



Telecommunications  
Dispute Resolution



20  
Part One  
22

**Biannual Report**

JANUARY – JUNE 2022



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## Welcome to this biannual report, with information about the complaints and enquiries we saw in the first half of 2022. Telecommunications Dispute Resolution service (TDR) is here to help Kiwis to resolve issues with their broadband, mobile and home phone providers, and every six months we share a snapshot of what we are seeing.

In this reporting period, TDR launched its new website in April and our awareness campaign in May 2022. We are encouraged by the results so far having seen an immediate impact with website traffic doubling and a significant uplift in enquiries made to the service. In May alone, TDR saw a 71% increase in consumers contacting our service compared to the same time last year. Digital efforts are also showing strong results, having reached over one million New Zealanders using social media channels in this period.

TDR received 1,253 enquiries in this six-month period. This is up 33% from the preceding six months, and is 34% higher than the same period last year. Volumes are now similar to our pre-pandemic levels in early 2020 (1,231) and early 2019 (1,341).

Our focus remains on resolving matters as early as possible. 97.1% of enquiries were resolved during the first step in our process, where telecommunication providers have an opportunity to work with their customer directly. As we have had higher volumes of customers contacting us, we have seen an increase in the number of cases requiring formal dispute resolution assistance. 31 complaints were resolved through facilitation, mediation and adjudication, which is 72% more than the previous six month period. While based on volume alone this seems high, relative to the enquiries received in each period pleasingly the proportion of enquiries that progress through our complaints stage has remained consistent at 2%.

Billing (42.7%) and customer service (16.7%) remain the highest drivers for telecommunications complaints. Disputed charges in relation to billing continues to be the top recurring complaint theme, with 282 people enquiring about a charge on their bill.



Account errors were also prominent with 108 people raising this issue. Faults (13.5%) have seen an increase from 8.8% since our last report. Some examples of faults reported include delays in service restoration, issues with equipment, and network faults.

We hope you find this report useful and learn more about how TDR can help untangle issues. We are free and independent, so please get in touch if you need some assistance resolving a complaint with your phone or internet provider. We also welcome your suggestions on how to improve our service and reports, So please feel free to contact us by email at [contact@tdr.org.nz](mailto:contact@tdr.org.nz) or by freephone on **0508 098 98 98**.



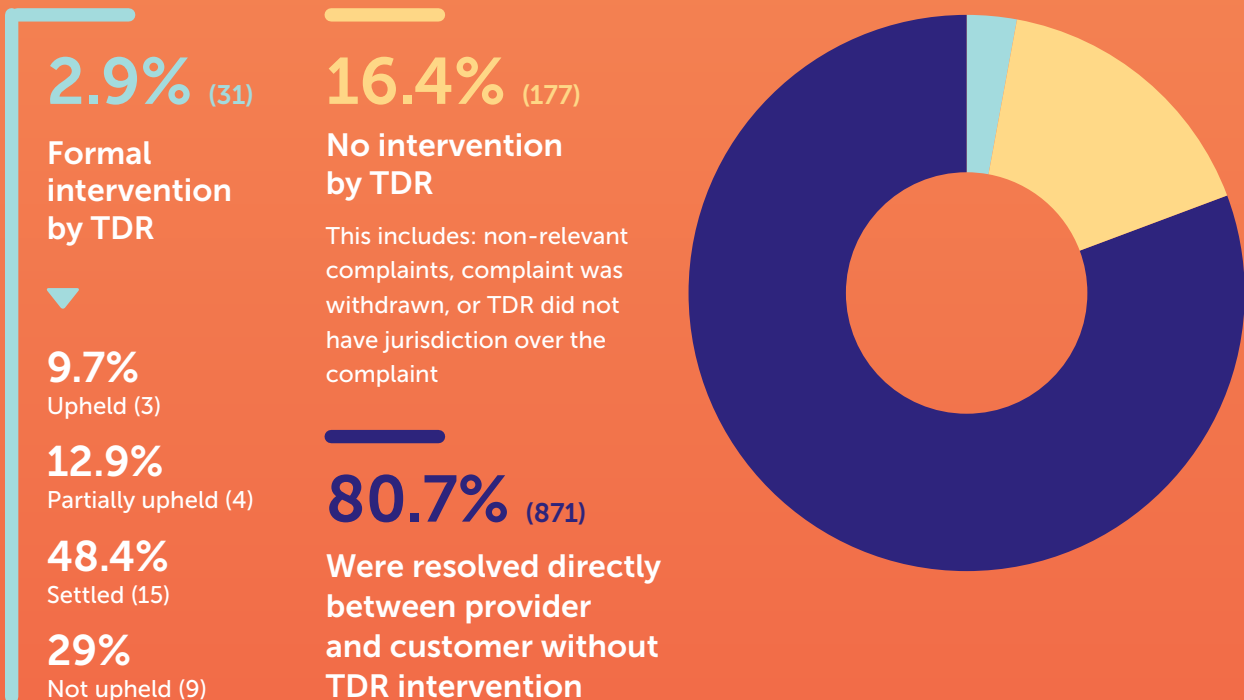
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**Jeanie Robinson**

