



Complaint Data Insights – October to December 2023

National picture

Overall complaints increased by 13.4 percent compared to the previous quarter, and decreased 17.9 percent compared to the same time last year.

Complaints by issue

Six of the top ten issues increased compared to the previous quarter. The most notable increases were complaints related to a **network outage** and having **no phone or internet service**. These complaints are mostly due to the Optus outage.

- **Network outage** complaints increased from 148 complaints in Q1 2023 to 900 complaints in Q2.
- **No phone or internet service** complaints increased by 33 percent compared to the previous quarter to 409 complaints.
- **Delay establishing a service** complaints increased by 25.8 percent compared to the previous quarter to 244 complaints.
 - The Gold Coast had a significant number of complaints about a delay establishing a service (43.7 percent increase compared to the previous quarter), along with Moreton Bay (16 percent), and Logan (72.7 percent).
- Other notable increases compared to the previous quarter were recorded for **non-financial loss not related to privacy** (20.2 percent) and **intermittent service or drop outs** (18.3 percent).
- Problems with **a telco not doing what it agreed to** saw the largest decrease compared to the previous quarter, down by 9.4% (147 complaints).

Optus outage complaints

- The TIO received 919 complaints from Optus customers about the Optus outage on 8 November 2023.
- 20 percent of these complaints were from small businesses.
- These complaints were about a **network outage**, as well as **having no phone or internet service, financial loss, termination fees, and no or delayed action by a telco**, among other issues.
- Most consumers sought outcomes including credits, a refunded or discounted service, financial compensation, exiting a contract early, or apologies.
- Complaints about the outage after December 2023 will be counted in the Q3 data.

Financial hardship

- The TIO received 451 contacts from consumers about **financial hardship or a repayment arrangement**. This is a decrease of 10.9 percent in contacts from the previous quarter, from 506 in Q1 to 451 in Q2. Of these contacts, 331 were raised as **complaints** and 120 noted as **enquiries**.



- Complaints about **financial hardship or a repayment arrangement** decreased 5.7 percent compared to the previous quarter.
- The number of **enquiries** to the TIO about financial hardship decreased 22.6 percent, and complaints about this issue coming back to the TIO as **unresolved** decreased 27.7 percent.
- Most financial hardship complaints came from residential consumers who are struggling to pay for their phone and internet services (95 percent).

Complaints by consumer type

Small businesses

- 1767 complaints from small businesses, an increase of 7.2% compared to the previous quarter.
- Complaints from small businesses made up 12 percent of all complaints.
- Complaints about **business loss** increased 35.7 percent compared to the previous quarter, making it the third-highest issue for small businesses in Q2 with 304 complaints.
- Other increases were recorded against **problems with a bill, having no phone or internet service**, and experiencing an **intermittent service or drop outs**.
- Total financial outcome returned to small businesses for the period was \$395,188.

Residential consumers

- 12,904 complaints from residential consumers, an increase of 14.3 percent compared to the previous quarter.
- Complaints from residential consumers made up 88 percent of all complaints.
- Increases in complaints were recorded against **service and equipment fees, no phone or internet service, delays establishing a service, intermittent service and drop outs**, as well as **financial and non financial loss**.
- Total financial outcome returned to residential consumers for the period was \$588,510.

Complaints by demographic

For First Nations consumers and people who speak a language other than English, the top two problems are reflected in the national complaints picture – **problems with customer service**, and **problems with a bill**. Beyond this the picture changes.

First Nations consumers

- We received 402 complaints from consumers who identified as First Nations. This is a 78.7 percent increase from the previous quarter, attributed to improved data collection as more First Nations consumers share their information with us.
- First Nations consumers had **problems getting or staying connected** to a phone or internet service, and a **telco not doing what it agreed to do**.



Consumers who speak a language other than English

- Consumers who speak a language other than English complained about **non-financial loss**, and a **telco not doing what it agreed to do**.
- Arabic and Hindi were the most used languages spoken by consumers, other than English.

Service types

Complaints across all service types increased compared to the previous quarter, but continue to be lower than the same time last year. Internet complaints increased the most.

Internet complaints

- Complaints about internet services increased 23.3 percent compared to the previous quarter, representing 37.7 percent of all complaints.
- The top three issues for complaints about internet services were **customer service problems**, **problems with a bill**, and **inadequate fault testing**.
- Significant increases were recorded against complaints about **having no internet service** (49.8 percent), **delays establishing a service** (22.9 percent), and having an **intermittent service or dropouts** (15.9 percent).
- **Network outage** was the issue with the largest increase quarter on quarter at 219%.
- All of the top 10 Local Government Areas (LGAs) saw increases in complaints about internet services except for Wyndham, which had a reduction by 33.9 percent.

Mobile complaints

- Complaints about mobile services increased 15.2 per cent compared to the previous quarter, representing 44.7 percent of all complaints.
- The top three issues for complaints about mobile services were **customer service problems**, **problems with a bill**, and a **telco not doing what it agreed to do**.
- Significant increases were recorded against complaints about **poor mobile coverage** (17.5 percent), **non-financial loss** not relating to privacy breaches (47.1 percent), and **misleading sales conduct** (15.8 percent).
- Brisbane had the highest proportion of mobile complaints of all LGAs.

