

Telecommunications
Industry
Ombudsman

Complaints data insights

Quarter 2 Report

October to December 2025

February 2026

Data snapshot

Quarter 2 (FY 2026)

Total complaints received



14,017

↑ 3.6% increase on Q1.

Most complained about service:



6,391

Mobile Services
complaints

↑ 6.8% increase on Q1.

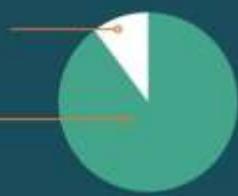
Who complained

Small Business 10.2%

0% change on Q1

Residential 89.8%

↑ 4% increase on Q1



The national picture



424

LGAs made complaints to the TIO

Down from 427 LGAs in Q1

Top 5 telcos by complaint increases

1	Lycamobile	.....↑ 180.6%	Total complaints: 261
2	Dodo Services	.....↑ 77.3%	Total complaints: 321
3	Aussie Broadband	.....↑ 49.3%	Total complaints: 303
4	Superloop	.....↑ 35.9%	Total complaints: 269
5	iiNet Ltd	.....↑ 18.3%	Total complaints: 440

Top 5 issues

1	No or delayed action by provider	..... 8,494	↓ 5.2% decrease on Q1
2	Service and equipment fees	..... 4,820	↓ 9.9% decrease on Q1
3	No phone or internet service	..... 1,961	↑ 41.6% increase on Q1
4	Inadequate fault testing	..... 1,938	↑ 14.2% increase on Q1
5	Intermittent service drop-outs	..... 1,708	↑ 21.6% increase on Q1

Biggest changes



41.6%

increase in No phone or internet service
complaints



50.7%

increase in complaints from Greater Geelong
to 205 complaints

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National picture: Quarter 2 FY2026

We publish quarterly complaints data to shine a light on emerging trends and challenges faced by residential and small business telco consumers across Australia. By sharing our insights, the Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman (TIO) helps build a stronger, more responsive communications environment and experience for people across the country.

What's frustrating people?

This quarter, 14,017 people contacted the TIO for help, with many finding it harder to rely on their phone and internet services. People reported unreliable mobile and internet causing ongoing disruptions to their work and daily lives with services dropping out, taking too long to fix or stopping working altogether.

Unclear communication from telcos and not getting timely support when things went wrong added to frustrations, with more people seeking compensation for the second consecutive quarter. People reported experiencing emotional stress, lost time and peace of mind, and feeling cut off from family and essential support services.

Concerns about safety and the reliability of services during an emergency were also front-of-mind for people, following the Optus Triple Zero outage in September. Concerns increased when telcos disconnected older phones because of regulations regarding emergency calls.

Encouraging signs this quarter was the decline in financial hardship complaints, suggesting consumer protections are starting to raise standards across the industry for people who need it most.

Outside of telco complaints, frustrations with digital platforms continued to grow. More people came to the TIO for help with social media and digital platform issues around account access, hacking, and platform decisions they couldn't challenge. While these complaints currently sit outside the TIO's jurisdiction, they highlight people's rising frustration with platforms that offer limited support and no access to fair resolution when things go wrong.

Top 10 issues

The Top 10 issues for consumers from October to December 2025 include **no or delayed action by provider** (8,494 complaints), **service and equipment fees** (4,820 complaints) and **no phone or internet service** (1,961 complaints). Mobile and internet service types dominated the complaints, representing 45.6% and 40.6% of the total respectively.

Six of the Top 10 issues increased this quarter, with the largest percentage growth observed for **no phone or internet service** up by 41.6% (1,961 total complaints) and **intermittent service or dropouts** up by 21.6% (1,708 total complaints).

Fewer people contacted us this quarter about **failure to cancel a service**, with complaints down by 15.6% (to a total 917 total complaints). This is a positive sign for consumers, but more still needs to be done to remove unnecessary barriers when people try to cancel a service.

Read more about the TIO's views on cancellations practices in its 2026 [Cancellations Policy Position Statement](#).

