

# Quarterly report

QUARTER 4

Financial year 2020-21



Telecommunications  
Industry  
Ombudsman

## Complaints April to June 2021

# 24,195

total complaints  
referred to providers



**Internet services** were the most  
complained about service type

## 12,335

fault and connection  
complaints



## 51.0%

of total complaints

## Enquiries

# 7,099

 enquiries

## Top 5 issues

No or delayed action by provider

10.6k

Service and equipment fees

7.9k

No phone or internet service

3.6k

Delay establishing a service

3.2k

Intermittent service or drop outs

2.0k

0 12k

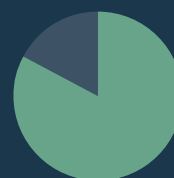
## Providers



**12.4%** of **providers** had a  
complaint in Q4

**91.5%** of total complaints came  
from the **top 10 providers**

## Who complained



**83%** residential  
consumers

**17%** small business  
consumers

## Dispute resolution



**4,902** complaints came back  
**unresolved from providers**

**2,983** unresolved complaints were  
**escalated for dispute resolution**

## Contacts

Online



37k

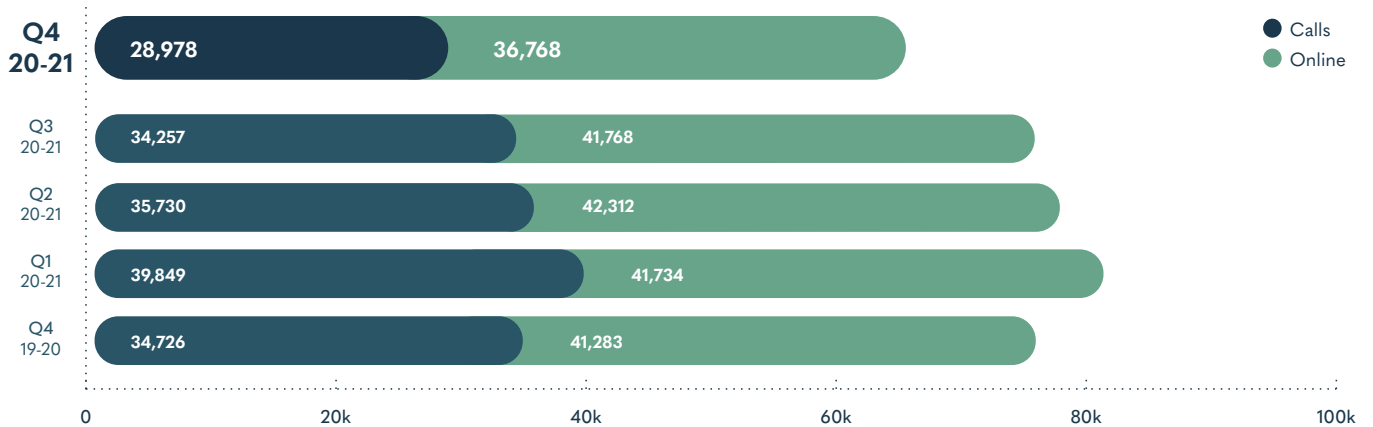
Calls



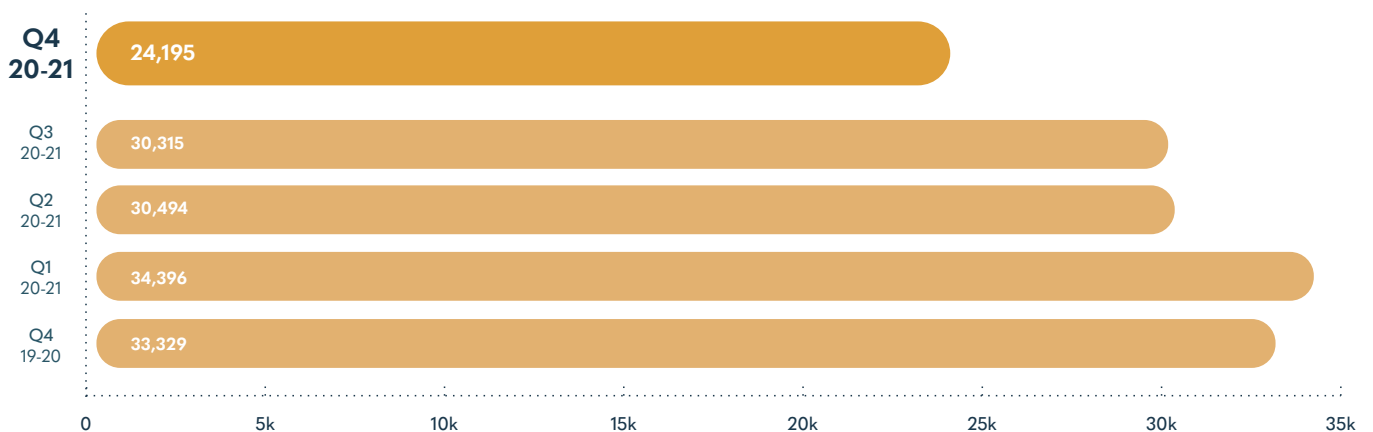
29k

# Contacts and complaints

## Contacts



## Complaints

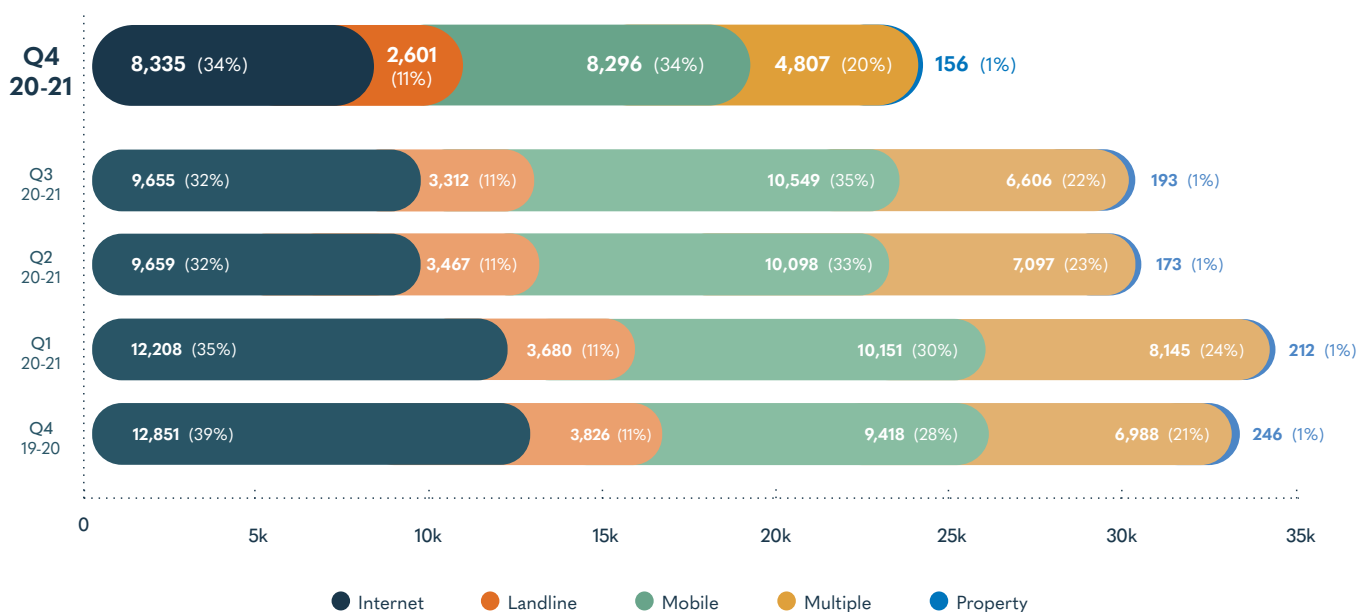


## Enquiries

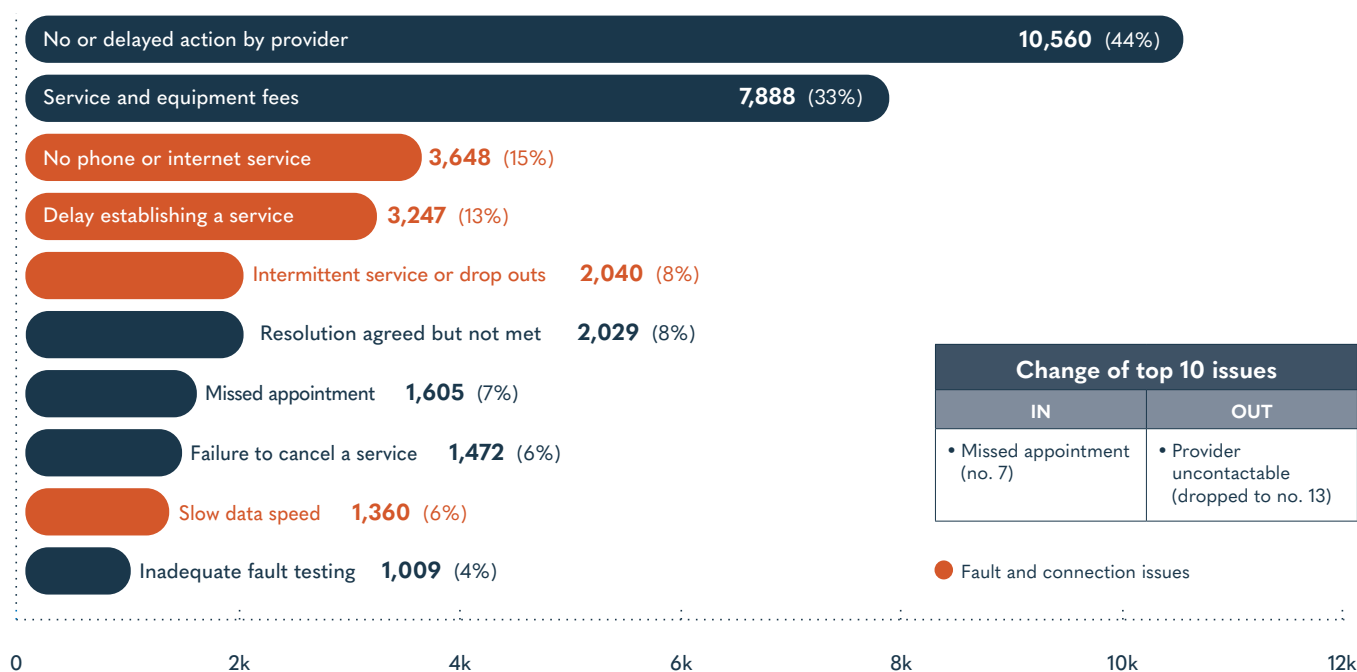


# Complaints by service type

## Complaints by service type

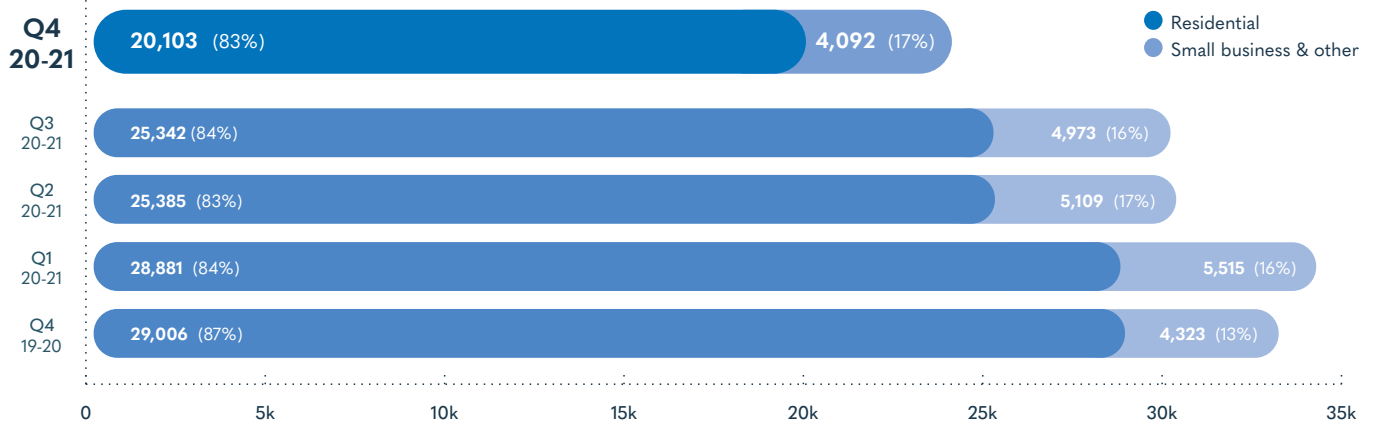


## Top 10 issues in complaints

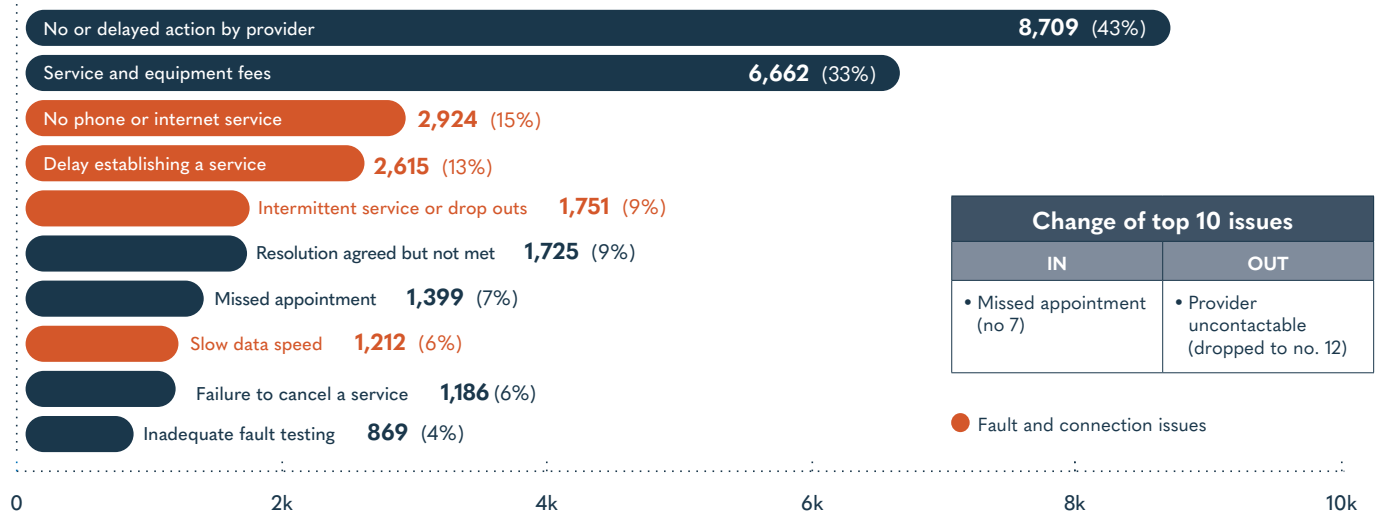


# Who complained

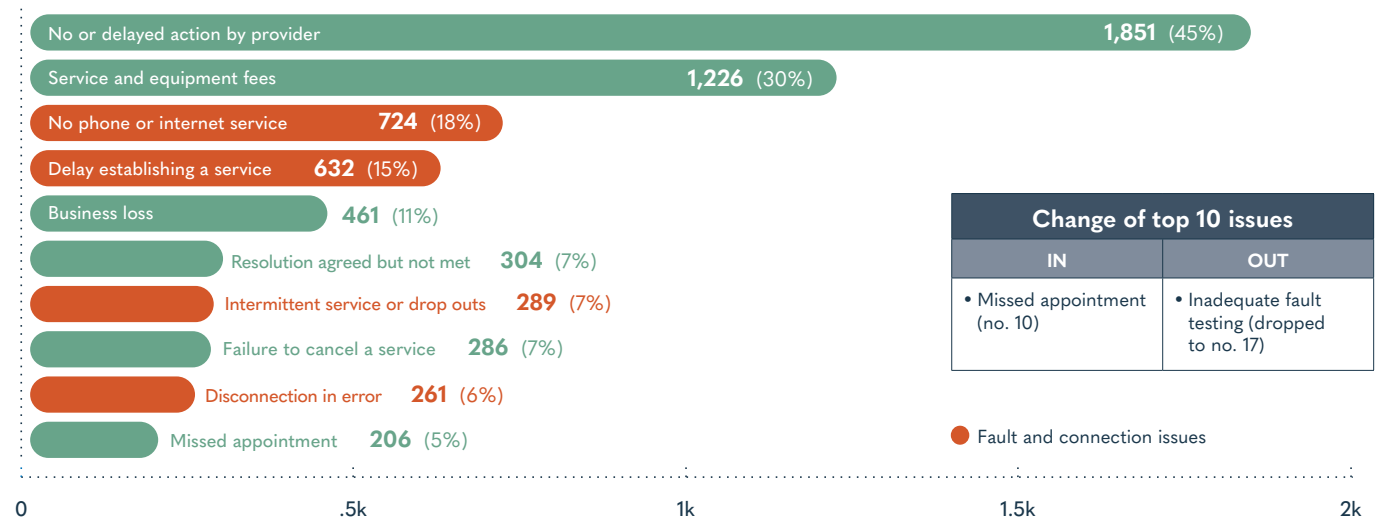