Operations Manager / Commercial Services  
Telecommunications Dispute Resolution

# TDR at a glance

## How complaints and enquiries were resolved at TDR

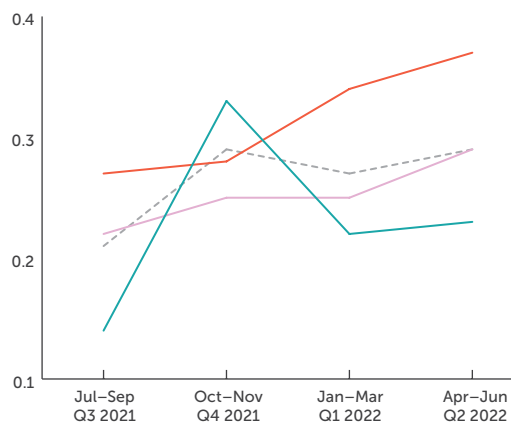


## Nature of complaints and enquiries received



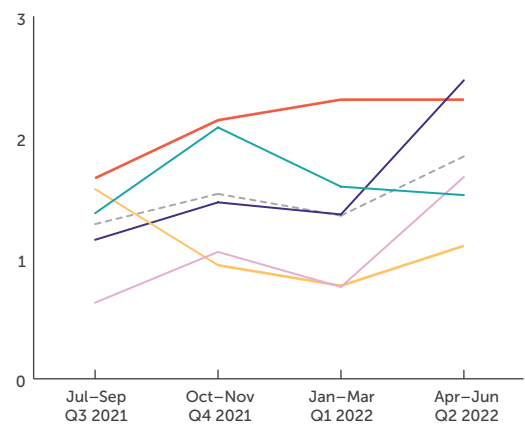
## Complaints and enquiries per 10,000 connections

### MOBILE



Scheme member	Q1	Q2
2degrees	0.22	0.23
Spark*	0.25	0.29
Vodafone**	0.34	0.37
Average	0.27	0.29