Table 1: National Top 10 issues

Issues	Q2 complaints	% of total complaints	Q1 complaints	Q on Q % change
1. No or delayed action by provider	8,494	60.6%	8,964	-5.2%
2. Service and equipment fees	4,820	34.4%	5,347	-9.9%
3. No phone or internet service	1,961	14.0%	1,385	41.6%
4. Inadequate fault testing	1,938	13.8%	1,697	14.2%
5. Intermittent service or dropouts	1,708	12.2%	1,405	21.6%
6. Delay establishing a service	1,253	8.9%	1,129	11.0%
7. Non-financial loss - not privacy	1,138	8.1%	999	13.9%
8. Slow data speed	1,061	7.6%	935	13.5%
9. Failure to cancel a service	917	6.5%	1,086	-15.6%
10. Resolution agreed but not met	900	6.4%	974	-7.6%

Rising challenges

More complaints about no phone or internet service

In Quarter 2 we received 1,961 complaints regarding **no phone or internet service** issues, with 1,022 of these complaints about internet services. While this represents a 41.6% national increase (an additional 576 complaints), it follows a notably low number of complaints in Quarter 1 (1,385 complaints), and a 5.9 % decline compared with the same quarter last year.

Complaints were driven by frustrations across both mobile and internet services:

Internet:

Complaints about internet services accounted for the largest share of **no phone or internet service** complaints, increasing 33.2% (an additional 255 complaints) against Quarter 1.

Consumers reported prolonged service outages, unresolved technical faults (particularly with modems), and inadequate or unclear customer support, including a lack of temporary resolutions offered.

Mobile:

No phone or internet service complaints about mobile services almost doubled (up from 221 to 432) since Quarter 1. This increase can be partially attributed to a rise in complaints about devices being disconnected because they don't meet obligations under the *Telecommunications (Emergency Call Service) Determination 2019*. The laws require telcos to block mobile phones that can't call emergency service across all mobile networks.

Compensation claims for phone and internet problems continue to climb

More people came to the TIO seeking compensation for non-financial loss* with complaints up by 13.9% (to a total 1,138 complaints) when compared with the previous quarter. This also reflects a 12.2 % increase when compared to the same quarter last year.

Non-financial loss recognises the impact of mobile and service problems on people's lives, through lost time, stress and inconvenience. Drivers behind requests for compensation this quarter included frequent connectivity failures, billing errors, slow resolutions from providers, and significant disruptions, including missed appointments and an inability to work or study from home.

**Non-financial loss linked to privacy issues are not included.*

Ongoing concerns about Triple Zero access

This quarter, we received over 400 complaints relating to Triple Zero and emergency services.

Of the complaints received, about 85 were from people unable to reach Triple Zero or emergency services. Most concerned recent call attempts, while others related to failed calls from previous months, often prompted by media coverage about Triple Zero reliability.

The remaining complaints were made by consumers who were concerned about not having reliable access to Triple Zero if an emergency happens in the future, due to network outages, poor mobile coverage, or handset issues such as those seen on Samsung devices.



Samsung Triple Zero incompatibility

We received 192 complaints in this quarter about Samsung mobile phones needing to be updated, replaced or disconnected because the settings on their device prevent them from connecting to Triple Zero.

Some consumers told us they were frustrated by unclear communication from their telcos or concerned about whether their device could reliably connect to Triple Zero if they needed it in an emergency. Consumers were also concerned about the financial burden of purchasing a replacement device. This was particularly stressful for consumers on pensions or other limited incomes.

Elderly consumer faced with difficult decision: financial burden or safety risks

An elderly consumer named Charlie* received notice that his phone would soon be blocked from making Triple Zero calls. This was stressful for Charlie as he is on a tight budget, and without buying a new phone, he would lose his only ability to contact his caregiver and make essential online purchases.

Having received no help from his telco, Charlie contacted the TIO. In the meanwhile, concerned about his safety, Charlie purchased a new phone. To help with the financial load of this purchase, Charlie and his telco agreed on a resolution to waive his plan fees for the next six months.

*Name changed for privacy reasons.

Financial hardship

Complaints about financial hardship dropped 19.2% since Quarter 1 to a total of 399 complaints. Victoria and New South Wales accounted for over half of these, reporting 127 and 109 complaints respectively. Complaints made about mobile services accounted for 67.7% of all financial hardship complaints this quarter.

Financial hardship complaints decreased overall by 35.7% when compared to the same quarter last year which is an encouraging shift the TIO will continue to monitor. However, every complaint highlights the ongoing impact of people still not getting the help they need, when they need it.

