

**Wednesday, 12th February 2020**



# Small businesses lodging greater share of telco complaints

New complaints data highlights the growing impact that unreliable telco services have on small businesses, according to the Australian Communications Consumer Action Network (ACCAN).

The Quarter 2 Complaints report released today by the Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman (TIO) shows that while overall phone and internet complaints are declining, the percentage of complaints coming from small businesses continues to increase.

“With reliable phone and internet services an essential part of any small business, it’s deeply concerning to see complaints continue to climb,” said ACCAN CEO, Teresa Corbin.

The TIO’s latest data shows that 16 per cent of the 28,746 complaints handled by the ombudsman in the last quarter of 2019 were from small businesses - the largest share of complaints in five quarters.

As Australia’s voice for phone and internet consumers, including small businesses, ACCAN has heard many first-hand stories from small business owners who have faced financial impacts because of an issue with their telco service.

“While many telco issues are beyond our control, there are steps that small business owners can take to minimise the risk of disruption to their business. These can include making sure you’re on a business grade NBN plan and having a mobile phone on standby that you can forward calls to in case of an NBN outage.”

A new pain point for consumer was also identified in the Quarter 2 Complaints report, with mobile replacing internet as the most complained about service type for the first time in five quarters.

“With mobile phones now a fundamental part of our daily lives, we’ll be monitoring this issue to determine if it’s a symptom of an emerging systemic issue that needs to be examined further.”

ACCAN welcomes the continued decrease of complaints about faults and connections for services delivered over the National Broadband Network.

“As the NBN roll-out ends in the middle of this year, we hope to see NBN-related phone and internet complaints continue to fall.”

ACCAN acknowledges the positive work of the TIO in releasing the Quarter 2 Complaints report in a timely manner. Contemporary complaints data is essential for ensuring the transparency about the issues that impact telecommunications consumers across Australia.