### BROADBAND

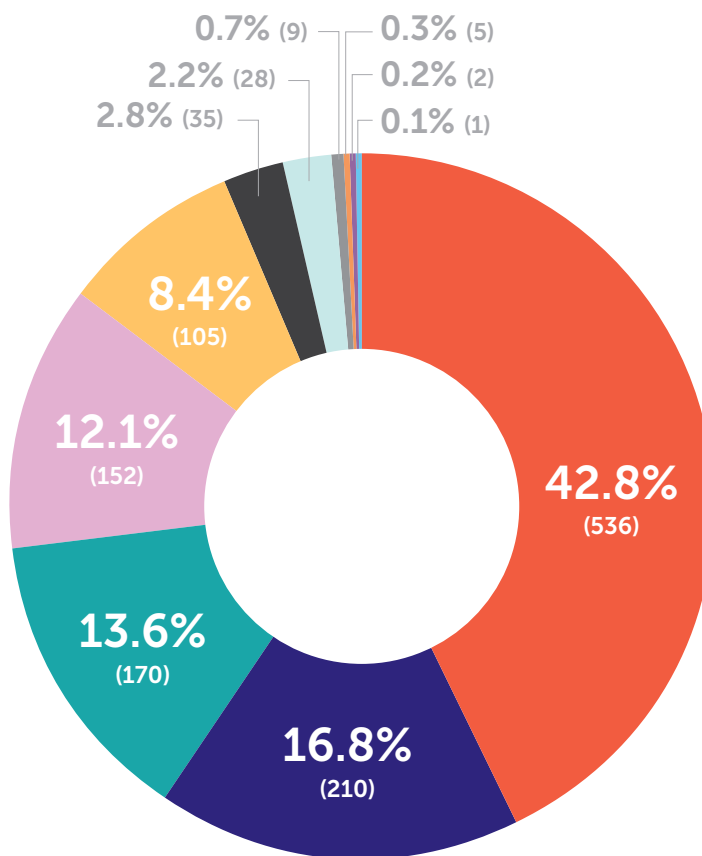


Scheme member	Q1	Q2
2degrees	1.59	1.52
Spark	0.76	1.67
Trustpower	0.77	1.10
Vocus***	1.36	2.47
Vodafone	2.31	2.31
Average	1.35	1.84

\* Spark includes Spark, Skinny and Bigpipe.  
 \*\* Vodafone includes Kogan Mobile.  
 \*\*\* Vocus includes 2Talk, Flip, Orcon, Slingshot, StuffFibre and Vocus Communications.

# Nature of complaints and enquiries received

This section outlines our statistics for all complaints and enquiries about TDR members that were received by TDR from 01 January to 30 June 2022, based on a total of **1,253** complaints and enquiries.



Customer complaints code	Number of complaints	Percent of complaints
<span style="color: red;">●</span> Billing	536	42.7%
<span style="color: darkblue;">●</span> Customer service	210	16.7%
<span style="color: teal;">●</span> Fault	170	13.5%
<span style="color: pink;">●</span> Installation	152	12.1%
<span style="color: orange;">●</span> Network performance	105	8.3%
<span style="color: black;">●</span> Contracts/terms and conditions	35	2.8%
<span style="color: lightblue;">●</span> Transfer	28	2.2%
<span style="color: grey;">●</span> Non-telecommunications matter	9	0.7%
<span style="color: orange;">●</span> Complaints handling	5	0.3%
<span style="color: lightblue;">●</span> Device	1	0.1%

Copper withdrawal code	Number of complaints	Percent of complaints
<span style="color: purple;">●</span> Information supplied by service provider not clear	2	0.2%



# Complaint and enquiry activities about home phones

## Voice service, home phone and 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 on page 17.

# 70

Complaints and enquiries about home phones in this period

*"A weather event caused my landline to stop working."*

*"The phone cuts out when I'm mid conversation."*

*"We've been disconnected for over a week! We're disabled and in our 80's, so we require our phone to be working for medical emergencies."*