## Complaints by consumer type



## Top 10 issues for residential consumers



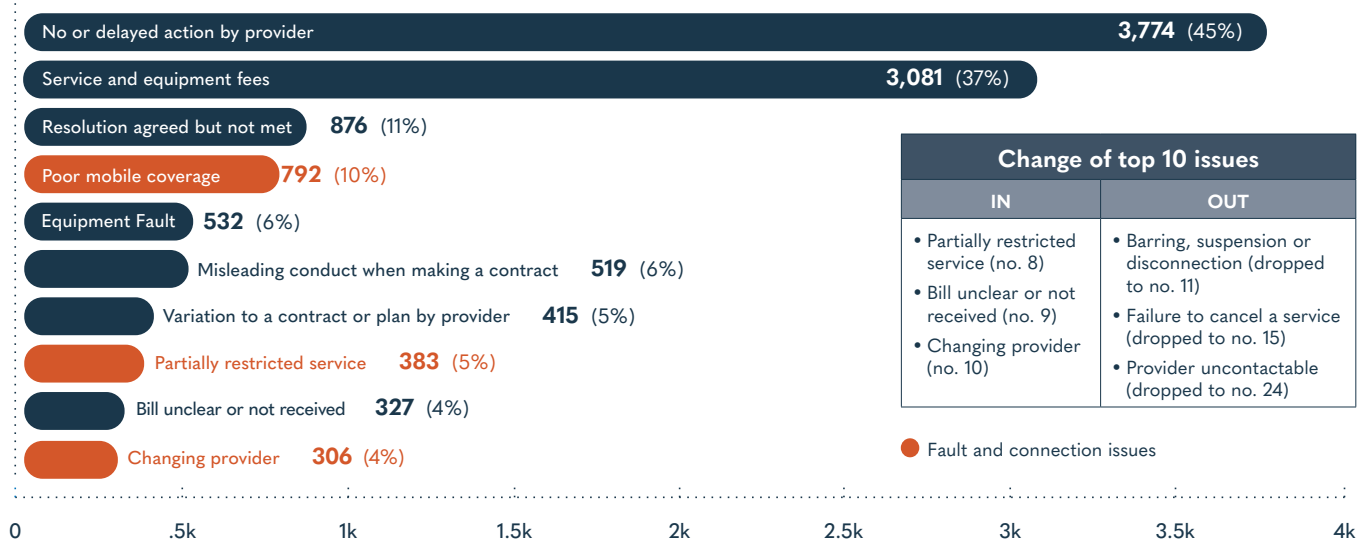
## Top 10 issues for small businesses



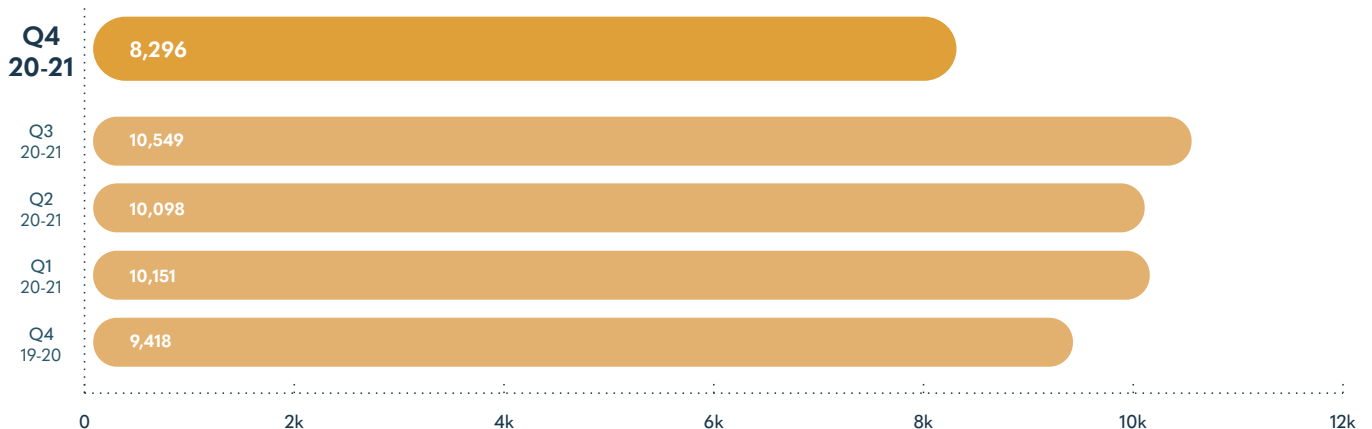


# Complaints about mobile services

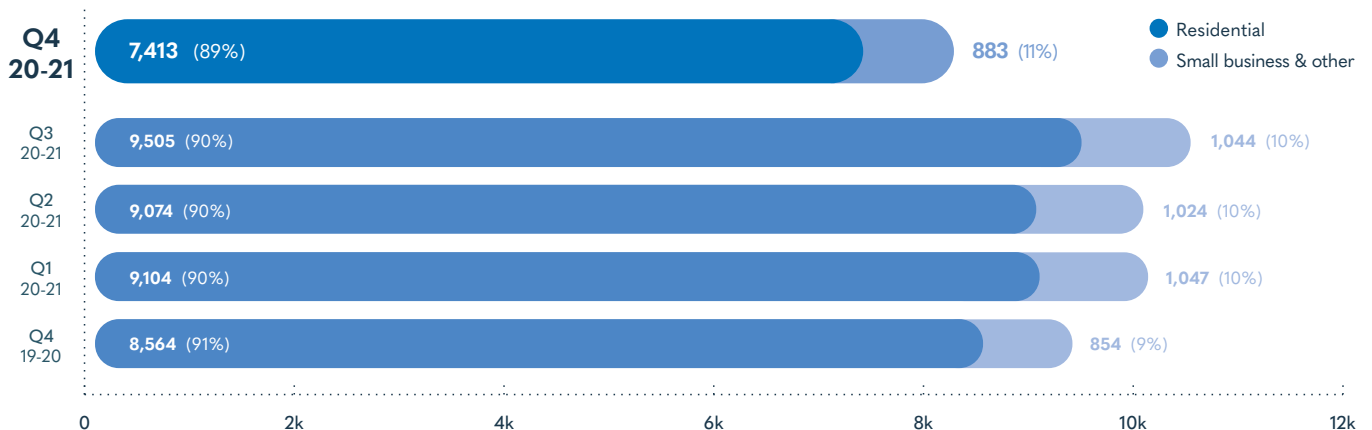
## Top 10 issues for mobile services



## Mobile complaints



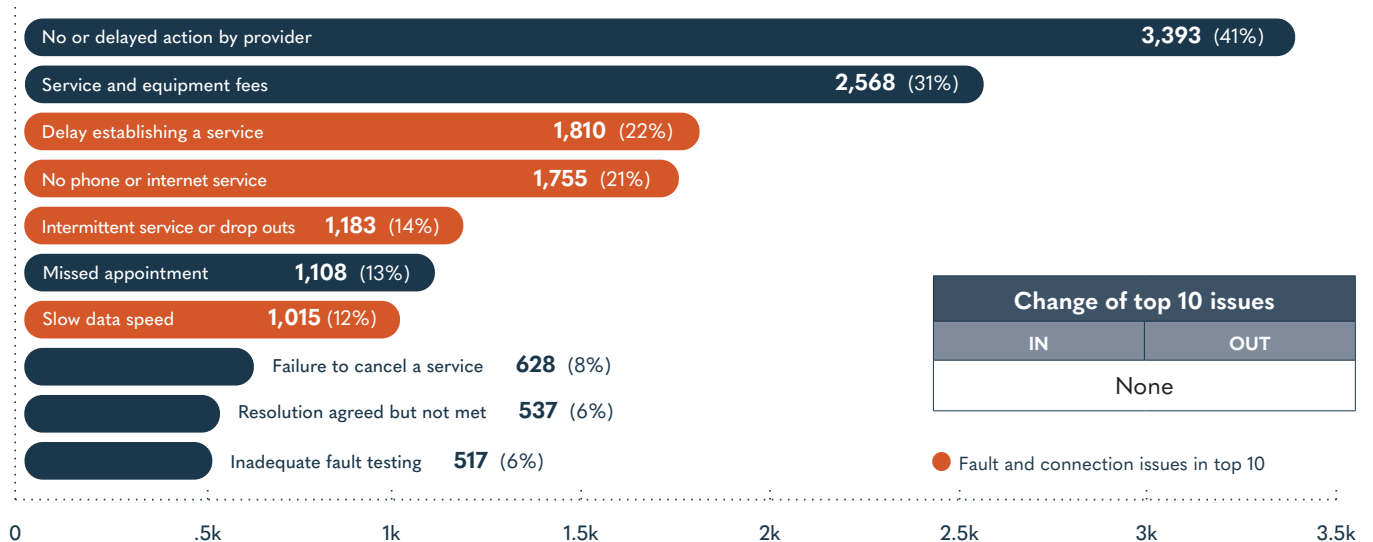
## Mobile complaints by consumer type



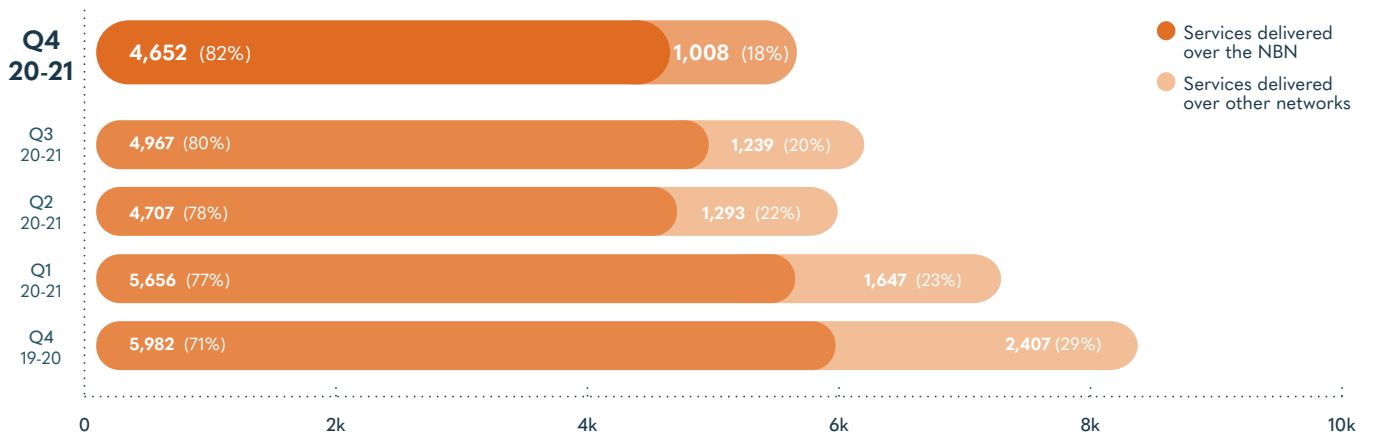


# Complaints about internet services

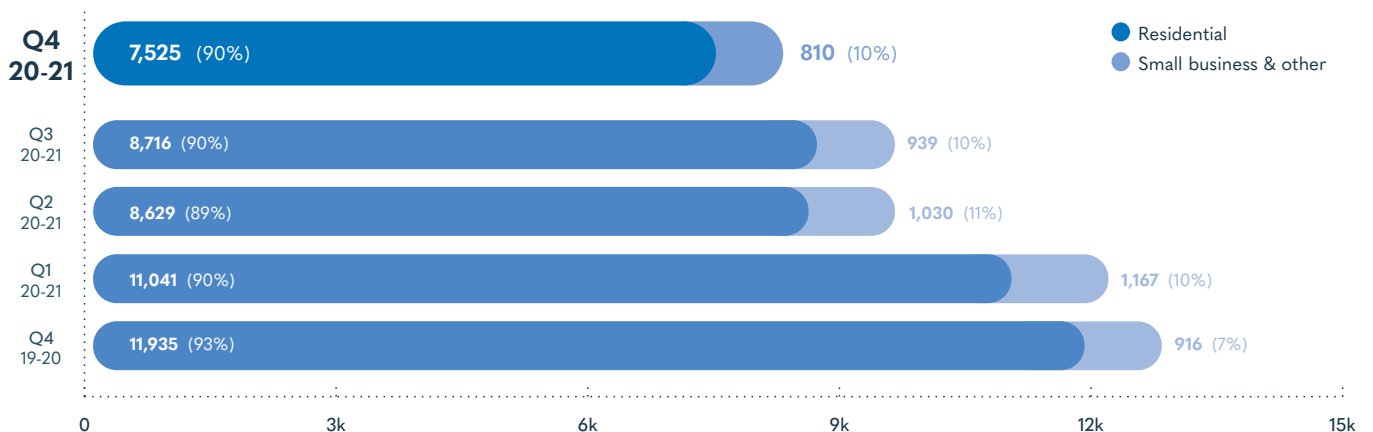
## Top 10 issues for internet services



## Fault and connection complaints

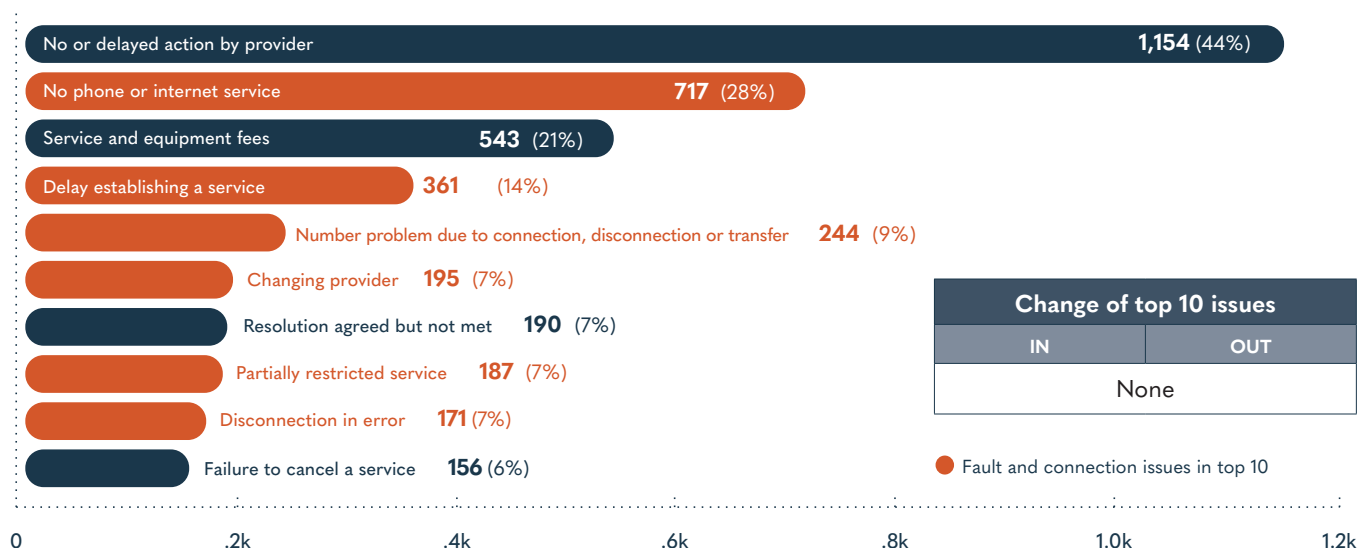


## Internet complaints by consumer type

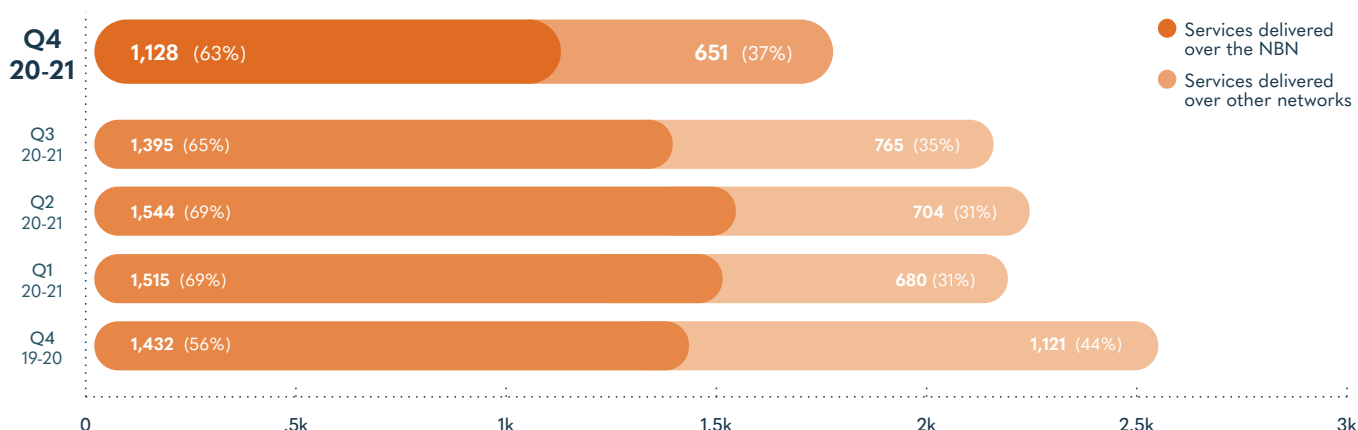


# Complaints about landline services

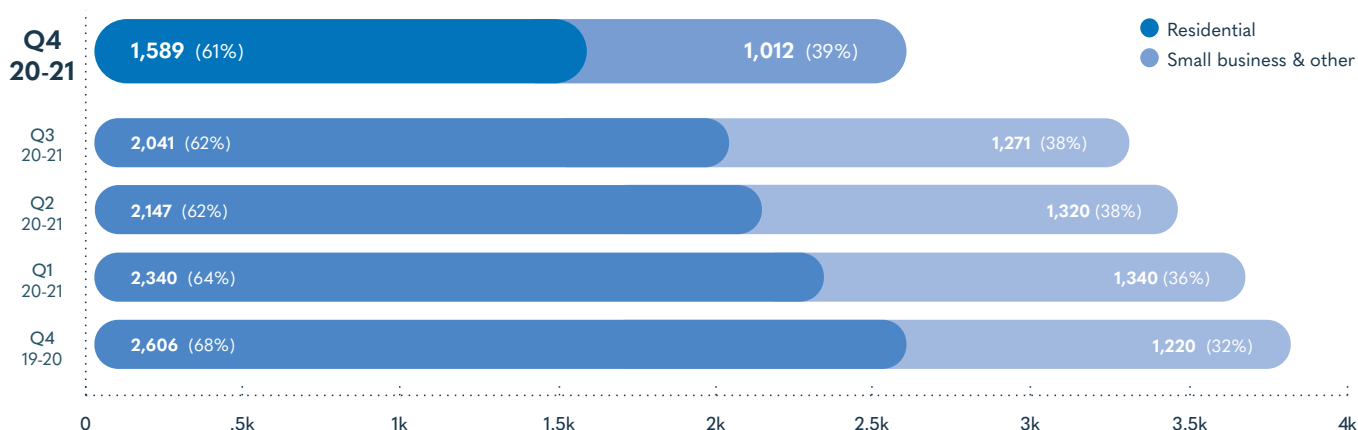