People contacting the TIO reported being denied payment plans or given plans they couldn't afford, while others lost access to services even after sharing their financial situation. This is despite obligations on telcos to help consumers experiencing payment difficulties in the *Telecommunications (Financial Hardship) Industry Standard 2024*.

Jemima* was threatened with disconnection, despite seeking financial hardship support

Jemima told her telco she was experiencing financial hardship after an accident left her hospitalised and unable to work. Jemima's telco confirmed they would offer discounted services for several months while she recovered, yet two weeks later, she was told her services were being disconnected due to under-payment.

When Jemima contacted her telco to question this, she was told that there was no discount applied to her account, and that she must pay her service in full immediately. This caused Jemima an immense amount of stress.

After Jemima contacted the TIO, we referred her complaint as urgent through to her telco.

**Name changed for privacy reasons.*

Top 10 telcos by complaints

Most complaints were made about the biggest telcos, with the Top 10 providers accounting for 84.8 per cent of complaints received in Quarter 2.

Telstra, Optus and Vodafone continue to account for the largest proportion of complaints, despite Telstra and Optus recording overall decreases in complaints by 9.6 % and 2.2% respectively.

Smaller providers, while accounting for a much lower proportion of complaints, observed the biggest percentage increase in complaint volumes this quarter.

Lyca Mobile complaints jumped 180.6% to a total of 261 complaints, putting the telco in this period's Top 10 list.

The most common issues for Lyca Mobile consumers were **service and equipment fees, delays in establishing a service, and partially restricted service**. These stem from problems in billing,

SIM/eSIM activation, and number porting, often due to poor coordination with providers and internal systems.

This is also the second consecutive quarter that complaints about Dodo Services have seen a significant increase, up 77.3% to a total 321 complaints.

Nine of the Top 10 issues raised by Dodo consumers increased this quarter, with **service problems with add-on feature, unauthorised disclosure, and provider uncontactable**.

Table 2: Top 10 telcos by complaint numbers

Telcos	Oct – Dec 2025	Oct – Dec 2024	Year on Year % change	Q on Q % change
1. Telstra	4694	5590	-16.0%	-9.6%
2. Optus Group	3136	3845	-18.4%	-2.2%
3. Vodafone Australia Limited	1570	1266	24.0%	15.5%
4. TPG Group	679	639	6.3%	14.1%
5. iiNet Ltd	440	544	-19.1%	18.3%
6. Dodo Services Pty Ltd	321	217	47.9%	77.3%
7. Aussie Broadband Limited	303	248	22.2%	49.3%
8. Superloop	269	162	66.0%	35.9%
9. Lyca Mobile	261	22	1086.4%	180.6%
10. Southern Phone Company	220	356	-38.2%	18.3%

Complaints by service type

Mobile

Complaints about mobile services rose by 6.8% this quarter to 6,391 and accounted for 45.6% of all complaints in the period.

Seven of the Top 10 mobile issues increased when compared to the previous quarter. The largest rise was for **no phone or internet service**, up 95.5% to 432 complaints. Despite this spike, year on year, these complaints are down 24.2%. This is partially due to the high number of complaints received in late 2024 resulting from the 3G shutdown.



Other notable increases included **intermittent service or dropouts**, up 41.7% to 374 complaints, **partially restricted service** up 28.6% to 566, and **inadequate fault testing** up 21.3% to 586.

These issues led to significant consequences for consumers, including the inability to make Triple Zero calls. Additionally, delays in service activation and eSIM porting resulted in people experiencing extended periods without mobile access, affecting their key communication and daily activities.

The largest decrease in the Top 10 issues was **no or delayed action by provider**, down 3.8% to 3,951 complaints.

Internet

Internet service complaints increased this quarter by 5.5% to 5,696 complaints.

Seven of the Top 10 internet issues increased. Significant rises were noted for **missed appointment**, up 52.8% to 350 complaints, **no phone or internet service**, up by 33.2% to 1,022 complaints, **delay establishing a service**, up 16.3% to 785, and **intermittent service or dropouts**, up 15.8% 1,092.

Missed appointment complaints were mostly driven by coordination failures between retail internet providers and internet wholesalers. Contributing to frustrations were faults incorrectly being marked as fixed through automated or remote testing, and technician shortages. People reported losing time and money through missed appointments, with consumers reporting they took time off work to wait for a technician that never came.