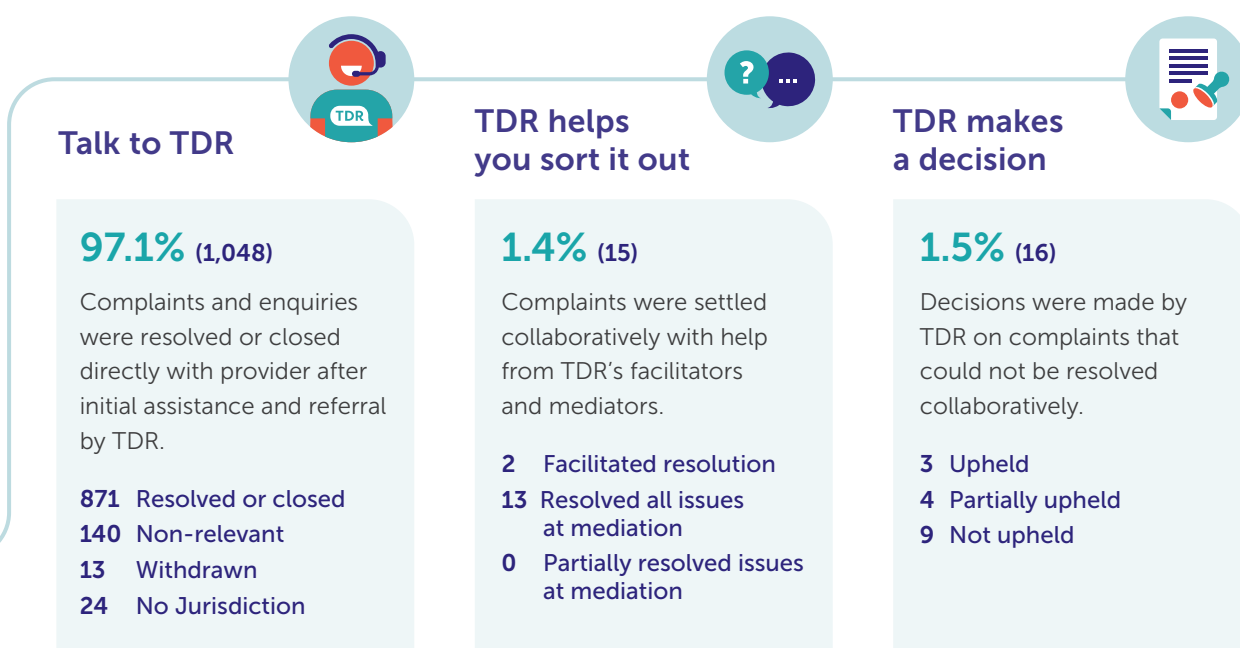
*"My account has errors with phone calls overseas and in NZ."*

*"My private home phone number is now public."*

*"They disconnected my phone number before it could be ported over to my new provider."*

# How complaints and enquiries were resolved or closed

This table shows the movement through the process of the **1,079** complaints resolved or closed with assistance from TDR during the reporting period.



Outcome	What it means	Number of complaints	Percent of complaints
<b>Settlement</b>	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.	<b>15</b>	<b>48.4%</b>
<b>Upheld</b>	The TDR adjudicator determined that the complaint was successful, which means that the consumer’s complaint prevailed.	<b>3</b>	<b>9.7%</b>
<b>Partially upheld</b>	Some aspects of these complaints were successful, which means that the TDR adjudicator found in favour of the consumer on those points.	<b>4</b>	<b>12.9%</b>
<b>Not upheld</b>	The TDR adjudicator determined that the complaint was not successful, which means that the consumer did not prevail.	<b>9</b>	<b>29.0%</b>

## 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 **+74**.

# +74

Net Promoter  
Score

*"Clear process that was communicated well to me. Easily implemented. A quickly-successful outcome that was a relief for me (more in principle than quantum)."*

*"Super quick responses and helped me resolve issue in under 48 hours that I couldn't do in 6 months."*

