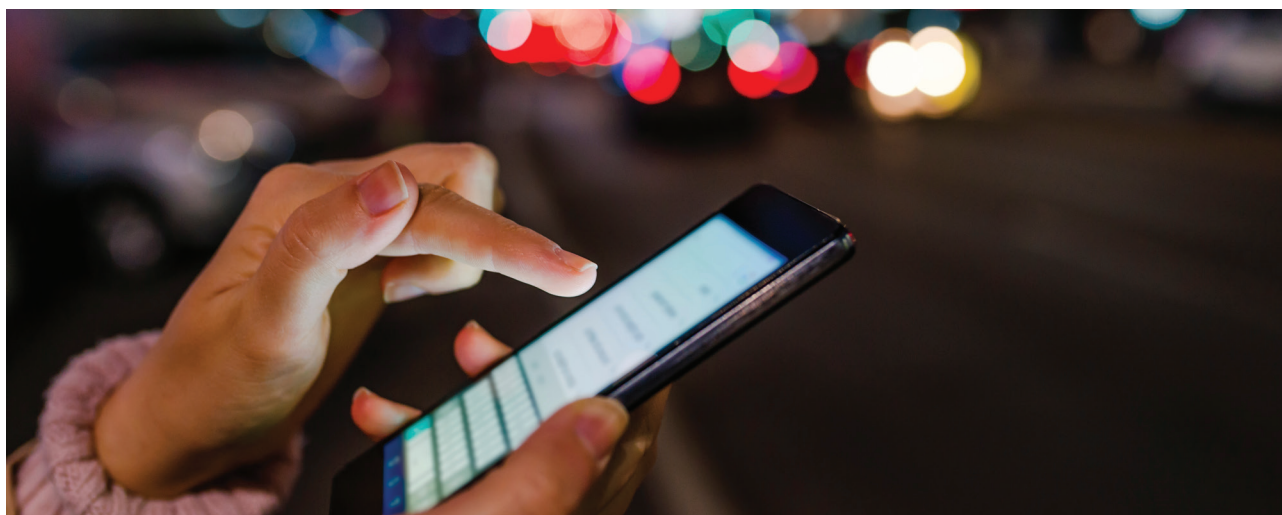
Not long after, Harry's phone started working so he assumed that his provider had fixed the issue. When Harry got back home from his holiday, he made a complaint through TDR about his inability to use the phone, his wife's inability to assist in an emergency, and the roaming pack charges for that period.

His provider agreed to wipe the outstanding amount on the phone repayment plan if Harry returned the phone. However, they would not wipe the costs for 'services used' (which included data, calls and text messages). The provider pointed to their terms and conditions, and privacy policy regarding authorities to act. They wanted Harry to pay the phone repayment and roaming charges for the period until he returned the phone. Harry agreed to return the phone and accepted that his wife was not authorised to act on his behalf, but he refused to pay for the 'services used.'

TDR's Resolution Practitioner began looking into the issue. The Resolution Practitioner was able to confirm that a network fault had occurred for 48 hours, which resulted in Harry's phone problems. However, once the fault was fixed Harry was able to use his phone and his records showed significant data usage between then and now.

Harry and his provider were unable to reach an agreement over the outstanding charges; therefore the TDR Resolution Practitioner was required to make a decision on the matter based on the information provided and discussions held with both parties. The Resolution Practitioner determined that Harry was liable to pay the outstanding amount for the services provided.

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



Unpaid bill affects mortgage

An unpaid amount quickly became a 'bad debt' affecting mortgage options.

In the latter part of 2017, Jurgen* changed his telecommunications provider. In January 2018, Jurgen was surprised to receive a letter from a debt collection agency about his old account. The letter said that he had an 'unpaid debt' and that he owed money for services with his previous provider.

Jurgen got in touch with his previous provider to dispute the charges. In his view, he had notified the provider that his services were to be cancelled and he was not given adequate notice to pay the outstanding balance on the unpaid bill before it was sent to a debt collection agency. They were unable to reach an agreement on how the matter was to be resolved.