The largest decrease was seen for **failure to cancel a service**, falling 21.6% to 468 complaints.

Nikhil* drove 80km to wait for a technician that never came

Nikhil has an Airbnb property 80 kilometres from his family home. He took the day off work to drive to his property so he could be there while a technician fixed an issue with the property's internet.

Despite reassurances throughout the day that a technician was on the way, no one showed up. At 6pm, Nikhil got a call to say the appointment had been delayed by two weeks, leaving his property without internet and Nikhil with a wasted day.

Nikhil contacted the TIO because he had lost confidence in his telco and could not afford to take another day off work unless he was assured that they would come.

**Name changed for privacy reasons.*

Landline

Landline complaints continued to decline, with a 6.5% decrease this quarter to 819 complaints, and a 16.6% decrease year on year.

Despite the overall decline, the following issues continued to drive landline complaints: **no or delayed action by provider**, **no phone or internet service**, and **service and equipment fees**.

Complaints about **partially restricted service** saw an uptick of 33.9% to 75 complaints, with people reporting severe disruptions, including being unable to receive calls for weeks. This particularly affected vulnerable groups, such as elderly customers, isolating them from family contact and posing safety risks where they rely on their landline for medical assistance.

Who we heard from

Residential consumers

Complaints made by residential consumers increased 4% to a total of 12,588 complaints compared to the previous quarter. The top issues faced by residential consumers were **no or delayed action by provider** (7,622 complaints), **service and equipment fees** (4,332 complaints) and **inadequate fault testing** (1,754 complaints).



Mobile service complaints increased 8% to 5,866 complaints. The primary issues faced by residential consumers for mobile complaints were **service and equipment fees, poor mobile coverage and partially restricted service**.

Complaints about internet services rose 4.6% to 5,213. The primary issues reported by residential consumers about internet services included **intermittent service or dropouts, no phone or internet service and service and equipment fees**.

Residential complaints in Queensland (2,240 complaints) and Western Australia (1,016 complaints) both increased 5.5%. The primary issues faced by consumers living in QLD and WA were **no phone or internet service, service and equipment fees and intermittent service or dropouts**.

The total financial outcome returned to residential consumers in Quarter 2 was \$572,661.

Small businesses

With a total of 1,429 complaints, complaints from small businesses remained unchanged compared to the previous quarter. The top issues faced by small businesses were **no or delayed action by provider** (872 complaints), **service and equipment fees** (488 complaints) and **business loss** (263 complaints).

For small businesses, mobile-related complaints dropped 4.9% to 525 complaints, while complaints about internet services increased 16.1% to 483 complaints.

The primary concerns for internet related complaints were **no phone or internet service, service and equipment fees** and **intermittent service or dropouts**.

The total financial outcome returned to small businesses in Quarter 2 was \$392,983.

Regional consumers

The TIO received a total of 2,969 complaints from the regions, a 1.6% decline on last quarter

Six of the Top 10 issues in the regions observed a rise in complaints. Increases were noted for **slow data speed**, up 17.6% to 234 complaints, and **no phone or internet service**, up 17% to 476 complaints.

The biggest decline in complaints from regional consumers was noted for **failure to cancel a service**, down 18.8% to 194 complaints.

The top five regional areas with the highest share of complaints were Townsville (76 complaints), Shoalhaven (72 complaints), Toowoomba (62 complaints), Cairns (61 complaints), and Port Stephens (59 complaints).

What's happening on the ground: connectivity in rural and regional communities

In December 2025, the TIO visited multiple regional and rural towns in New South Wales, offering communities a chance to raise connectivity concerns and learn about our services. The events were organised by the New South Wales Farmers Association and were attended by the Regional Tech Hub, NBN Co, and Telstra.

Communities told us they were concerned about their ability to call emergency services, with many people citing previous failures. We also heard that rural and regional Australians feel forgotten and tired of complaining, particularly since unreliable mobile connectivity has become a persistent issue since the 3G shutdown. Congestion issues across key holiday periods also impacted mobile connectivity, causing major disruptions to business operations.

