



EMBARGOED UNTIL 11AM AEDT MONDAY 29 OCTOBER

More than 3,200 Telecommunications complaints made by ACT residents

ACT residents made 3,203 new complaints, or 8.9 complaints per 1,000 people, to the Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman (TIO) during 2011-12, according to the TIO Annual Report released today.

Across Australia, the TIO received a total of 193,702 new complaints in 2011-12, a decrease of two per cent on the previous year. Ombudsman Simon Cohen reported positive signs of improvement in the telco industry late in the 2011-12 financial year. "There has been a significant trend, since April 2012, of reduced complaints, with the last quarter being our quietest for almost two years," Mr Cohen said. "This is a positive sign that reflects the focus by a number of telcos on improving their customer service."

Against this overall result, complaints about mobile phones increased nationally by 9.3 per cent in 2011-12, with 122,834 new complaints about mobiles to the TIO last year, an increase from 112,376 the previous year.

Mr Cohen said two out of three complaints made to the TIO were about mobile phones, reflecting the rising use of smartphones. Poor coverage, billing disputes and the quality of information given to consumers at the point of sale were common issues among ACT residents and similar to those experienced by consumers across Australia.

The biggest increases in mobile issues across Australia were:

- financial overcommitment due to inadequate spend management tools (15,752 issues – double the number of the previous year)
- disputes over the total amount of a bill (13,943 issues – 33 per cent increase)
- disputed internet usage charges (10,556 issues – 150 per cent increase)
- disputed roaming charges (4,186 issues – 69 per cent increase).

"Complaints about mobile phone services continue to rise and it's very concerning that so many consumers who contact the TIO face unexpectedly high bills," Mr Cohen said.

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| <p>Media invitation: Ombudsman Simon Cohen will launch the TIO's Annual Report, <i>Preparing for the Future</i>. Monday 22 October 2012 10am for 10.15am level 3, 595 Collins Street, Melbourne</p> | <p>Please confirm your attendance on (03) 8600 8701</p> <p>The media launch will be webcast live. To register for the webcast, go to http://viostre.am/TIO/2012</p> <p>The annual report: www.tio.com.au/annualreport</p> |
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Contact: Mirjana Jovetic, TIO Communications Manager, on (03) 8600 8378 or 0428 023 536.



Top Ten complaint postcodes in ACT

The issues most commonly raised by ACT residents were about poor customer service, for example incorrect/inadequate advice, and about service providers not actioning their undertakings once the consumers had made a complaint. Underlying these were the issues in the table below.

| Postcodes | Location(s) | Complaints per 1,000 pop* | Top complaint issues |
|-----------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| 2914 | Amaroo and surrounds | 10.6 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coverage Disputed usage charges, total bill |
| 2612 | Braddon | 9.9 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disputed usage charges, internet usage charges Coverage |
| 2913 | Ngunnawall and surrounds | 9.6 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coverage Point of sale advice, product and terms |
| 2902 | Kambah | 9.5 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coverage Point of sale advice, product and terms |
| 2905 | Isabella Plains and surrounds | 9.3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coverage Unexpectedly high bill/adequacy of spend management tools |
| 2615 | Melba and surrounds | 8.9 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coverage Disputed usage charges, total bill |
| 2904 | Monash and surrounds | 8.7 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coverage Failure to refer to the TIO |
| 2602 | Dickson and surrounds | 8.6 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disputed usage charges, total bill Coverage |
| 2617 | Belconnen and surrounds | 8.6 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coverage Point of sale advice, product and terms |
| 2906 | Conder and surrounds | 8.4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coverage Disputed usage charges, total bill |

| Complaints by state | | |
|---------------------|------------|----------------------------|
| State | Complaints | Complaints (per 1,000 pop) |
| VIC | 56,785 | 10.6 |
| SA | 15,936 | 9.9 |
| ACT | 3,203 | 8.9 |
| NSW | 60,398 | 8.7 |
| QLD | 34,077 | 7.8 |
| WA | 15,832 | 7 |
| TAS | 2,883 | 5.8 |
| NT | 1,169 | 5.5 |

| Top 10 complaint postcodes in Australia | | |
|---|----------------|----------------------------|
| Postcode | Location(s) | Complaints (per 1,000 pop) |
| 3000 | Melbourne City | 24.4 |
| 3008 | Docklands | 22.2 |
| 5000 | Adelaide City | 21.9 |
| 2150 | Parramatta | 21.5 |
| 2000 | Sydney City | 20 |
| 2015 | Alexandria | 19.6 |
| 2045 | Haberfield | 19.4 |
| 3754 | Doreen | 19.2 |
| 3182 | St Kilda | 19.1 |
| 3061 | Campbellfield | 18.8 |

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