



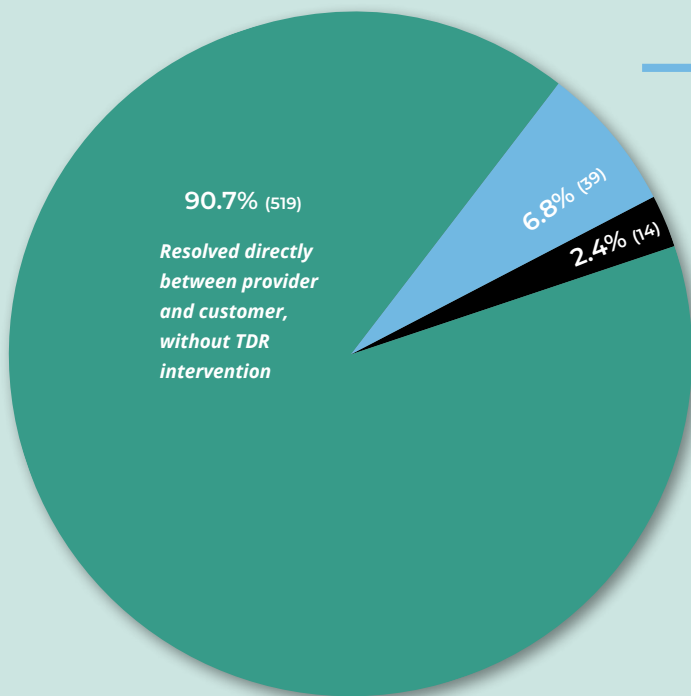
**TELECOMMUNICATIONS  
DISPUTE  
RESOLUTION**

**Q4**

**Telecommunications  
Dispute Resolution**

Quarterly Report  
*April 2018 - June 2018*

## How complaints and enquiries received by TDR were resolved this quarter (Apr-18 - Jun-18)

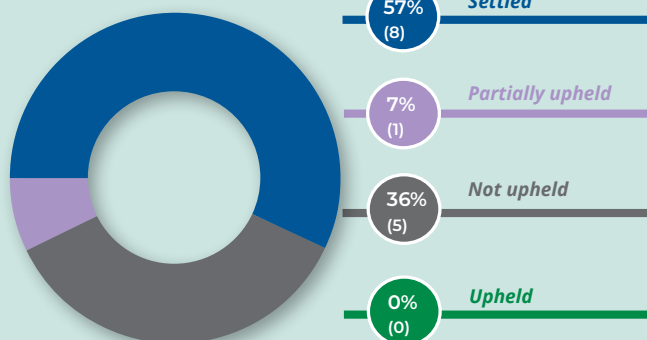


### No intervention by TDR

What this includes: complaint wasn't relevant, complaint was withdrawn, or TDR did not have jurisdiction over the complaint

### Formal intervention by TDR

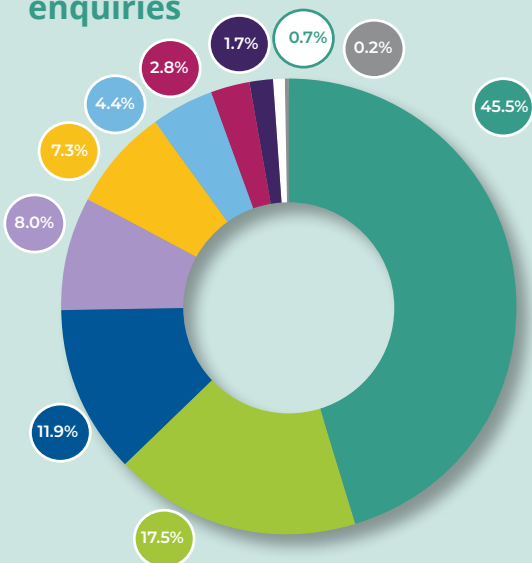
Of the complaints resolved using TDR's expert dispute resolvers



