



**Telecommunications  
Industry  
Ombudsman**

**Deirdre O'Donnell**  
Ombudsman

**Friday, 21 November 2008**

Kelly Burke  
Consumer Affairs Reporter  
*Sydney Morning Herald*

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Dear Kelly,

I write to respond to your article in this morning's paper, *Poor phone service to be exposed*.

My office has embarked on a campaign, **connect.resolve**, to work collaboratively with the telecommunications industry to address the high level of customer service complaints from consumers.

The aim of the campaign is to see all service providers connect with their customers and resolve their concerns fairly and efficiently.

The TIO is a complaint-handling agency that is independent of the telecommunications industry and governments. We are not a federal government agency and will not be cracking down on the sector, as stated in the article.

The TIO is uniquely placed to gather customer intelligence about the telecommunications industry. Throughout **connect.resolve**, which will conclude in June 2009, we will provide feedback on progress to our largest member organisations via monthly trend analysis.

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We will not, as the article suggested, be providing report cards for public scrutiny. The TIO regularly publishes complaints statistics, on its website and in its annual report, for members who have received more than 25 complaints. We will continue to do this throughout the campaign. The TIO will publish a report at the conclusion of the campaign, in July 2009.

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*"providing independent, just, informal and speedy resolution of complaints"*

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As with our members, the TIO has always worked closely with the Federal Government, regulators and consumer groups to improve outcomes for telecommunications consumers. We will continue to do this.

As I highlighted in my recent *Annual Report* I am concerned about the high level of complaints, particularly about customer service and complaint handling, which my office received in the 2008 financial year.

I remain committed to working with industry throughout the **connect.resolve** campaign to improve outcomes for all telecommunications consumers.

Yours sincerely  
Deirdre O'Donnell  
Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman