

Six Monthly Update  
July to December 2016



# Contents

BACKGROUND	3
About the Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman	3
Scope of service	3
How the Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman records complaints	3
The Telecommunications Industry Sector	3
Telecommunications Service Providers	3
Making a complaint to the Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman about a phone or internet service	4
INTRODUCTION	5
Complaints to the Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman between 1 July 2016 and 31 December 2016	5
Complaints about landline phones, mobile phones and internet services	5
Internet services	5
Mobile phone services	5
Landline phone services	5
Complaints to the Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman by state and territory	6
Complaints about services delivered over the national broadband network	7
Complaints about services delivered over the national broadband network by service type	7
Issues in complaints about services delivered over the national broadband network	7
Faults	7
Connections	7
Complaints about services delivered over the national broadband network	7
Contact the Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman	8

# Background

The Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman provides a free and independent dispute resolution service for residential consumers and small businesses who have an unresolved complaint about their telephone or internet service in Australia.

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## About the Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman

The Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman was established in 1993 under the *Telecommunications (Consumer Protection and Service Standards) Act 1999* (the Act) and is a company limited by guarantee. The Act requires telecommunications service providers to be members of the Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman and to comply with the decisions of the Ombudsman.

## Scope of service

Dispute resolution services include:

- Dealing with individual and systemic complaints
- Promoting fair and effective resolution of complaints
- Providing information and analysis to community, government and members

## How the Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman records complaints

When recording complaints, the Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman collects information from residential consumers and small businesses.

For reporting purposes, the information collected includes:

1. which service provider the complaint is about
2. whether the complaint relates to a landline phone, mobile phone or internet service
3. the complaint issues
4. the postcode of the residential consumer or small business
5. the resolution the residential consumer or small business is seeking

If the complaint is about fault or connections, residential consumers or small businesses will be asked if the service is delivered over the national broadband network.

## The Telecommunications Industry Sector

The Telecommunications industry regulators are the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) <http://www.acma.gov.au> and the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) <https://www.accc.gov.au>

Government and the regulators set policy and regulations for the telecommunications sector.

The Communications Alliance is the peak body for the Australian communications industry <http://www.commsalliance.com.au>

The Australian Communications Consumer Action Network (ACCAN) is Australia's peak communications consumer organisation representing individuals, small businesses and not-for-profit groups as consumers of communications products and services. <http://accan.org.au/index.php>



## Telecommunications Service Providers

Under the *Telecommunications Act 1997*, individuals or organisations can provide carriage services (telecommunications services) to the public. These are:

1. carriers - persons who own a telecommunications network unit to supply carriage services to the public. The carrier must be licensed through the ACMA.
2. carriage service providers (CSP) - those who use a telecommunications network unit to supply carriage services to the public. Carriage services include services for carrying communications, for example telephone services, internet access services and VoIP services.

Carriers and carriage service providers are required to be members of the Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman.

## Making a complaint to the Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman about a phone or internet service

1

Residential consumers or small businesses should firstly aim to resolve their complaint with their phone or internet provider.

2

If the complaint remains unresolved, the residential consumer or small business should visit the Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman at [www.tio.com.au](http://www.tio.com.au) or call 1800 062 058.

If the complaint can be dealt with by the Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman, it will be referred to the phone or internet provider the complaint is about to allow another chance for the matter to be resolved.

3

If the complaint remains unresolved after this referral, conciliation begins. The Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman will talk to the residential consumer or small business, and their phone or internet provider. If settlement cannot be reached, the Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman may investigate the complaint.

If a residential consumer or small business is not satisfied their complaint has been resolved, the Ombudsman has the power to decide the resolution of the complaint.



# Introduction

The Six Monthly Update outlines the key data about complaints from residential consumers and small businesses to the Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman for the period 1 July 2016 to 31 December 2016.

Full Financial Year data and analysis for the period 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017, is produced in the Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman's Annual Report published in October 2017.