# +85

Net promoter score

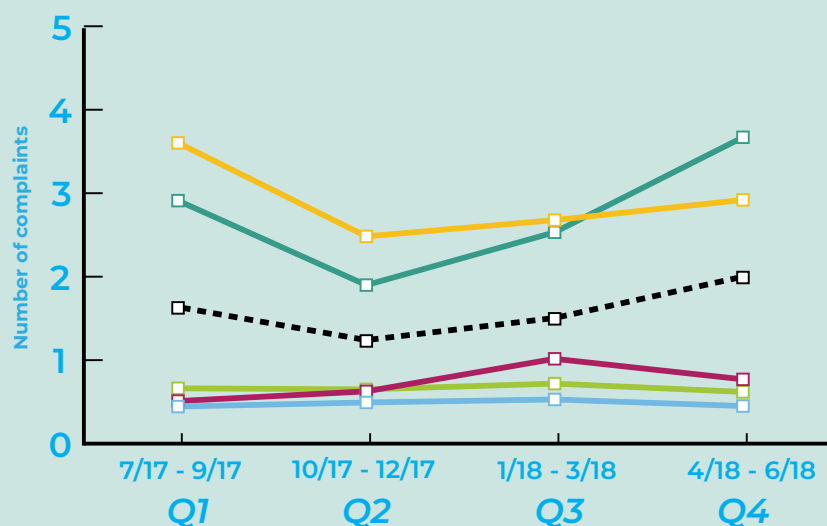
## Nature of complaints and enquiries



KEY		
Billing	260	45.5%
Customer Service	100	17.5%
Faults	68	11.9%
Contracts	46	8.0%
Fibre installation	42	7.3%
Credit Management	25	4.4%
Transfer	16	2.8%
Network Performance	10	1.7%
Other	4	0.7%
Complaints Handling	1	0.2%

For a full explanation of definitions see page 4 of the report.

## All complaint and enquiry activities per 10,000 connections per provider from quarter to quarter



KEY					
Industry Average	Spark	2Degrees	TrustPower	Vodafone	Vocus

\* The number of contacts includes mobile and fixed line services. TrustPower and Vocus are not Mobile Network Operators. See FAQ for more information on Mobile Network Operators, mobile and fixed line services.



## Points of Interest

Telecommunications Dispute Resolution (TDR) is here to help consumers resolve complaints about their telecommunications provider.

Reporting on the final quarter of our reporting year, we get a real sense for the trends and issues within the telecommunications industry.

Highlights from this report include:

- ◆ Billing issues remain the highest proportion of complaints recorded by TDR. We saw a rise of complaints about transfer issues over the last year, which has prompted TDR to release a recurring issue statement on the TDR website about transfer issues. You can find it here: <https://www.tdr.org.nz/cases/recurring-issues/customer-transfer-issue>
- ◆ TDR finished the financial year with exceptionally high customer satisfaction rating. TDR is here to assist consumers solve problems and being able to do that well is something we are proud of. However, there is always more we can do and we always welcome feedback.
- ◆ Overall complaint enquiries for the year (2017-18) were the same as the previous year, 2261 complaint enquiries versus 2263 the previous year.
- ◆ In Q4, TDR provided complaints handling education to TDR members. This is on-going commitment by TDR to assist in raising awareness of best-practice complaints handling.
- ◆ TDR also worked with consumer organisations as part of an ongoing commitment to ensuring TDR meets the needs of consumers. This included working with consumer organisations on the re-design of TDR's consumer-facing brochure. TDR's goal is to create something that is useful for consumers and for those who may advise them on their options.

We hope this quarterly 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](mailto:contact@tdr.org.nz).