This quarter, we supported the Government's Universal Outdoor Mobile Obligation as a critical step in incorporating mobile services into Australia's universal services framework. Requiring that mobile coverage be reasonably available outdoors across the Australian continent will help ensure Australians can call Triple Zero in as many locations as reasonably possible.

First Nations consumers

There were 404 complaints this quarter from consumers who identified as First Nations people. The issues raised by First Nations consumers as the primary reason for their complaint were **no phone or internet service, service and equipment fees** and **intermittent service or dropouts**.

Among the Top 10 issues for First Nations consumers, **intermittent service or dropouts** increased 65.7% to 58 complaints, while **no phone or internet service** rose by 42.5% to 57 complaints.

While the number of complaints from First Nations consumers has remained steady over the past few years, we know many issues still don't get reported to us. This quarter, we heard from community organisations in the Northern Territory that some First Nations people are having trouble verifying their identity and activating prepaid services.

For some people, this means spending a significant amount of money on services they can't activate because they don't have the necessary identification. The Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) will undertake a review of the rules for verifying a consumer's identity to activate prepaid services. We look forward to this issue being considered in consultation with telcos and community representatives.

Read more about the [TIO's call to make ID verification more accessible for First Nations consumers in its submission](#) to the ACMA.

Table 3: Top 10 issues – Regional vs Major Cities

Regional issue	Q on Q Regional % change	Major city issue	Q on Q Major city % change
1. No or delayed action by provider	-8.7%	1. No or delayed action by provider	-4.5%
2. Service and equipment fees	-10.8%	2. Service and equipment fees	-9.3%
3. No phone or internet service	17.0%	3. Inadequate fault testing	17.5%
4. Inadequate fault testing	3.1%	4. No phone or internet service	52.8%
5. Intermittent service or dropouts	13.2%	5. Intermittent service or dropouts	23.6%
6. Delay establishing a service	-2.2%	6. Delay establishing a service	15.2%
7. Slow data speed	17.6%	7. Non-financial loss - not privacy	16.4%
8. Poor mobile coverage	1.4%	8. Slow data speed	11.9%
9. Non-financial loss - not privacy	5.3%	9. Failure to cancel a service	-14.3%
10. Failure to cancel a service	-18.8%	10. Resolution agreed but not met	-10.9%

Table 4: Service types – Regional vs Major Cities

Service type	Regional complaints	% of total complaints	Regional Q on Q % change	Major city complaints	% of total complaints
Mobile	1,269	42.7%	1.8%	4,590	44.4%
Internet	1,165	39.2%	1.7%	4,394	42.5%
Landline	266	9%	-4.3%	527	5.1%

State by state

Queensland recorded the highest percentage increase in complaints, up 5.7%, followed by Western Australia, up 4.5%, New South Wales, up 4%, South Australia, up 2.3%, and Victoria, up 1.8%.

Table 5: Complaints by state

State	Complaints	% of total complaints	Previous Quarter	Q on Q % change
NSW	4,285	30.6%	4,120	4.0%
VIC	3,892	27.8%	3,822	1.8%
QLD	2,511	17.9%	2,375	5.7%
WA	1,124	8.0%	1,076	4.5%
SA	1,003	7.2%	980	2.3%
TAS	212	1.5%	228	-7.0%
ACT	196	1.4%	207	-5.3%
NT	73	0.5%	75	-2.7%

New South Wales (NSW)

- A total of 4,285 complaints were made by people in NSW, up 4% since the previous quarter.
- Eight of the top 10 issues increased. **No phone or internet service** had the largest increase, up 32.2% to 608 complaints. Other notable increases were observed for **intermittent service or dropouts**, up 25.9%, **slow data speed**, up 23.9%, and **partially restricted service**, up 21.3%.
- **Service and equipment fees** observed the largest decline of 10.1%, down 1,463 complaints.
- 22.6% of complaints were from regional areas and 77.4% were from major cities.
- The top five NSW LGAs with the highest number of complaints were Canterbury-Bankstown (225 complaints), Central Coast (200 complaints), Sydney (172 complaints), Blacktown (166 complaints) and Sutherland (129 complaints).

Victoria (VIC)

- A total of 3,892 complaints were made by people in Victoria, up 1.8% since the previous quarter.

