

**Tuesday, 29th October 2019**



# Growth of internet issues reinforces need for reliability safeguards

The increase in complaints about internet services to the Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman (TIO) highlights the need for greater reliability safeguards, says to the Australian Communications Consumer Action Network (ACCAN).

The TIO’s quarterly report shows that of the 32,801 complaints they received from 1 July– 30 September 2019, the majority (33 per cent) were related to internet issues. This is a 4 per cent increase from the same period last year.

“Australians are receiving unreliable internet services and it is time for change,” said ACCAN CEO, Teresa Corbin. “With so much of our daily lives now heavily reliant on the internet, Australians deserve 21st century safeguards that include broadband protections.”

The current Customer Service Guarantee only protects standard telephone services. ACCAN would like to see these reliability consumer protections to be extended to include fixed-line broadband services from all telcos.

ACCAN has also proposed that connection and repair times for fixed-line services should be at least the same as the existing Customer Service Guarantee and should be defined in terms of days, rather than working days.

As Australia’s voice for phone and internet consumers, ACCAN was frustrated to see that “no or delayed action” was again the top complaint issue to the TIO. This is fourth consecutive report from the TIO1 that has highlighted a lack of timely action by Australia’s telco providers.

“When you have an issue with your phone or internet service, you expect your telco to respond in a reasonable timeframe. Report after report from the TIO shows that this just isn’t happening,” said Ms Corbin. “If the telco industry is not willing or able to step up their customer service standards, consumers should be able to rely on an expanded Customer Service Guarantee to give them the reliability that they deserve.”

1 TIO Annual Report 2017-2018, TIO Six Month Update July – December 2018, TIO Annual Report 2018-2019, TIO Quarterly Report – Q1 2020