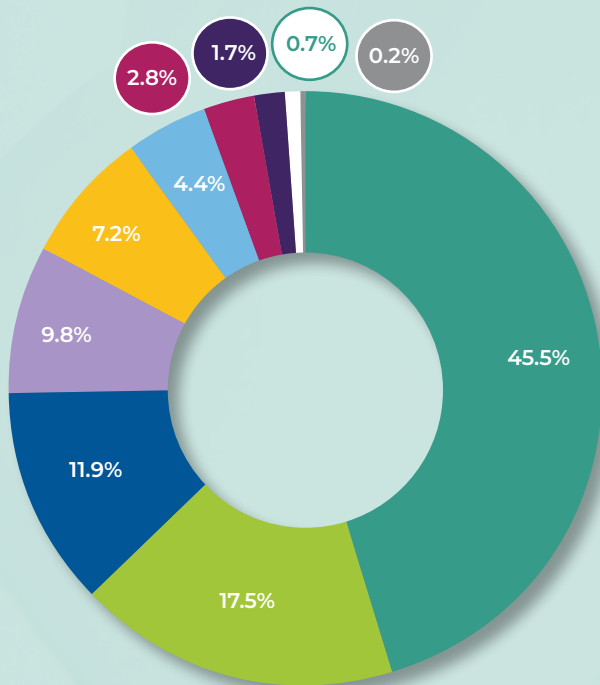


**Jennifer Mahony**

Client Director of  
Telecommunications Dispute  
Resolution

## Nature of complaints and enquiries this quarter

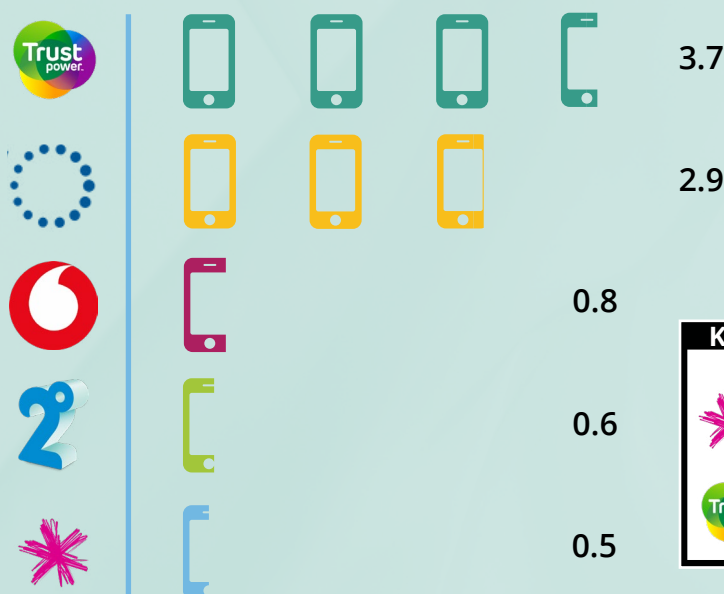
This section outlines our statistics for complaints and enquiries about TDR members that were resolved or closed with assistance from TDR from 1 April to 31 June 2018, based on a total of 572 complaints and enquiries.



KEY		
Billing	260	45.5%
Customer Service	100	17.5%
Faults	68	11.9%
Contracts	46	9.8%
Fibre Installation	42	7.2%
Credit Management	25	4.4%
Transfer	16	2.8%
Network Performance	10	1.7%
Other	4	0.7%
Complaints Handling	1	0.2%

Billing is typically the largest component of complaints and enquiries TDR receives each year. Complaints and enquiries about disputed charges are on the rise and higher than in the previous year.

## All complaint and enquiry activities per 10,000 connections per provider this quarter

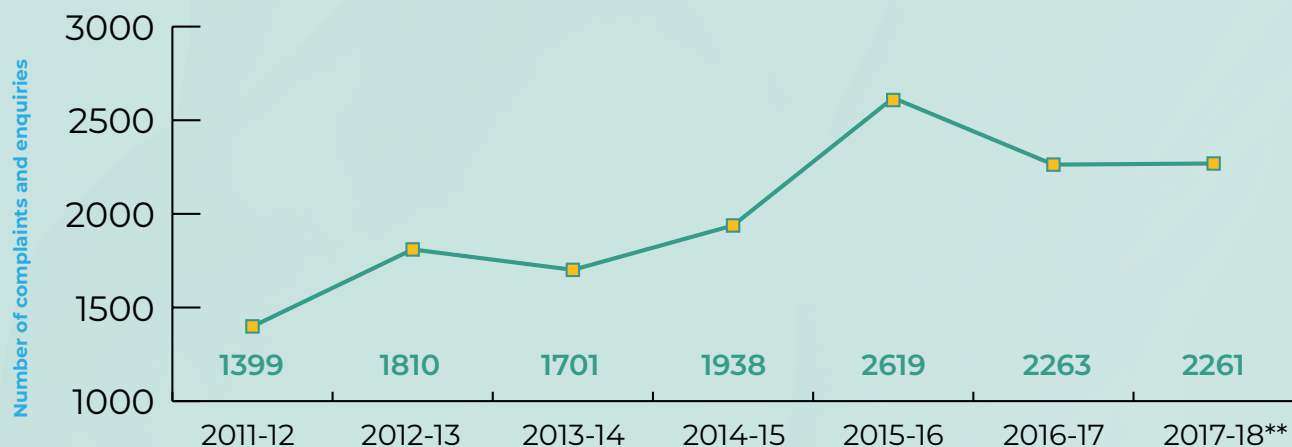


KEY			
	Spark		2Degrees
	TrustPower		Vodafone
			Vocus

This graph represents the number of complaints and enquiries per 10,000 connections per provider this quarter. To see a rolling average over the last four quarters, please refer to the line graph with the same title on the inside cover of this report. The number of contacts includes mobile and fixed line services. TrustPower and Vocus are not Mobile Network Operators. See FAQ for more information on Mobile Network Operators, mobile and fixed line services.