- Six of the top 10 complaint issues increased. With a total of 556 complaints, the highest increase was noted for **no phone or internet service**, up 61.6%.
- **Failure to cancel a service** decreased by 10.1% to 249 complaints.
- 16.4% of complaints from VIC were from regional areas and 83.6% were from major cities.
- The top five VIC LGAs with the highest number of complaints were Wyndham (211 complaints), Greater Geelong (205 complaints), Casey (196 complaints), Whittlesea (190 complaints) and Hume (167 complaints).
- Complaints in Greater Geelong increased 50.7% this quarter, with **no phone or internet** complaints rising from 8 to 67 (up 737.5%) and **network outage** complaints rising from 2 to 39 (1,850%). In late November 2025, the TIO received an influx of complaints from consumers who were impacted by Opticomm internet disruptions in Lara following planned maintenance works.

Queensland (QLD)

- A total of 2,511 complaints were made by people in Queensland, up by 5.7 % since last quarter.
- Seven of the top 10 complaint issues increased. **No phone or internet service** increased 50.2% to 413 complaints. Other notable increases included **equipment fault** (up 41.6%), **intermittent service or dropouts** (up 34.8%) and **non-financial loss – not privacy** (up 30.1%).
- **Failure to cancel a service** recorded the largest decrease, down 16% to 157 complaints since last quarter.
- 27.6% of complaints from QLD were from regional areas and 72.4% were from major cities.
- The QLD LGAs with the highest number of complaints were Brisbane (676 complaints), Gold Coast (295 complaints), Moreton Bay (277 complaints), Sunshine Coast (191 complaints) and Logan (180 complaints).

Western Australia (WA)

- A total of 1,124 complaints were made by people in WA, up 4.5 % since last quarter.
- Four of the top 10 complaint issues increased. **Delay establishing a service** saw the largest increase of 58.1% to 117 complaints, followed by **intermittent service or dropouts**, up 31.6% 129 complaints, and **no phone or internet service**, up 19.6% to 134 complaints.
- **Failure to cancel a service** decreased 22.5% to 69 complaints.
- 16.6% of complaints from WA were from regional areas and 83.4% were from major cities.

- The top five LGAs with the highest number of complaints were Stirling (114 complaints), Wanneroo (91 complaints), Swan (79 complaints) Joondalup (72 complaints) and Gosnells (58 complaints).

South Australia (SA)

- A total of 1,003 complaints were made by people in SA, up by 2.3% since last quarter.
- Six of the Top 10 complaint issues observed a rise in complaints. **Slow data speed** saw the highest increase of 40% to 77 complaints, followed by **no phone or internet service**, up 35.4% to 111 complaints, **non-financial loss - not privacy**, up 25% to 85 complaints, and **delay establishing a service**, up 22.1% to 83 complaints.
- **Service and equipment fees** decreased 13.8% to 349 complaints.
- 19.4% of complaints from SA were from regional areas and 80.6% were from major cities.
- The top five LGAs with the highest number of complaints were Onkaparinga (104 complaints), Port Adelaide Enfield (85 complaints), Charles Sturt (76 complaints), Salisbury (73 complaints) and Tea Tree Gully (62 complaints).

Tasmania (TAS)

- A total of 212 complaints were made by people in Tasmania, down 7% since last quarter.
- Four of the Top 10 complaint issues increased. **Partially restricted service** observed the largest percentage increase of 41.7% to 17 complaints, followed by **inadequate fault testing**, up by 22.2% to 33 complaints.
- **Intermittent service or dropouts** dropped 29.6% to 19 complaints.
- The top five LGAs with the highest number of complaints were Clarence (29 complaints), Hobart (23 complaints), Glenorchy (19 complaints), Kingborough (19 complaints) and Launceston (17 complaints).

Australian Capital Territory (ACT)

- A total of 196 complaints were made by people in ACT, down 5.3% since last quarter.
- Complaints about **mobile services** increased 37.7% and accounted for 48.5% of total complaints from the ACT.
- Six of the Top 10 complaint issues decreased this quarter, with **inadequate fault testing** recording the largest decline of 43.2% down to 21 complaints.



- **No phone or internet service, service and equipment fees and intermittent service or dropouts** were the main complaint issues reported by people in ACT.