Jurgen contacted TDR. After discussions with both Jurgen and the provider, a Resolution Practitioner was appointed. The Resolution Practitioner worked with Jurgen and the provider, clarifying the actions that both parties had taken before the debt had been passed on to the debt collection agency.

During their mediation sessions, it was clear that Jurgen was mostly upset about the debt collection agency getting involved. He was in the process of arranging a mortgage for his first home and suddenly he was flagged as having a bad debt. He didn't mind paying the amount owed to his provider but having a debt with a debt collection agency was affecting his ability to get a mortgage.

The Resolution Practitioner helped Jurgen and the provider to discuss options. The provider agreed to withdraw the debt from the debt collection agency on the condition that Jurgen paid the outstanding amount. Both Jurgen and the provider agreed to this plan. Jurgen subsequently paid the owed amount and the bad credit rating was removed.

Jurgen has now moved into his new home.

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



From A to V

Upgrade from ADSL to VDSL interrupts internet.

Debbie's* broadband provider got in touch with her to advise that she would be upgraded from ADSL to VDSL. ADSL and VDSL both use copper wiring to deliver broadband services. VDSL is faster than ADSL, but it is not as widely available.

A few days after the call, Debbie received a new modem with instructions on how to install it. She was advised that her VDSL upgrade would happen within two weeks. She looked forward to her new faster broadband connection.

Over the next month, Debbie's broadband performance significantly declined. She contacted her provider who arranged a technician to visit. The technician checked the line and completed some repairs. Her broadband speed improved slightly however there were still periods of time where the broadband would disconnect, or the speed would drop.

A couple of months later Debbie called her provider again to complain about the service. The provider said her modem must be faulty, so sent her a replacement. Her broadband service did not improve with the new modem. Despite further discussions and testing, her connection did not improve.

Debbie learnt that she was still on ADSL. She was very frustrated that she had been offered VDSL and believed she had been upgraded, when she hadn't been. She couldn't understand why coverage maps showed VDSL in her area, yet she remained on a poor performing ADSL connection. Communication broke down between Debbie and the provider, so she contacted TDR.

A Resolution Practitioner was assigned to the case. During discussions, the Resolution Practitioner was able to find out what had happened with her VDSL upgrade. While VDSL was advertised as being available in the area, the signal strength at Debbie's actual address was very poor. After testing the line onsite, the technician determined that Debbie would have been worse off moving to VDSL so he decided against installation. Neither the technician nor the provider had explained this to Debbie.

Through the TDR process, Debbie and her provider began communicating again. By exploring options together with the Resolution Practitioner, Debbie found that fibre had been rolled out locally and she could now upgrade to fibre. Fibre uses fibre-optic cables to deliver broadband and is the fastest and most reliable broadband service.

Debbie decided to withdraw her complaint from TDR and she arranged a fibre installation with her provider instead.



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

Surprise service switch

An unexpected call leads to unexpected change of service provider.

Gary* received a call from a sales representative asking if he would like to switch his mobile phone provider. After going through the costs involved, Gary told the representative that he would call his current provider and compare the offer. After speaking with his current provider, Gary decided that he was already getting a good deal. Gary called the sales representative back and advised that he was going to stick with his current provider.

Soon after this, Gary received email correspondence from the new provider confirming his transfer. Gary replied to the email confirming that he did not authorise a service transfer and he also called the new provider advising that he did not agree to the change. Despite his call and email, his phone number was ported across to the new provider.

Gary spent a significant amount of time contacting both providers trying to reverse the transfer and ended up without any phone service for three days. The new provider apologised for the confusion and said all costs would be waived, however Gary did not believe there should have been any costs to begin with as he had not authorised the transfer.

Gary requested compensation for the unauthorised transfer and for the time he had to personally spend on having the connection reverted back to his original provider. The new provider refused to provide compensation and the complaint was referred to TDR.

TDR began looking into the matter, highlighting that there are two industry codes and set rules for transferring customers between service providers.

TDR's Resolution Practitioner arranged mediation, through that process Gary and the new provider came to an agreement. The new provider agreed to provide Gary with a formal apology and to cover the costs of his phone plan while he was without service. The phone provider also agreed to educate their sales team around the error.

**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)
	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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