## About the complaints and enquiries TDR receives

### Total complaint and enquiry contacts with TDR per year



This graph is an accurate reflection of total complaints and enquiries received by TDR as at 30 June 2018. The complaint and enquiry contacts with TDR in 2017-18 were the same as the previous year. Following a spike of complaint and enquiry contacts in 2015-16, there is a "new normal" for complaint statistics emerging. TDR remains focussed on consumer awareness of the service.

### Total complaint and enquiry contacts with TDR per year by category

This section represents our statistics for complaints about TDR members across all complaints and enquiries received by TDR.

KEY	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18**
Billing	495	586	596	650	774	812	932
Customer Service	369	437	250	323	531	317	321
Faults	209	330	339	300	443	331	271
Contracts	111	165	204	295	332	271	230
Fibre installation	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	78	142	173
Network Performance	61	94	108	128	179	126	89
Credit Management	60	61	74	102	194	137	135
Transfer*	88	126	112	124	114	89	61
Other*						14	34
Complaints Handling	6	11	18	16	52	23	15

Billing saw significantly more activity in 2017-18 than in previous years. The largest increase was due to disputes about charges. Fibre installation complaints were up as well, but are also in line with the increase of fibre connections in New Zealand. On that basis, the percentage of complaints received by TDR about fibre installation are about the same as previous years.

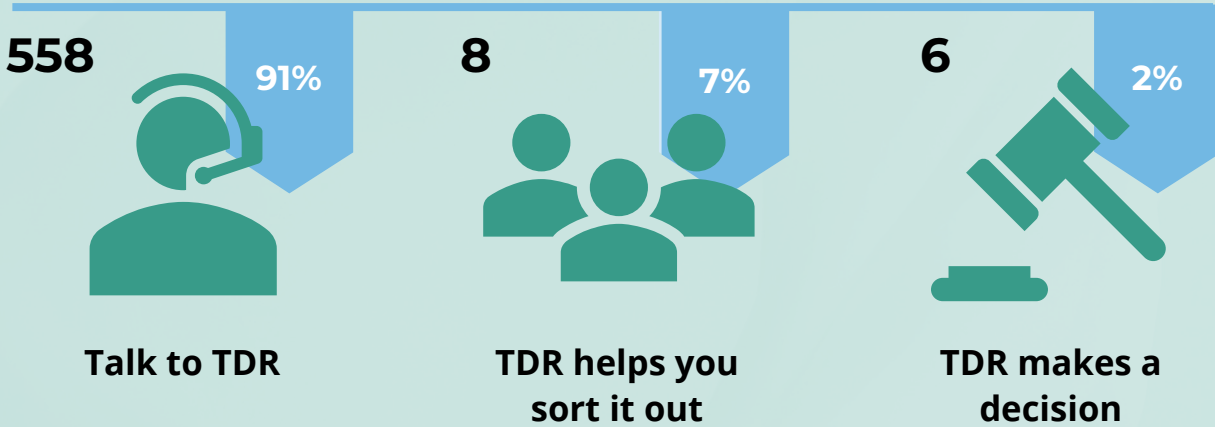
\* Transfer and other have previously been recorded as a single category. It did not split into two categories until 1 July 2016.

\*\* Running total as at 30 June 2018.

# How complaints and enquiries were resolved or closed this quarter

This graph shows the movement through the process of the 572 complaints completed in Q4.

## How complaints and enquiries were resolved or closed this quarter



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

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

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

519	Resolved or closed
21	Non-relevant
9	Withdrawn
9	No Jurisdiction

1	Facilitated resolution
7	Resolved all issues at mediation
0	Partially resolved issues at mediation

0	Upheld
1	Partially upheld
5	Not upheld

When TDR gets involved, most formal complaints are settled collaboratively. Six complaints this quarter required a formal decision from TDR. The partially upheld complaint is discussed in this quarter's "Third Party Charges" case study. The remaining five complaints were not upheld. Four were about contract terms related to billing and the other related to customer service regarding the sale and marketing of a handset.