Northern Territory (NT)

- A total of 73 complaints were made by people from NT, down 2.7% since last quarter.
- The primary issues were **service and equipment fees, intermittent service or dropouts** and **no phone or internet service**.
- The top five LGAs with the highest number of complaints were Darwin (28 complaints), Litchfield (16 complaints), Palmerston (15 complaints), Alice Springs (5 complaints) and Barkly (3 complaints).

Digital Platforms

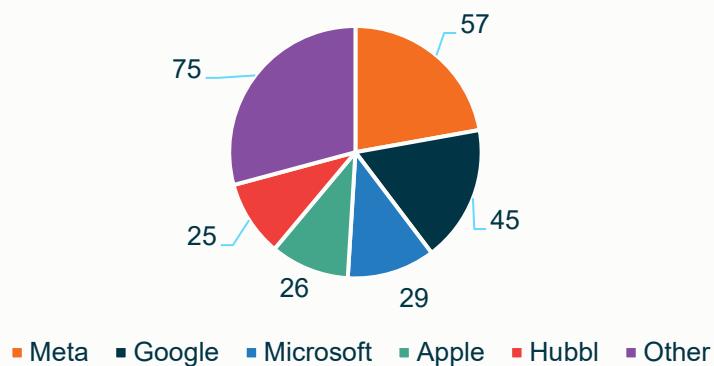
Findings

In the September to December 2025 period, 244 people approached the TIO with complaints about digital platforms.

A total of 719 complaints about digital platforms were raised with the TIO in the 2025 calendar year. This is a 20% increase on digital platforms complaints from the 2024 calendar year.

Despite the growing number of people approaching the TIO for help in this area, we are unable to escalate or resolve these complaints, as digital platforms remain outside our jurisdiction.

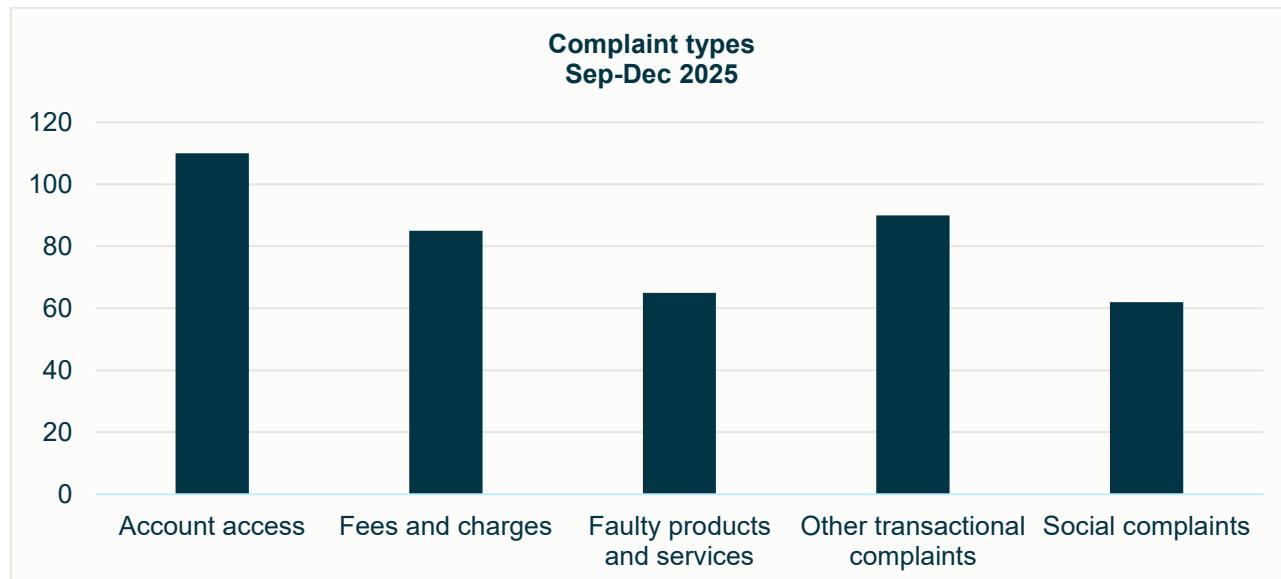
Complaints by digital platform company
Sep-Dec 2025



Between September-December 2025, people continued to raise complaints about major tech companies Meta, Google, Microsoft, Apple, and Hubbl. These five companies accounted for 71% of all complaints we received about digital platforms.

