

Information for bushfire affected consumers

As at 14 January 2020



Staying connected through phone and internet services is important for everyone – individuals, families and small businesses located in areas impacted by natural disasters. The Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman encourages those affected by bushfires to familiarise themselves with the assistance and support available.

What do you need to know?

Many phone and internet service providers are offering special assistance for those affected by the bushfires. Damage to telecommunications infrastructure and loss of power has meant large areas have little or no access to phone or internet services. If you are in one of these areas, you may be eligible for special assistance.

Special assistance for fire fighters

Some providers are waiving bills for volunteer firefighters who have fought fires. Ask your provider if you are eligible:

Telstra: 13 22 03 (includes Farm Fighters)

Vodafone: 1300 650 410

Optus: 1300 301 671

If your provider is not listed above, contact your provider's general enquiries number for guidance.

Accessibility issues

Some areas don't have telecommunications or electricity at the moment. Providers have advised us they are re-establishing services as quickly as possible.

NBN Co has set up free Wi-Fi spots in some places – [Free Wi-Fi locations \(current\)](#) along with [bushfire recovery and support updates](#).

Special assistance for destruction of equipment

If your handset or other telecommunications equipment was destroyed by fire, let your provider know. You may be able to claim the loss on insurance or be eligible for flexibility with payments.

Special assistance for recovery

If you have lost your home, let your provider know so they can work with you to provide hardship assistance. Contact your provider and advise them of your situation:

Commander: 1300 110 076

Dodo: 1300 038 224

iiNet: 1300 336 393

Internode: 1300 66 33 27

iPrimus: 1300 097 143

Optus: 1300 308 839

Southern Phone: 13 14 64

Telstra: 13 22 00 (say "financial Hardship" when prompted)

TPG: 1300 993 011

Vodafone: 1300 650 405

If your provider is not listed above, contact their general enquiries number for more information.

If your phone or internet issues remain unresolved

Residential consumers and small businesses with phone or internet issues in bushfire affected areas must contact their provider first. If the issue remains unresolved, consumers should contact the Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman on our natural disasters phone line –

1800 046 686.

We are here to help.