

International texting issues

Some mobile phone users are having problems sending or receiving texts from overseas. It does not appear to be a widespread problem but it does occur.

When a customer places a call or sends a text message to another country they, and their service provider, are reliant on a 3rd party service provider in the receiving country. The New Zealand service provider must negotiate an agreement with all overseas companies to allow its customers' access to that overseas provider's network. It is our understanding that there are still some overseas networks that are not available to New Zealand mobile phone users.

In principle if a phone connects to its own network all the services of the provider should be available to that phone. However one provider notes in its transfer number Terms and Conditions that some services the customer received from the original provider may not be available from the new provider or may be accessed in a different way. There are still possibilities for technical issues that could prevent connection either with the New Zealand or the overseas company.

Read the Terms and Conditions

When changing from one provider to another it is very important to visit the websites for the new provider and note any statements in their terms and conditions about potential problems with international texting and calling. FairWay has noted an alarming trend for customers to fail to read these. The terms and conditions form a very important part of the contract with the provider and are binding on the parties to that contract. An example of the type of statement that might be found in relation to international texting is:

Due to the complex nature of international text messaging involving a number of international carriers and intermediaries outside the control of X company while X company does its best to ensure technical reliability of the interconnection, X company cannot offer any guarantee of message delivery to the international mobile.

It is very important that all customers read the Terms and Conditions and ask questions of their providers.