## Top 10 issues for landline services



## Fault and connection complaints



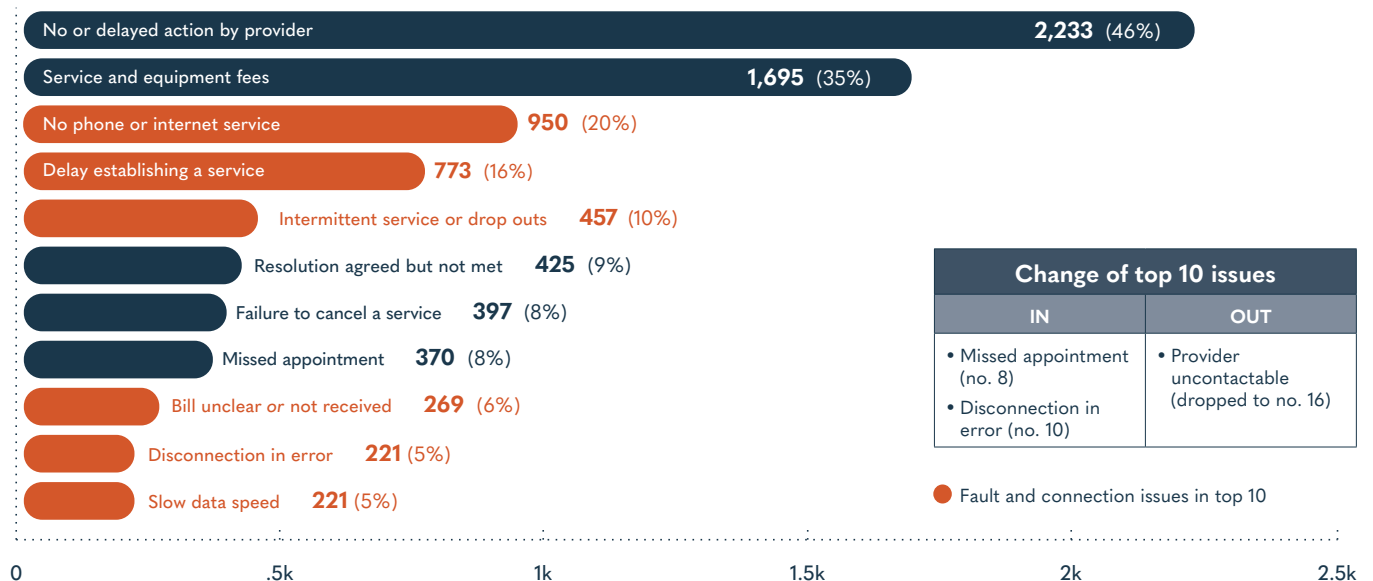
## Landline complaints by consumer type





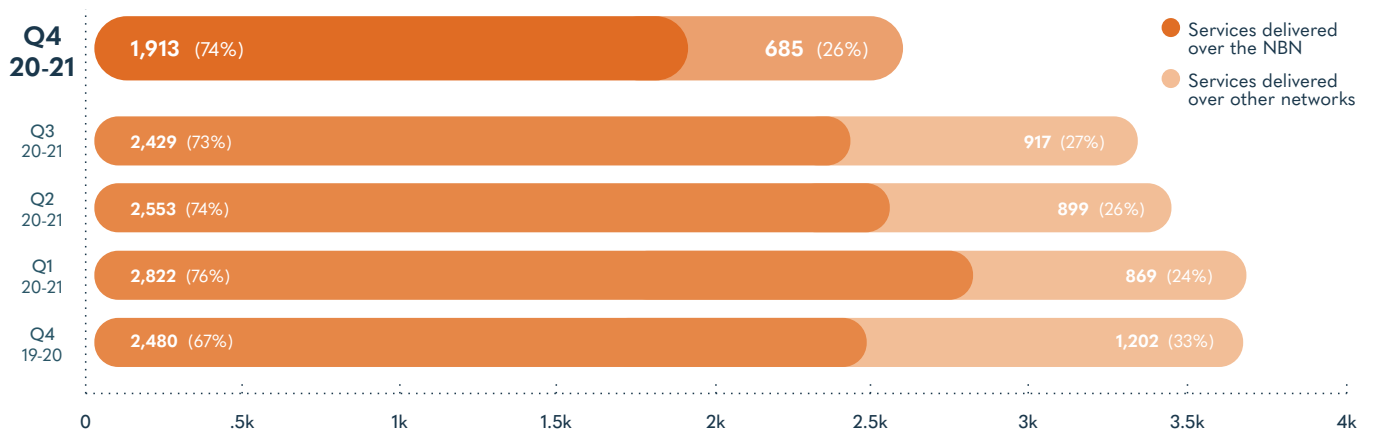
# Complaints about multiple services

## Top 10 issues for multiple services\*

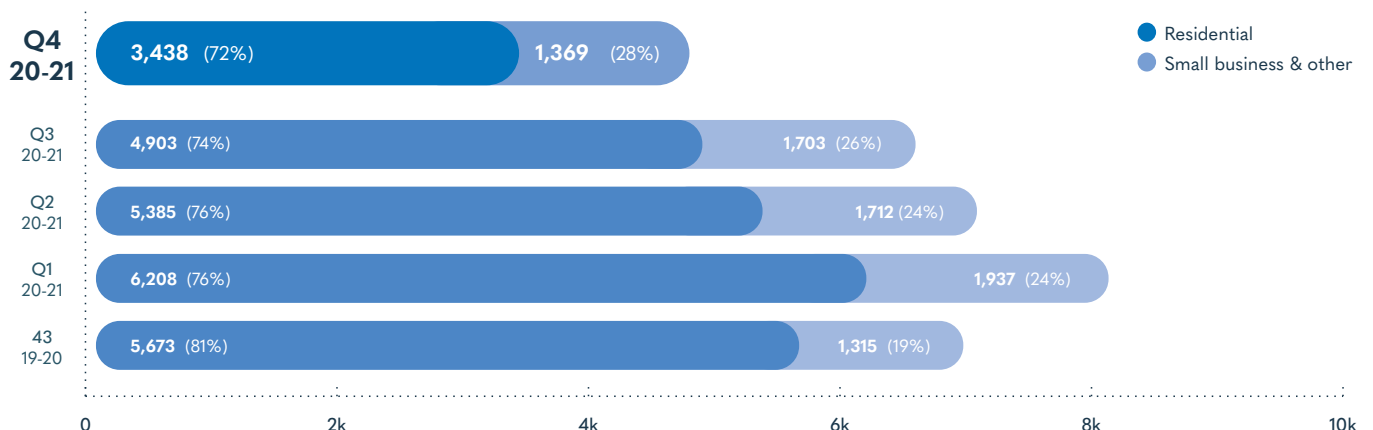


| Change of top 10 issues                                                                                               |                                                                                              |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| IN                                                                                                                    | OUT                                                                                          |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Missed appointment (no. 8)</li> <li>Disconnection in error (no. 10)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provider uncontactable (dropped to no. 16)</li> </ul> |

## Fault and connection complaints

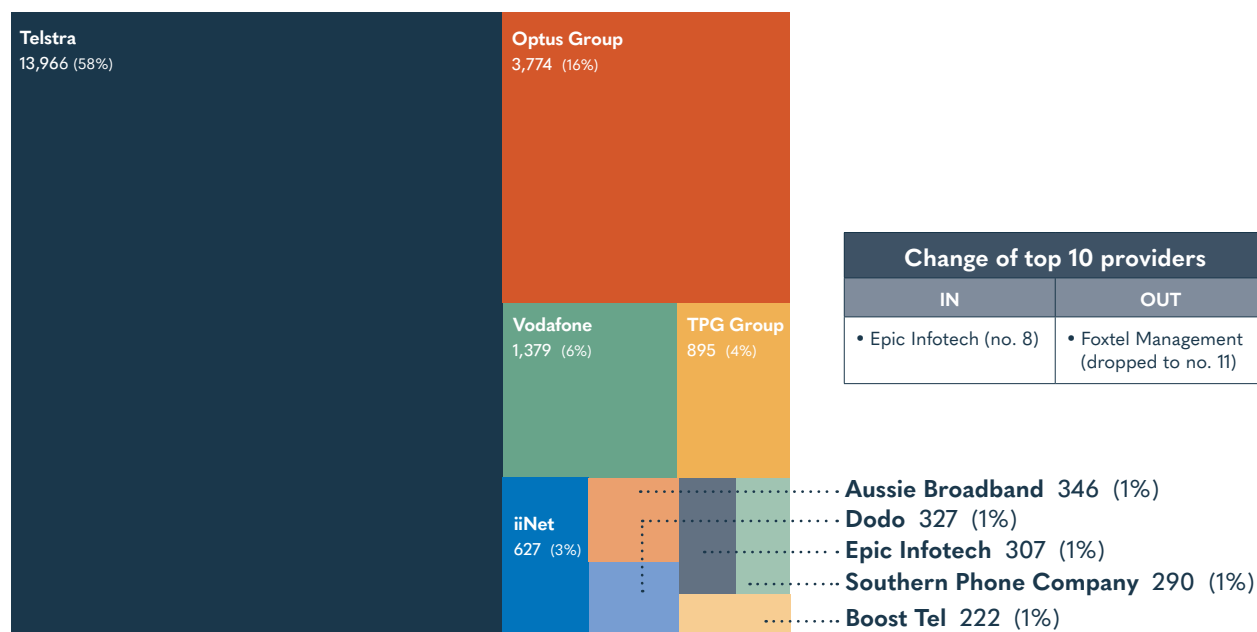


## Multiple services complaints by consumer type



# Top 10 providers by complaints

## Top 10 providers by complaint numbers



## Top 10 providers by service type

| Organisation/Group         | Internet | Landline | Mobile | Multiple | Property |
|----------------------------|----------|----------|--------|----------|----------|
| Telstra Corporation        | 4,245    | 1,858    | 4,440  | 3,359    | 64       |
| Optus Group                | 961      | 223      | 1,970  | 612      | 8        |
| Vodafone Australia Limited | 170      | 3        | 1,116  | 90       | -        |
| TPG Group                  | 622      | 84       | 45     | 143      | 1        |
| iiNet Ltd                  | 418      | 75       | 27     | 107      | -        |
| Aussie Broadband Ltd*      | 270      | 32       | 4      | 39       | 1        |
| Dodo Services Pty Ltd      | 208      | 24       | 27     | 66       | 2        |
| Epic Infotech Pty Ltd      | 293      | 1        | -      | 13       | -        |
| Southern Phone Company Ltd | 116      | 52       | 76     | 46       | -        |
| Boost Tel Pty Ltd          | -        | -        | 222    | -        | -        |

\*Aussie Broadband Limited was previously reported as Aussie Broadband Pty Ltd.