Outcome	What it means	#	%
Settlement	Complaints were settled by TDR facilitators or mediators, meaning that before the TDR had to make a decision, the consumer and their telecommunications provider were able to collaboratively resolve with assistance from TDR.	8	57%
Upheld	The TDR adjudicator determined that the complaint was successful, which means that the consumer prevailed.	0	0%
Partially upheld	Some aspects of these complaints were successful, which means that the TDR adjudicator found in favor of the consumer on those points.	1	7%
Not upheld	The TDR adjudicator determined that the complaint was not successful, which means that the consumer did not prevail.	5	36%

## Net Promoter Score this quarter

TDR measures how likely a customer is to recommend TDR to others. TDR does this through assessing 'Net Promoter Score' (NPS).

The NPS score is calculated by taking the percentage of respondents who are promoters of TDR (based on their rating of the service) and subtracting the percentage of respondents that are detractors (again, based on their rating of the service). This will generate a score ranging from -100 to +100.

In Quarter 4, TDR achieved a NPS score of +85 which demonstrates an exceptionally high level of customer satisfaction.

**+85**

Net promoter score

## Customer Feedback

*Fantastic customer service as the person who answered the phone showed empathy and gave me clear instructions on what I needed to do and he just emailed the template of questions to complete which made it easy. I felt that my issue was taken very seriously and that they were there to assist me in getting a response from the other party.*

*My provider would not listen or even help until you got involved.*

*I had a call and resolution from [my telecommunications provider] within 2 hours of the case being logged. Amazing service from TDR team. All it needed at [my telecommunications provider] was the right people with the ability to understand the issue and take action.*

**Bill shock- \$2k over data cap** | *This case study highlights how mobile operators work and how costly exceeding plan limits can be*

When Peter\* and his family moved houses, their broadband connection was delayed for a month. While he was waiting for his connection, Peter used his mobile data instead. Peter received warning texts from his provider advising him that additional charges would apply if he exceeded his data plan, however Peter assumed the additional charges would not be high.

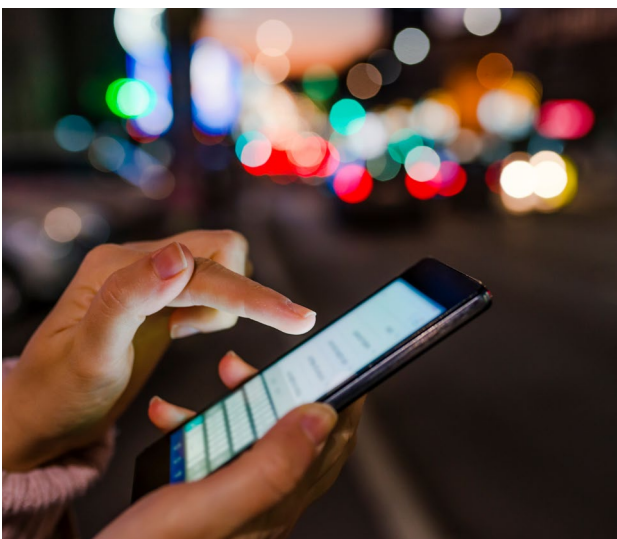
A month later Peter received his usual bill, with the account showing additional charges of \$2200 for mobile data usage. He contacted his provider who confirmed the charges were accurate and reflected the approx.10 gigs additional data usage in the month.

Peter acknowledged that he received texts warning him of the charges but expected that he would receive further contact considering the high costs involved for exceeding his plan. His provider explained that as Mobile Virtual Network Operators (MVNO\*\*) they are limited in their ability to provide updates to customers who reach their plan limit and are bound by the terms of their own contract with the Mobile Network Operator (MNO).

The provider offered credits up to \$250 but the matter could not be resolved. TDR became involved and appointed a Resolution Practitioner to assist in resolving the matter.

Through discussions examining all the issues and options involved, the Resolution Practitioner was able to help Peter and his provider reach a settlement of 50% off Peters final bill. The Resolution Practitioner also helped Peter understand the difference between a MVNO and a MNO.

After reflection, Peter’s provider agreed to look into further ways of keeping their mobile customers better informed and protected from ‘bill shock’ in the future.