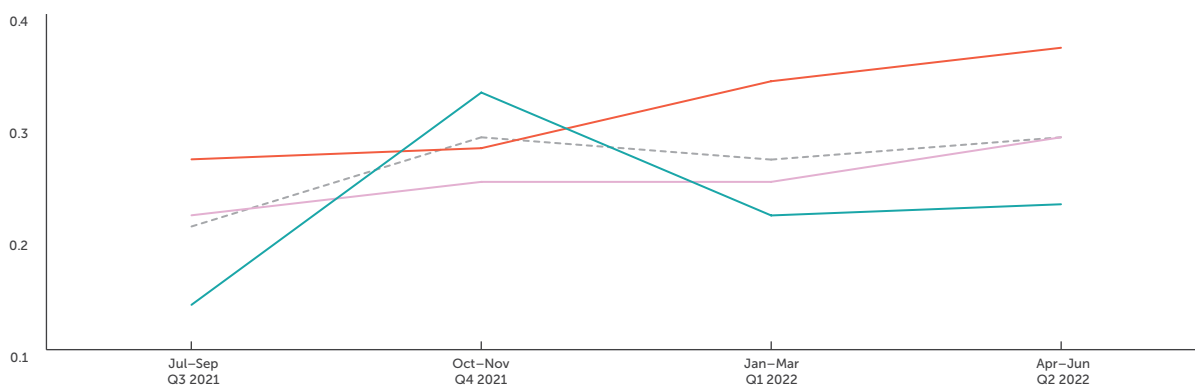
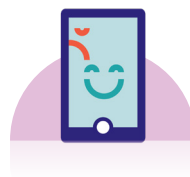
*"It went so well because they actually helped me fix my problem with my broadband provider."*

*"After months of endeavouring to talk to a person not a robot, regarding a difficult issue nothing changed. Within days of your intervention someone contacted me, records were looked at and the inaccurate process was reversed. Thank you."*

*"I just used the fact that I had registered my issue with TDR and miraculously after years of trying to get a permanent resolution, I had one within 1 month."*

# Year to date data

## Complaint and enquiry activities per 10,000 connections – Mobile



Scheme member	Q1 Based on total industry connections of 6,279,775		Q2 Based on total industry connections of 6,341,325	
	*Per 10k connections	Total received	*Per 10k connections	Total received
2degrees	0.22	33	0.23	35
Spark**	0.25	60	0.29	72
Vodafone***	0.34	76	0.37	85
Average	0.27		0.29	
^Other		3		13
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>172</b>		<b>205</b>

\* IDC New Zealand supplies TDR with connection data from IDC’s Telecommunications Market Tracker at quarterly points throughout the year. This report uses the connection data recorded from 01 January to 30 June 2022. Please refer to page 16 for additional information.

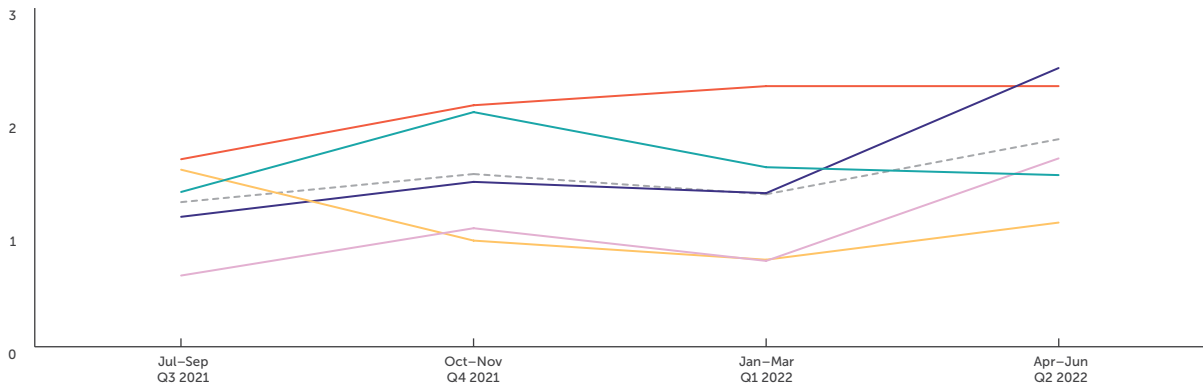
\*\* Spark includes Spark, Skinny and Bigpipe.