# Unresolved and escalated complaints

An unresolved complaint is a complaint or enquiry referral that the consumer tells us was not resolved after we referred it to the provider.

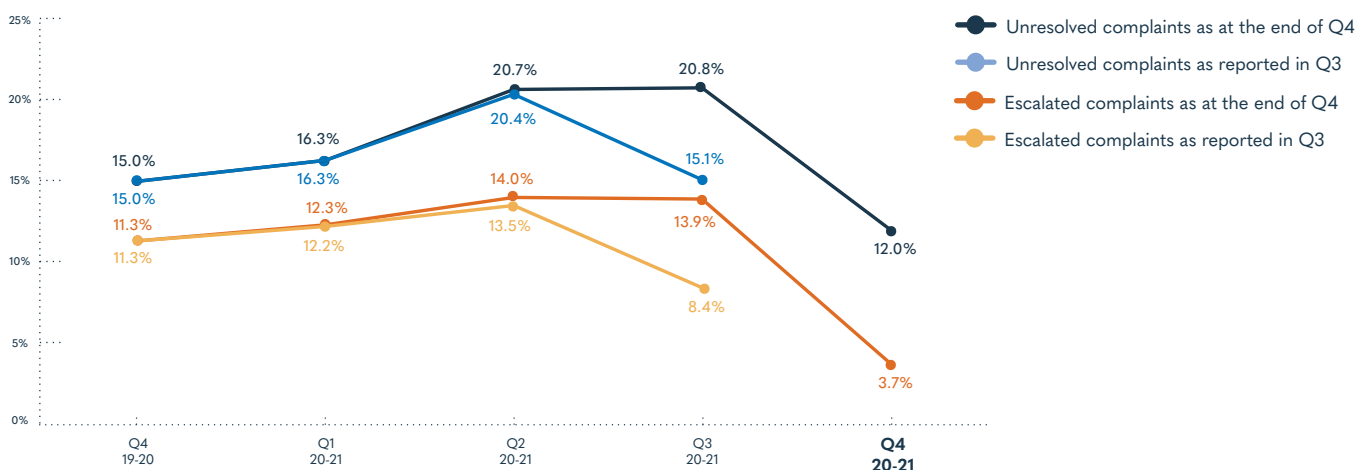
Most unresolved complaints proceed to dispute resolution and are called escalated complaints. Some unresolved complaints are not escalated – this can be because the issue is resolved before escalation, the issue that remains unresolved is not a matter we can assist with, or the consumer decides not to proceed with the complaint.

The graph below shows the proportion of complaints and enquiry referrals that were referred to providers and returned to us as unresolved complaints, and the proportion that were escalated.

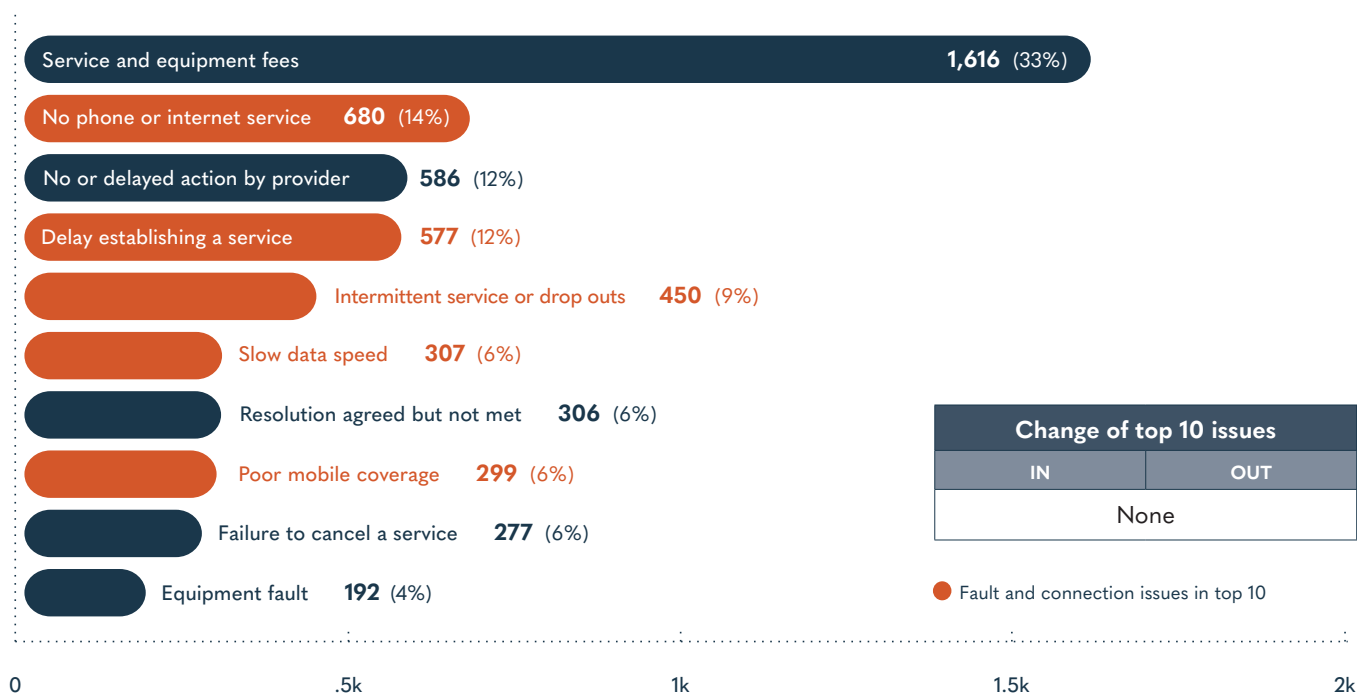
The proportions of unresolved and escalated complaints increase over time, and so the proportions reported in our previous report have increased. This is because consumers who made their complaint in an earlier quarter may not return to us with an unresolved complaint until the next quarter. We expect the proportion of unresolved complaints from the more recent quarters will similarly increase.

In response to higher than usual unresolved rates, during Q3 FY 20-21 we made a temporary change to the complaint handling process. This has driven a higher escalation rate than would normally be the case in Q3 FY 20-21.

## Snapshot of unresolved and escalated complaint proportions



## Top 10 issues in unresolved complaints



# How we do data

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This section explains the finer points of our data.

## Complaints

Where we talk about complaints, these:

- are expressions of dissatisfaction about a provider when the consumer has contacted the provider and is not satisfied with the outcome. We send complaints to specialist teams at providers for another attempt at resolution. Most complaints are resolved in this process
- may include more than one issue
- do not include enquiries, enquiry referrals or withdrawn complaints.