## Complaints to the Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman between 1 July 2016 and 31 December 2016

Between 1 July to 31 December 2016, the Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman recorded 65,970 complaints. The complaints were recorded against 324 phone and internet providers in Australia.

Data recorded for the period 1 July 2016 to 31 December 2016, shows a 5.3 per cent increase in complaints, compared to the preceeding period 1 January 2016 to 30 June 2016. This is a 33.8 per cent increase in complaints, compared to the same period in 2015 (1 July 2015 to 31 December 2015).

	July to December 2015	January to June 2016	July to December 2016	Half year comparison July to December 2016 and January to June 2016	Year on Year Change 2016 to 2015
<b>Complaints</b>	49,318	62,631	65,970	5.3% increase	33.8% increase

## Complaints about landline phones, mobile phones and internet services

Complaints to the Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman are classified according to one of three service types – landline phones, mobile phones and internet services.



### Internet services

37.4 per cent of complaints were about internet services. This shows a 53.6 per cent increase on the same period in 2015.



### Mobile phone services

35.4 per cent of complaints were about mobile phones. This shows an 18.8 per cent increase on the same period in 2015.

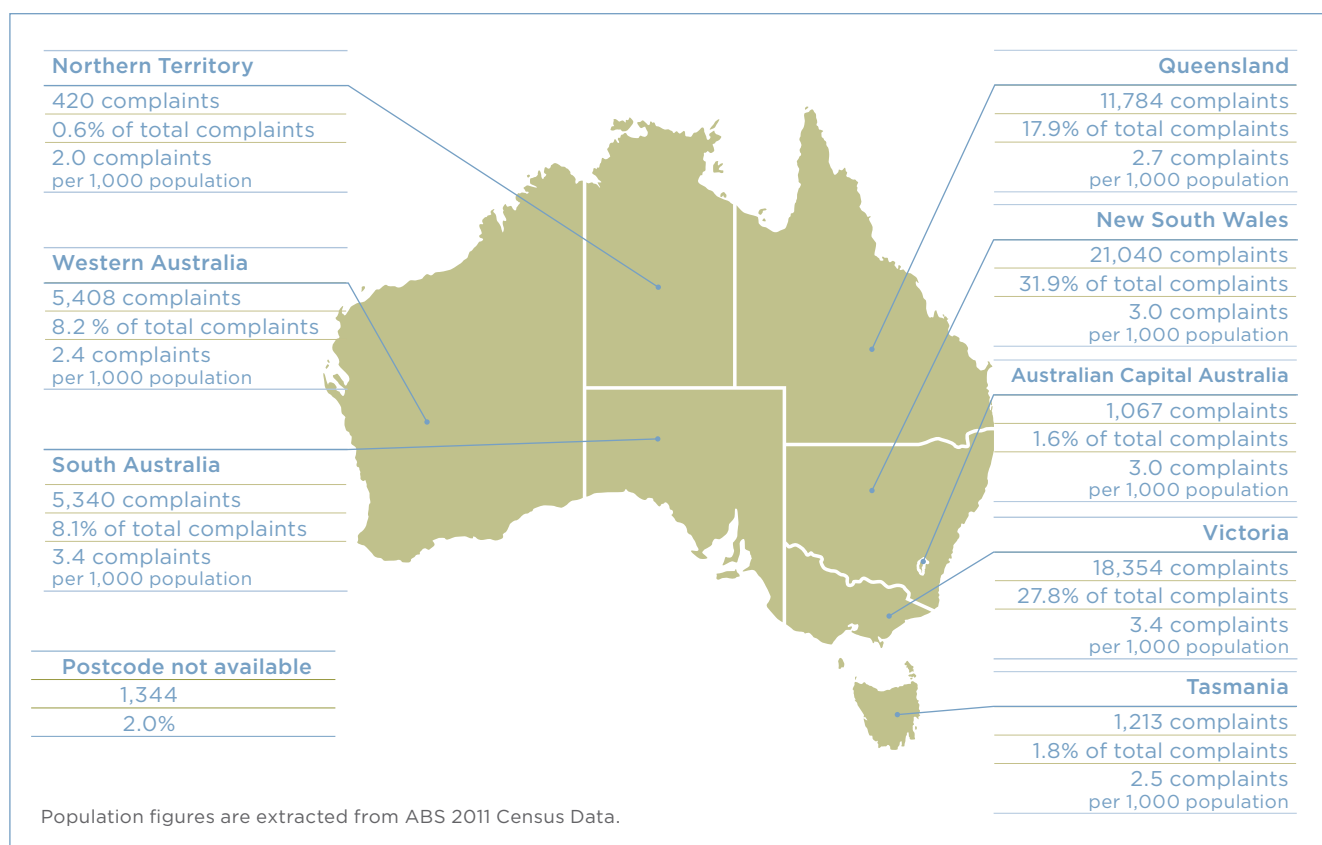


### Landline phone services

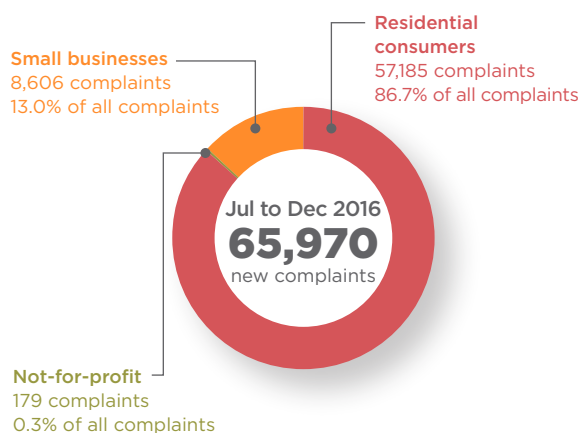
27.3 per cent of complaints were about landline phones. This shows a 32 per cent increase on the same period in 2015.

	July to December 2015	January to June 2016	July to December 2016	Half year comparison July to December 2016 and January to June 2016	Year on Year Change 2016 to 2015
<b>Internet services</b>	16,047	22,715	24,641	8.5%	53.6%
<b>Mobile phone services</b>	19,639	21,390	23,331	9.1%	18.8%
<b>Landline phone services</b>	13,632	18,526	17,998	-2.9%	32.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>49,318</b>	<b>62,631</b>	<b>65,970</b>	<b>5.3%</b>	<b>33.8%</b>

## Complaints to the Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman by state and territory

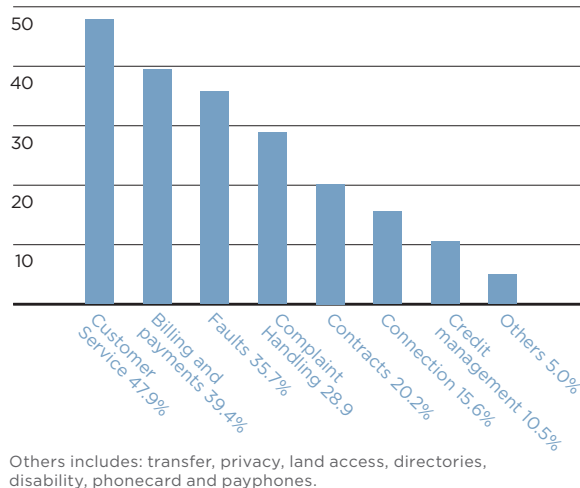


### Who complained to the Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman



### Complaint issues

Complaints about Customer Service and Billing and Payments continue to be the top two issues residential consumers and small businesses complained about.





## Complaints about services delivered over the national broadband network

There has been an increase in complaints about services delivered over the national broadband network. The rate of increase in these complaints is slower than the rate of new premises connected to the national broadband network.