Top 10 providers

1. Telstra	2. Optus
3. Vodafone	4. TPG
5. iiNet	6. Dodo
7. Aussie Broadband	8. Southern phone



9. Internode (new to top ten)

10. Tangerine

- The proportion of complaints about **Telstra** decreased from 41.1 percent of all complaints in Q1 to **36.8** percent in Q2.
- The proportion of complaints about **Optus** increased from 24.9 percent of all complaints in Q1 to **31.4** percent in Q2.
- Increases in the volume of complaints were recorded against nine of the top ten providers, with only **Southern Phone** recording a decrease of 28.9 percent, from 294 complaints to 209.
- Complaints about **Internode** increased from 82 to 202 complaints (146.3 percent increase), complaints about **Dodo** increased from 123 to 232 complaints (88.6 percent increase), while complaints about **Optus** increased from 3,224 to 4,612 complaints (43.1 percent increase).

State picture

Nationally, the top five LGAs with the highest complaints were Brisbane (602), Gold Coast (323), Moreton Bay (291), Sunshine Coast (213) and Wyndham (206). Sunshine Coast is new to the top five LGAs, and Wyndham has dropped from number 3 to number 5.

New South Wales (NSW)

- People in NSW made 4,324 complaints about phone and internet services.
- 10.7 percent of complaints were from small businesses, a decrease of 3.3 percent in the previous quarter. This is slightly lower than the national average.
- Increases in complaints were recorded against **problems with a bill, no phone or internet service, and intermittent service or dropouts**.
- The LGA in NSW with the highest number of complaints was Blacktown, followed by Sydney, Bankstown, Liverpool and Parramatta.
- NSW was the state with the second highest number of complaints about a **network outage** (266), and Sydney was the LGA with the third highest **network outage** complaints nationally.

Victoria (VIC)

- People in VIC made 3,922 complaints about phone and internet services, an increase of 4.4 percent compared to the previous quarter.
- 10.3 percent of complaints were from small businesses, a decrease of 2.2 percent in the previous quarter. This is slightly lower than the national average.
- The LGA in VIC with the highest number of complaints was Wyndham, followed by Casey, Hume, Whittlesea and Melbourne.
 - The LGA of Casey in VIC had the highest increase in complaints of the top ten LGAs nationally (41.3 percent). Most of the complaints were linked to **no or**



delayed action by provider, billing problems and intermittent service or drop outs.

- Wyndham in Victoria was the only LGA in the top ten LGAs nationally to decrease in complaints (-15.9 percent), compared to the previous quarter where it was the only LGA to increase in volume.
- VIC was the state with the most complaints about a network outage (267).

Queensland (QLD)

- People in QLD made 2,564 complaints about phone and internet services.
- 11 percent of complaints from QLD were made by small businesses, slightly lower than the national average.
- Nation-wide, four of the top five LGAs with the most complaints were in QLD.
- The LGA in QLD with the highest number of complaints was Brisbane, followed by Gold Coast, Moreton Bay, Sunshine Coast and Logan.
- Brisbane remained the LGA with the highest complaints nationally at 602, an increase of 20.4%. Most of the complaints from Brisbane were about **no or delayed action by provider, billing problems and no phone or internet service**.
- QLD was the state with the third highest number of complaints about a **network outage**. Brisbane and Moreton Bay were the top two LGAs with the most complaints about a **network outage** nationally.

South Australia (SA)

- People in SA made 1,100 complaints about their phone and internet services, an increase of 18.7 percent.
- 91 percent of complaints in SA were from residential consumers.
- The LGA in SA with the highest number of complaints was Onkaparinga, followed by Port Adelaide Enfield, Salisbury, Playford, and Charles Sturt. Complaints from people in Onkaparinga increased to 141 from 91 in the previous quarter.
- There were significant increases in **delays establishing a service** for people in SA, with complaints about this problem increasing 84.6 percent compared to the previous quarter. The LGA in SA with the most complaints about this issue was Salisbury.

Western Australia (WA)

- People in WA made 1,208 complaints about their phone and internet services.
- 10.3 percent of complaints were from small businesses, remaining steady from the previous quarter.
- Increases were recorded against **no phone or internet service** (29.8 percent) and having **intermittent service or drop outs** (17 percent).
- The LGA in WA with the highest complaints was Wanneroo (109), with an increase of 5.8 percent.



- Stirling and Swan were second and third highest LGAs in WA and had significant increases of 17.6 percent and 27.4 percent respectively.

Tasmania (TAS)

- Tasmanians made 243 complaints about their phone and internet services.
- 11.5 percent of these complaints were from small businesses, compared to 15 percent in the previous quarter.
- The LGA in TAS with the most complaints was Clarence, with Glenorchy and Brighton seeing significant increases.
- Eight of the top ten issues in TAS increased, including **customer service problems** (16 percent), **billing problems** (38.3 percent), and **having no phone or internet service** (73.7 percent).

Northern Territory (NT)

- The NT was the only state or territory in Australia to see a decrease in complaints.
- 8 percent of complaints were from small businesses, a decrease compared to 17 percent in the previous quarter.
- People from the NT made 57 complaints about their phone and internet services, a 24 percent decline compared to the previous quarter.
- Complaints decreased across all service types.
- NT was the only state where complaints about **no phone or internet service** decreased.

Australian Capital Territory (ACT)

- People from the ACT made 188 complaints about their phone or internet services, a 6.8 percent increase compared to the previous quarter.
- 93.6 percent of complaints were from residential consumers.
- More people in the ACT were complaining about having an intermittent service or drop outs, with this issue increasing by 42.9 percent this quarter.