



Media Release

For immediate release 23 June 2015

Complaint fatigue persists among telco consumers

A survey commissioned by the Australian Communications Consumer Action Network ([ACCAN](#)) found that real complaint levels are still high despite decreasing escalated complaints reported by the Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman (TIO). The survey found that 46 per cent of telco consumers reported having a problem with their phone or internet provider in the last year. This represents more than 8.5 million Australians. The survey was completed by Galaxy Research with 1100 respondents, representative of the Australian population. The 2015 survey repeated the questions of a survey ACCAN commissioned in 2010.

According to the survey, around one third of respondents (38 per cent) who had a problem with their phone or internet service, complained to their provider and were dissatisfied with the response from the telco. However, only nine per cent of these consumers escalated their complaint to the TIO. This suggests that phone and internet providers have not improved the proportion of complaints that are resolved. ACCAN is calling on the telcos to publish their complaint data so the problem areas can be identified.

“The survey shows a positive downwards trend in problems which is the result of good consumer protections that are in place, such as the Telecommunications Consumer Protections (TCP) Code introduced in 2012,” said ACCAN CEO, Teresa Corbin. “These consumer protections have also seen telcos improving their internal complaint handling processes, however, the survey clearly shows that there is still a high number of consumers who are dissatisfied with how their complaint was resolved with their provider.”

The results indicate that around two in three consumers would complain to their provider if they experienced an issue. The high number of dissatisfied consumers who didn’t take their complaint to the TIO shows that complaint fatigue is a concern. The most common reason given for not elevating a complaint to the TIO was that the respondent didn’t think there was any point in doing so (51 per cent). Thirty-three per cent said it was too difficult, while 15 per cent said they had not heard of the TIO.

Of all the respondents who had a problem and were dissatisfied with the outcome of the complaint to their provider or did not contact their provider, only five per cent took their complaint to the TIO. This shows that while awareness of the TIO has increased since 2010, many consumers still may not know about or do not use TIO services.

“We encourage any consumers who have a problem that they can’t resolve with their provider to take their complaint to the TIO to get it resolved as soon as possible,” said Ms. Corbin.

MEDIA CONTACT

Luke Sutton
Mobile: 0409 966 931
luke.sutton@accan.org.au
Phone: 02 9288 4017
TTY: 02 9281 5322

The Australian Communications Consumer Action Network (ACCAN) is Australia’s peak communications consumer organisation. The operation of ACCAN is made possible by funding provided by the Commonwealth of Australia under section 593 of the Telecommunications Act 1997. This funding is recovered from charges on telecommunications carriers.

Download the survey results here: <http://accan.org.au/news-items/media-releases/1072-complaint-fatigue-release>

Key stats from the survey

- Around one in three (38 per cent) of the consumers who had experienced a problem and complained to their provider were dissatisfied with the outcome of the complaint (this is an increase from the 36 per cent of survey respondents who said they were dissatisfied with their complaint to their provider in the 2010 survey)
- Of those who were dissatisfied with the outcome of their complaint to their provider, the two biggest problems experienced were technical problems (69 per cent) and problems with customer service (52 per cent)

For more information, please contact Luke Sutton on 0409 966 931 or luke.sutton@accan.org.au.

MEDIA CONTACT

Luke Sutton
Mobile: 0409 966 931
luke.sutton@accan.org.au
Phone: 02 9288 4017
TTY: 02 9281 5322

The Australian Communications Consumer Action Network (ACCAN) is Australia's peak communications consumer organisation. The operation of ACCAN is made possible by funding provided by the Commonwealth of Australia under section 593 of the Telecommunications Act 1997. This funding is recovered from charges on telecommunications carriers.