### Complaints about services delivered over the national broadband network

Complaints about services delivered over the national broadband network	July to December 2015	January to June 2016	July to December 2016	Half year comparison July to December 2016 to January to June 2016	Year on Year Change 2016 to 2015
Complaints	3,454	7,033	7,512	6.8%	117.5%

### Complaints about services delivered over the national broadband network by service type

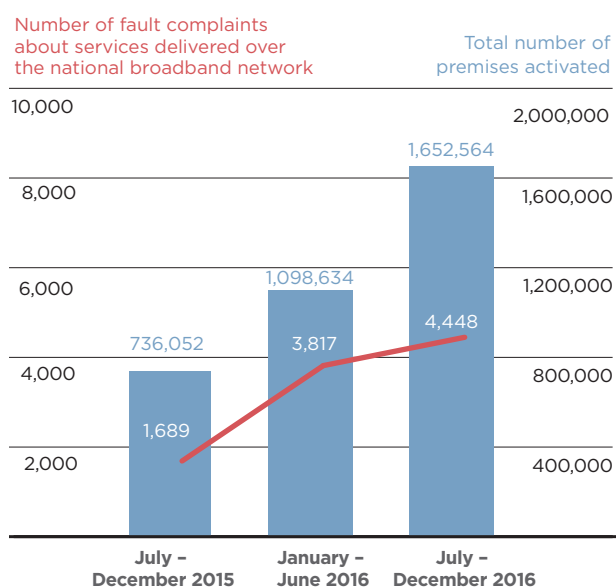
Complaints about services delivered over the national broadband network	July to December 2015	January to June 2016	July to December 2016	Half year comparison July to December 2016 to January to June 2016	Year on Year Change 2016 to 2015
Internet services	1,786	3,638	4,309	18.4%	141.3%
Landline	1,668	3,395	3,203	-5.7%	92.0%

## Issues in complaints about services delivered over the national broadband network

Faults and connections are the two main issues in complaints about services delivered over the national broadband network.

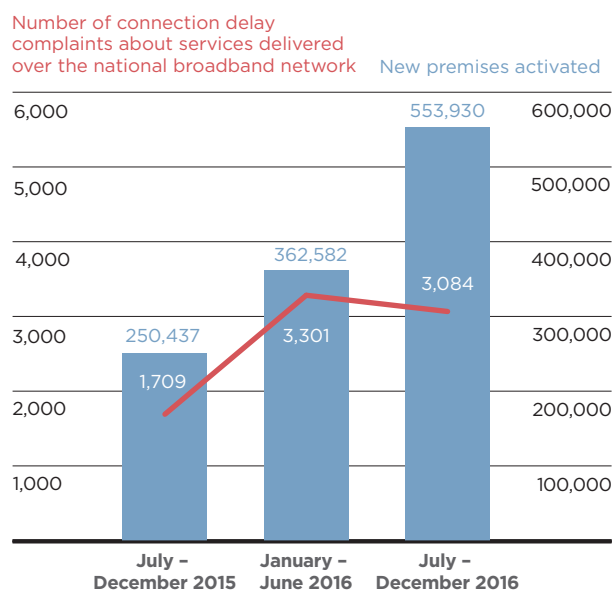
### Faults

Number of fault complaints about services delivered over the national broadband network against total number of premises connected to the national broadband network.



### Connections

Number of connection delay complaints about services delivered over the national broadband network against number of premises being connected to the national broadband network.



New premises activated and total number of premises activated figures are based on nbn co.'s weekly progress report (9 March 2017).

## Contact the Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman

By phone	1800 062 058
Online	<a href="http://www.tio.com.au">www.tio.com.au</a>
By fax	1800 630 614
By post	PO Box 276 Collins St West VIC 8007
TTY	1800 675 692

### National Relay Service

Call on 1800 555 677 then ask for 1800 062 058

### Media Enquiries

For all media enquiries please contact [mediaenquiries@tio.com.au](mailto:mediaenquiries@tio.com.au) or 03 8680 8426.