## Contacts

Where we talk about contacts, these:

- include calls, emails and online forms that come through our public portals
- exclude calls and emails to individual staff members and abandoned calls
- exclude identified data anomalies within the financial year
- include all contact up until a complaint is classified as unresolved.

## Data updates

If a complaint or enquiry is withdrawn or cancelled before the end of the reporting quarter and before the end of the quarter's financial year, it will be removed from that quarter's report.

If a complaint is reclassified before the end of the reporting quarter and before the end of the quarter's financial year, we reflect this in the quarterly report.

If we find other data that requires adjustment, we will also make these adjustments within the financial year.

**Dispute resolution** is where we work with providers and consumers to resolve escalated complaints.

**Early resolution** is where we take initial contacts from consumers and log them as enquiries or send complaints to providers.

**Enquiries** includes enquiries and enquiry referrals.

**Enquiry referrals** are complaints that have not been raised with the provider before a consumer contacts us. We send these complaints to providers but give providers a longer time to try to resolve these.

**Escalated complaints** are a subset of unresolved complaints that proceed to dispute resolution. Some unresolved complaints are not escalated – this can be because the issue is resolved before escalation, the issue that remains unresolved is not a matter we can assist with, or the consumer decides not to proceed with the complaint.

Complaints that are reclassified before the end of the financial year will be removed from the total count of escalated complaints. Complaints can be reclassified if they are escalated in error (for instance, the issue was already resolved).

**Fault and connection complaints** are complaints that include a fault or connection issue. These are only counted once, regardless of the number of issues raised in the complaint. These complaints may have other issues that do not relate to faults or connections. Faults and connections include issues from the connection, no service, and poor service quality issue sub-categories.

**Internet complaints** relate to services delivered over fixed-line or fixed wireless internet connections. These complaints do not include internet services delivered by mobile devices or Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) services delivered over the internet.

**Issues** A single complaint can have more than one issue. Where we talk about complaint numbers, we only count complaints once. Where we talk about issues, we count all the issues.

**Issues in complaints** are recorded based on six broad categories that follow the lifecycle of a consumer's relationship with their phone or internet provider. From September 2019 we introduced new keywords to better capture the emerging issues in complaints. For a complete list of issues in complaints see pages 13, 14, and 15.

**Landline complaints** includes complaints about voice services delivered over the Public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN) and voice services delivered over the National Broadband Network (VoIP services delivered over fixed-line internet connections are also included).

**Member groupings** Optus group includes "Optus Internet Pty Ltd", "Opus Mobile Migrations Pty Ltd", "Optus Mobile Pty Ltd" and "Optus Networks Pty Ltd". TPG group includes "TPG internet Pty Ltd" and "TPG Network Pty Ltd".

**Member status** If members are currently undergoing cessation to terminate their membership, they are not included in the count of active members.

**Mobile complaints** are complaints relating to a mobile telephone device or service, including complaints about internet accessed through a mobile telephone service.

**Multiple complaints** relate to complaints about more than one service type with the same provider.

**Online** includes all web forms and emails.

**Percentages** within the report have been rounded, so totals may not add to 100%.

**Property complaints** includes complaints about damage to a provider's or landowner's property, or a dispute about use of property by a carrier.

**Small business** includes small businesses, not-for-profits, and charities.

**Top 10 providers** Where we talk about the Top 10 providers, we mean those we received the most complaints about in the quarter. The data does not reflect the number of customers or services in operation. A consumer making a complaint does not necessarily mean a provider or network operator is at fault.

**Unresolved complaints** An unresolved complaint is a complaint or enquiry referral that the consumer tells us was not resolved after we referred it to the provider. Most unresolved complaints proceed to dispute resolution, and are called escalated complaints. Some unresolved complaints are not escalated – this can be because the issue is resolved before escalation, the issue that remains unresolved is not a matter we can assist with, or the consumer decides not to proceed with the complaint.

# Issues in complaints

Descriptions in the body of the document contain additional words to provide clearer descriptions of the keyword in isolation of the other categories (for example, Number Problem due to connection, disconnection or transfer).

## Establishing a service

| Category          | Keyword                             |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Making a contract | Product unsuitable                  |
|                   | Inadequate documentation            |
|                   | Inadequate credit assessment        |
|                   | Inadequate explanation of product*  |
|                   | Refused a service                   |
|                   | Cooling off                         |
|                   | Unable to contract                  |
|                   | Misleading conduct                  |
|                   | Unconscionable conduct              |
| In contract       | Variation by provider               |
|                   | Request to change account holder    |
|                   | Not liable for contract             |
|                   | Unfair contract terms               |
|                   | Equipment finance agreement         |
|                   | Mishandling of business information |
|                   | Failure to cancel*                  |
| Connection        | Delay                               |
|                   | Number problem                      |
|                   | Changing provider*                  |
|                   | Unauthorised transfer               |

\*New keyword introduced from September 2019.

## Service delivery

| Category             | Keyword                      |
|----------------------|------------------------------|
| No service           | No service                   |
|                      | Disconnection in error       |
|                      | Network outage               |
| Poor service quality | Intermittent/drop outs       |
|                      | Poor mobile coverage         |
|                      | Noise/interference           |
|                      | Slow data speed              |
|                      | Restricted service           |
| Equipment            | Unsuitable                   |
|                      | Fault                        |
| Special services     | Priority assistance          |
|                      | Disability equipment         |
|                      | Enhanced/add-on feature      |
|                      | Directory listing - business |

## Payment for a service

| Category         | Keyword                                  |
|------------------|------------------------------------------|
| Charges and fees | Bill unclear/not received                |
|                  | Excess data                              |
|                  | Excess call/sms/mms                      |
|                  | Roaming                                  |
|                  | 3rd party*                               |
|                  | Fee for a bill                           |
|                  | Connection/reconnection                  |
|                  | Late payment/dishonour                   |
|                  | Termination                              |
|                  | Service and equipment                    |
|                  | Technician                               |
| Payments         | Direct debit                             |
|                  | Missing payment                          |
|                  | Unsuitable payment options               |
|                  | Payment extension                        |
| Debt management  | Financial hardship/repayment arrangement |
|                  | Barring/suspension/disconnection         |
|                  | Credit default report                    |
|                  | Sold debt                                |
|                  | Debtor harassment                        |
|                  | Statute barred debt/bankrupt             |
|                  | Not liable for debt                      |

\*New keyword introduced from September 2019.

## Customer service

| Category             | Keyword                                   |
|----------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| Personal information | Object to collection                      |
|                      | Unauthorised disclosure                   |
|                      | Information inaccurate                    |
|                      | Access denied                             |
|                      | Silent number/directory listing           |
| Compensation sought* | Business loss*                            |
|                      | Customer Service Guarantee*               |
|                      | Other financial loss*                     |
|                      | Non-financial loss*                       |
| Provider response    | Uncontactable                             |
|                      | Refusal to deal with representative       |
|                      | Missed appointment                        |
|                      | No or delayed action                      |
|                      | Resolution agreed but not met             |
|                      | Rudeness                                  |
|                      | Unwelcome/life threatening communications |
|                      | Inadequate fault testing*                 |

## Property

| Category       | Keyword                                              |
|----------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| Infrastructure | Hazardous, non-compliant or temporary infrastructure |
|                | Location of equipment                                |
| Damage         | By consumer                                          |
|                | By provider                                          |
|                | By 3rd party                                         |

\*New keyword introduced from September 2019.

# We help resolve complaints about phone or internet services.

We are a free and independent service.

That means you don't pay and we don't take sides.

## Contact us

You can complain through our website at [www.tio.com.au](http://www.tio.com.au) or by calling **1800 062 058**.

You can post a letter to PO Box 276, Collins Street West, VIC 8007 or fax it to 1800 630 614.

If you need to use a language other than English, call the Translating and Interpreting Service on **134 450** and they will help you speak with us. They are a free service.