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

*\*\*A Mobile Virtual Network Operator (MVNO) is a wireless telecommunications service provider that does not own the wireless network infrastructure over which it provides services to its customers. Wholesale services are purchased by the MVNO from a Mobile Network Operator (MNOs include 2Degrees, Spark and Vodafone), and the MVNO then acts as any retail service provider does and enters into contracts directly with customers for mobile or wireless services.*

*A MVNO customer has the same general customer service rights as any other mobile customer. Any complaint should be dealt with directly between the MVNO and their customer, or the complaint can be referred to TDR if the MVNO is member of our service. It is up to the MVNO to ensure that its wholesale services agreement with the MNO provides the required level of service it needs to its customers.*



## Third Party Charges | *Weeks without an internet connection. Who pays for external IT support?*

Despite ordering their home phone and internet several weeks prior to moving into their new home, Steve and Janice were still not connected after four weeks of technical and communication issues with their provider. Steve and Janice hired an IT Support Person, Gail, to assist them in getting connected and in sorting out their issues with their provider. Gail contacted Steve and Janice's provider several times and was able to work with their provider to get Steve and Janice up and running.

Steve and Janice were then billed by Gail. Considering the length of time without a connection and the perceived lack of support provided, Steve and Janice believed that their provider should contribute towards the cost of Gail's work and offer compensation for poor customer service, time without internet, and the inconvenience of having to continually contact their provider.

As a gesture of good will, the provider initially agreed to pay a portion of Gail's bill (covering the two month period without working internet) and provided Steve and Janice with three months' worth of credit: one month for the time without a connection and two months as an additional good will offer. Steve and Janice declined the offer. They wished for Gail's full bill of approximately \$500 to be paid by the provider as well as an additional two months' credit.

Steven and Janice then contacted TDR. As Steve, Janice and the provider had already exhausted attempts to resolve the complaint themselves, it was assigned to a TDR Resolution Practitioner.

The first step in the resolution process was mediation. However, this was unsuccessful in this case. The next step involved the Resolution Practitioner reviewing all the available information and making a decision on the matter.

The Resolution Practitioner issued a decision which found Steve and Janice's complaint was partially upheld.

TDR's Resolution Practitioner found that there was no legal basis for Steve and Janice's provider to pay for Gail's services. That portion of Steve and Janice's complaint was declined.

However, the Practitioner did find that the provider was in breach of section 5.1.3 of the Customer Complaints Code which states:

*"Scheme Members will be clear in their communications to Customers; deliver on promises and will use reasonable endeavours to provide service in a timely manner ..."*

The Resolution Practitioner determined that the provider had not met this requirement and determined that the credits the provider had already provided to Steve and Janice (totalling five months of credit) was an appropriate remedy. The decision was accepted.

*\*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 quarterly 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 11. 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 data from the Commerce Commission's Annual Telecommunications Monitoring Report. The most recent one is for 2017 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.

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

Our reporting reflects the total volume of complaints and enquiries made to TDR during the 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 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 is too little data to report on outcome of cases by individual member. We are also unable to report based on the differences between mobile and broadband providers. However, we do combine report the outcome of all complaints that require TDR's formal intervention across all members and report on this (see page 4 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 are fixed line and mobile services?

Fixed line services refers to all of the wired networks that are used for voice and data communications. A fixed line connection is a connection to a customer's home or business, via either a copper or fibre cable, that allows the consumer to make phone calls or connect to broadband. Fixed line services are location specific, meaning that you need to be at the location where the fixed line connects to make a call or access broadband. Network Operators own and provide the network for fixed line services which are accessed by Retail Service Providers to sell to customers.

Mobile services, refers to mobile networks that are used for voice and data communications via wireless transmission technologies. Mobile services allows customers to make calls, send texts and access broadband when in range of a wireless transmission signal, although some mobile broadband services are provided at a fixed location (referred to as fixed wireless). A Mobile Network Operator owns and provides the network of wireless transmission sites so that customers can communicate and connect wherever there is coverage.

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## Methodology

This report provides information about complaints and enquiries made to TDR about mobile, landline and internet services from residential and commercial 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 services in operation (SIO) per provider. Providers' SIO connections market share are calculated using

information from the Commerce Commission Annual Telecommunications Monitoring Report – December 2017.

The data count for previous quarters 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.

There are major differences between fixed and mobile providers but at this stage we are unable to report at this level of detail.

# 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/internet 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
Big Pipe	<a href="http://www.bigpipe.co.nz">www.bigpipe.co.nz</a>
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	Call 123 or *123 (mobile)
TNZ Group Ltd	0800 000 860
TrustPower	0800 878 787
Ultrafast Fibre	0800 FIBRE LTD (0800 34 27 35)
Unison Fibre	0800 286 476
United Networks	0800 442 015
Vector Communications	0800 826 436
Vocus Communications	0800 895 000
Vodafone	0800 800 021
VoIPline Telecom	09 222 1000
VoiPcloud Wholesale	09 222 1000
Warehouse Mobile	0800 284 800



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