Most people raised transactional disputes with the TIO. Transactional disputes are complaints about unmet expectations, often relating to contract obligations or business practices. The most common complaint types were:

- Account access, including blocks, bans and hacking (27%)
- Fees and charges (21%)
- Faulty products and services (16%)



Insights

Between 2023 and 2025, the TIO received 1,780 digital platform complaints. Last year we released our first [digital platform complaints insights report](#), sharing findings from digital platforms complaints between January 2023 and August 2025. Many people approaching the TIO between September and December 2025 continue to face the same challenges.

1. Internal dispute resolution (IDR) processes are inadequate

When people approach the TIO with a digital platform complaint, they've often been unable to contact the platform directly. While digital platforms and services usually have FAQs and webforms to help with common problems, there are no consistent standards for IDR or customer assistance.



Derek* was locked out of his email and unable to get help

For more than 15 years, Derek had relied on his email account, but when he tried to log in, he was instructed to enter a verification code sent to an old work email he could no longer access. He tried to get help from the email provider but was stuck in automated account recovery processes. The AI help bot provided inaccurate information, directing him to contact US-based helplines that did not operate in Australia. Derek was unable to speak to a human and was given no option to use other security questions to recover access to his account. Derek was worried because important financial and personal information is stored in his email and cloud storage. All he wanted was to regain access to his long-held email account.

**Name changed for privacy reasons.*

2. Bundled services can double the frustration

Meta, Google, Microsoft, Apple and Hubbl all offer multiple digital products and services. Several complaints referenced multiple platforms or services, such as a billing issue with Hubbl affecting both Kayo and Binge, or a Meta account lockout affecting Facebook, Instagram and Threads.

Many of the digital platform complaints we receive also overlap with our work in telco complaints handling. For example, streaming subscriptions bundled with telco services can offer savings, but it can be unclear where to get help for an issue. Without clear processes or ways to escalate to effective support, people can be left with issues spanning multiple platforms and devices, and no way to get the help they need.

Manny* was charged for a subscription that he never activated

Manny set up an energy bundle that included an optional subscription to a streaming service. He did not set up the streaming service subscription but was billed monthly for it. When he contacted the energy company, they said that it was an issue with the streaming platform. Manny was unable to cancel the payment directly with the streaming platform because he hadn't set up an account with them. Manny changed energy providers because he felt dissatisfied with their service. He wanted a refund from the streaming platform but could not find a way to get it. He contacted the TIO for help, and we referred him to the energy ombudsman but had nowhere to refer Manny for streaming platform help.

**Names of parties have been changed.*

3. Digital platform complaints increased in 2025

Digital platform complaints increased in 2025. Since the introduction of the Australian Government's social media age restrictions in December 2025, we have been monitoring account lockout complaints for any unintended negative impacts on users. We have only received a small number of complaints related to user verification technology and incorrectly flagged accounts since the introduction of social media age restrictions. The majority of account lockout complaints continue to relate to automatically flagged community guidelines violations that users cannot appeal, inadequate support for regaining access to hacked accounts, and other transactional disputes.

Jamila* was inadvertently locked out of her social media account

Jamila has a social media account with parental controls over her child's account. After social media age restrictions came into force, her child's account was locked, and Jamila was unintentionally also locked out of her account. She tried to contact the platform but did not hear anything back. Unable to get back into her account, she contacted the TIO for help.

**Names of all parties have been changed.*

The TIO has publicly supported the Australian Government's commitments to strengthen digital platforms regulation in Australia, including through the forthcoming digital duty of care and digital competition regime, and recently adopted social media age restrictions and online safety codes.

We need a free and fair digital platforms ombudsman to help when things go wrong

Rising numbers of digital platforms complaints demonstrate the need for strong, fair complaints handling for digital platforms in Australia. Stronger IDR processes would help resolve many straightforward transactional issues with digital platforms. Establishing a digital platforms ombudsman would give people a clear, accessible and independent way to resolve problems when internal processes fail.

The TIO continues to call on the Australian Government to expand our jurisdiction as the Communications Ombudsman, handling both telco and digital platform complaints and providing robust, independent dispute resolution for those who need it. As the Communications Ombudsman, we look forward to providing a future-ready scheme that will help Australians thrive off- and online.