\*\*\* Vodafone includes Kogan Mobile.

^ TDR does not calculate the per 10k connections of ‘Other’ scheme members, for more detail please see the FAQ on page 16.

Note: The above information excludes non-relevant enquiries and complaints or enquiries where the service type was not specified by the customer.

## Complaint and enquiry activities per 10,000 connections – Broadband



Scheme member	Q1 Based on total industry connections of 1,931,793		Q2 Based on total industry connections of 1,940,562	
	*Per 10k connections	Total received	*Per 10k connections	Total received
2degrees	1.59	24	1.52	23
Spark**	0.76	53	1.67	117
Trustpower	0.77	9	1.10	13
Vocus***	1.36	29	2.47	51
Vodafone	2.31	93	2.31	92
Average	1.35		1.84	
^Other		20		32
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>228</b>		<b>328</b>

\* IDC New Zealand supplies TDR with connection data from IDC’s Telecommunications Market Tracker at quarterly points throughout the year. This report uses the connection data recorded from 01 January to 30 June 2022. Please refer to *page 16* for additional information.

\*\* Spark includes Spark, Skinny and Bigpipe.

\*\*\* Vocus includes 2Talk, Flip, Orcon, Slingshot, StuffFibre and Vocus Communications.

^ TDR does not calculate the per 10k connections of ‘Other’ scheme members, for more detail please see the FAQ on *page 16*.

Note: The above information excludes non-relevant enquiries and complaints or enquiries where the service type was not specified by the customer.

# Case studies

## New phone, no service

A customer living in a South Island town had intermittent network service. She lived on a main street, so she assumed that she was experiencing a fault with her phone rather than a network coverage issue. She looked at new phones online and purchased one from her provider's website.

The new phone arrived, but she continued to experience the same network issues. She contacted her provider online who confirmed there were no reported outages and provided her with some troubleshooting steps which were unsuccessful. The provider suggested a SIM card swap may fix the issue and instructed her to visit a store.

The customer visited her provider's store three times over the course of a week, completing a SIM card swap each time and then revisiting after returning home to discover the issue persisted. When she visited the store for a fourth time, a sales representative showed her the provider's coverage map and she discovered her home was not in coverage, which was resulting in her not being able to receive calls or texts while at home.

She asked to return her phone and receive a refund for the handset. The provider declined as the phone was not faulty.

The customer contacted TDR for assistance. TDR appointed a resolution practitioner to assist with resolving this dispute. As the customer and provider could not reach an agreement together, the complaint progressed to adjudication where TDR can decide on the matter.

**TDR gathered information from both parties and investigated two points:**

- 1. if whether there was any misleading conduct on the part of provider, and**
- 2. whether the provider's network guarantee applied.**

TDR was satisfied that there was no evidence of misleading conduct on the part of the provider. When the handset was purchased online, there was no representation that coverage would be available in the customer's address, in fact no indications were made as to the product's coverage at all. This part of the complaint was not upheld.

TDR did find that the customer was entitled to return the phone and receive a refund under the provider's guarantee. The provider's guarantee stated that new or re-signing customers could make a claim about network issues within 30 days of date of purchase. As this customer had repeatedly made contact online and instore discussing network issues within this the 30-day period, TDR determined that the customer met the criteria of the guarantee and as such was entitled to return the handset, and receive a refund, under the guarantee.

**| This aspect of the complaint was upheld.**



A customer and their provider were in a dispute about the full and final amount required to clear the customer's account upon termination of their contract. The amount in dispute could not easily be explained and as a result, the customer contacted TDR.

TDR may determine a complaint is deadlocked if the complaint was raised by the customer to their service provider 6 weeks prior to contacting TDR, or if the complaint is still unresolved 15 working days after TDR has informed the service provider of the complaint, whichever comes first. When determining deadlock, TDR will consider the complexity of the issue, the desired resolution, and whether an escalation in the complaint will assist in the resolution of the complaint. TDR determined that this dispute had reached deadlock and proceeded with the resolution process.

A TDR practitioner was assigned, and they determined that the disputed charge was indeed difficult to explain or confirm why it had been applied to the customer's account. The practitioner dug further into the disputed charge and reviewed the provider's reasoning and was then able to conclude that the charge did apply to the customer's account.

## Disputed amounts

The practitioner was then able to explain to the customer why this charge occurred, how it was demonstrated on their invoicing, and that this aligned with the terms and conditions of their plan. The customer accepted the practitioner's findings and understood that they were required to repay the amount.

**The TDR practitioner then assisted the customer and provider to negotiate the terms of payment for this amount. They agreed on arrangements for it to be paid on an amended payment plan term that was suitable for both parties.**

# FAQ

## 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 report on members who are identified in IDC New Zealand's Telecommunication Market Tracker which is presented at parent company level. A full list of our members can be found on *page 19*. 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?

IDC New Zealand supplies TDR with connection data from IDC's Telecommunications Market Tracker. *You can find more about IDC at [www.idc.com/anz/about-idc](http://www.idc.com/anz/about-idc).*

## Why do you report at parent company level?

Reporting at parent company level is consistent with IDC New Zealand's Telecommunications Market Tracker. A full list of our members can be found on *page 19*.

## 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 10* for more information).

## 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 supplied by IDC New Zealand.

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.



# How we help

We aim to resolve complaints as early as possible using one or more of these steps

**Get in touch with TDR**  
**Free phone** 0508 98 98 98  
**Email** [contact@tdr.org.nz](mailto:contact@tdr.org.nz)  
**Online** [www.tdr.org.nz](http://www.tdr.org.nz)



## Enquiry

### Tell us about your complaint

We'll gather information and let your provider know about your complaint so you can work together to resolve it. Most complaints are resolved at this stage.



## Mediation

### Collaborate and reach an agreement

TDR will check if we can help further. If the complaint is within jurisdiction, a mediator will help you and your provider to explore the complaint and solutions.

## Facilitation

### Find a solution through conversation

Our team will ask 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.



## Adjudication

### TDR considers your complaint

If you don't reach an agreement together, TDR will make a decision. If you accept the decision, your provider must follow the directions within the decision.

**Need some extra assistance?**

If you have any special requirements (for example if English is your second language, if you have cultural requests, or if you experience vision or hearing problems) you should let TDR know as soon as possible so we can make suitable arrangements.

# 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**

**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)

kogan.com

**Kogan**  
www.kogan.com/nz



**MyRepublic**  
0508 MYFIBRE  
(0508 693 4273)



**Mercury**  
09 475 7234



**Northpower Fibre**  
0800 667 847



**NOW**  
0800 GET NOW  
(0800 43 86 69)



**Orcon**  
0800 131 415



**Primo Wireless**  
0800 12 37 74



**Sedacom**  
0800 SEDACOM  
(0800 733 226)



**Skinny**  
0800 4 SKINNY  
(0800 475 4669)



**Sky Broadband**  
0800 759 759



**Slingshot**  
0800 892 000



**Spark**  
0800 800 123



**Trust Power**  
0800 878 787



**Tuatahi First Fibre**  
0800 FIBRE LTD  
(0800 34 27 35)



**Unison Fibre**  
0800 286 476



**Vector Fibre**  
0800 826 436



**Vocus Communications**  
0800 895 000



**Vodafone**  
0800 800 021



**VolPcloud Wholesale**  
09 222 4699



**VoiPline Telecommunications**  
09 222 1000



**Warehouse Mobile**  
0800 284 800

Free phone 0508 98 98 98

Email [contact@tdr.org.nz](mailto:contact@tdr.org.nz)

Online [www.tdr.org.nz](http://www.tdr.org.nz)

