Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman

Complaints data insights

Quarter 1 Report

July to September 2026

November 2026

Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman

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Data snapshot

Quarter 1 (FY 2027)

Total complaints received

13,343

↑8.4% increase on FY26 Q4

Most complained about service:

6,935 **Mobile Services complaints**

↑20.7% increase on FY26 Q4

Who complained

Small Business **10.8%**
↑ 7.3% increase on FY26 Q4

Residential **89.2%**
↑ 8.6% increase on FY Q4



The national picture

435

LGAs made complaints to the TIO
Up from 424 LGAs in Q2

Top 5 issues

1 Disputed charges **4,151**
↓7.3% decrease on FY26 Q4

2 Comp for experience or inconvenience **2,032**
↑57.8% increase on FY26 Q4

3 No service **1,311**
↓9.1% decrease on FY26 Q4

4 Intermittent service or drop-outs **1,309**
↓7.1% decrease on FY26 Q4

5 Comp for financial loss **1,070**

Top 3 telcos by complaint increases

1 Telco Pay .....↑**2030.8%**
Total complaints: 831

2 Southern Phone Company .....↑**65.8%**
Total complaints: 305

3 Telstra .....↑**21.8%**
Total complaints: 4,915

Top 5 LGAs (Highest no. of complaints)

1 Brisbane .....↑**27.6%**
Total complaints: 592

2 Gold Coast .....↑**14.1%**
Total complaints: 316

3 Moreton Bay .....↓**4.1%**
Total complaints: 210

4 Sydney .....↑**22.1%**
Total complaints: 199

5 Blacktown .....↑**23.4%**
Total complaints: 195

Key Changes

Provider uncontactable

↑699%

Network outage

↑72.2%

Phone and internet this quarter

Complaints this quarter shed light on what consumers expect of their provider when things go wrong. Following a decrease last quarter, complaints increased by 8.4% to a total of 13,343, though complaints remain stable year on year. Mobile complaints increased, along with complaints about network outages, providers being uncontactable and compensation for experience or inconvenience.

Note: Keywords marked with an asterisk (*) were updated in July 2026. These keywords cannot be directly compared with previous reporting periods. See the Methodology for more information.

Top 10 issues

Compensation for experience or inconvenience made it into the top three issues this quarter, joining disputed charges and no service which consistently appear each quarter. Of these issues, only complaints about compensation for experience or inconvenience increased. Five[1] of the Top 10 issues declined.

Table 1: National Top 10 issues

Issues	Q1 complaints	% of total complaints	Previous Q complaints	Q on Q % change	Y on Y % change
1. Disputed charges	4,151	31.1%	4,477	-7.3%	-22.4%
2. Compensation for experience or inconvenience	2,032	15.2%	1,288	57.8%	103.0%
3. No service	1,311	9.8%	1,442	-9.1%	-5.3%
4. Intermittent service or dropouts	1,309	9.8%	1,409	-7.1%	-7.1%
5. Compensation for financial loss*	1,070	8.0%	1,149	-6.9%	58.1%
6. Service not cancelled on consumer request	975	7.3%	991	-1.6%	-10.4%
7. Delay setting up a service*	873	6.5%	N/A	N/A	N/A

[1] Compensation for financial loss is not counted in this figure. This is because the keyword cannot be accurately compared with the previous quarter as the scope was broadened during the TIO's keyword review.

8. Provider uncontactable	815	6.1%	102	699.0%	224.7%
9. Slow data speed	809	6.1%	989	-18.2%	-13.6%
10. Variation by provider	646	4.8%	579	11.6%	-5.4%

Rising challenges

Industry events, such as the 8 July 2026 Telstra outage and the Telco Pay (trading as Moose Mobile) network migration, highlighted the importance of clear, timely communication and fair compensation when things go wrong.

Network outage

Network outage complaints increased from 331 to 570 this quarter, up 72.2%. Of these complaints, 57% were about mobile services and many related to the July Telstra outage.

As a result of the July Telstra outage, consumers reported losing business and being concerned about or unable to contact Triple Zero. Many consumers reported experiencing other vulnerabilities, such as financial hardship, living with a medical condition or experiencing domestic and family violence, which exacerbated the impacts of the outage.

Complaints suggest that consumers are assessing their provider's performance based not only on outages alone, but also on their communication both during and after the outage.

Compensation for experience or inconvenience

Following a slow but steady increase over the past year, complaints about compensation for experience or inconvenience increased 57.8% this quarter, from 1,288 to 2,032. Complaints have more than doubled when compared with the same period last year (up 103%). Compensation for experience or inconvenience complaints increased for nine of the Top 10 providers.

Telstra compensation for experience or inconvenience complaints increased the most, rising 134.5%, from 374 to 877. This increase was partially driven by the July Telstra outage.

Complaint insights point to the importance of tailored approaches to compensation, recognising the differing levels of impact that telco issues can have on consumers.

Sonya* lost service while her mother was in a critical condition

Sonya is the primary carer for her elderly mother who suffered a stroke that left her in a critical condition. Sonya was receiving regular updates from medical staff about her condition.

When Sonya was on a work trip, her mobile provider experienced a network outage and Sonya was left without a service for 12 hours. This was extremely distressing for Sonya because she was worried medical staff wouldn't be able to contact her if something went wrong.

After the outage, Sonya requested compensation from her provider to reflect the safety risk and stress that the outage had caused. Sonya wasn't happy with the compensation offered by her provider, so she contacted the TIO seeking a fairer amount.

After contacting the TIO, Sonya's provider offered a discounted service for the next three months.

**Names of all parties have been changed.*

Provider uncontactable

Complaints from consumers who were unable to contact their provider saw the largest increase this quarter, up 699% from 102 to 815. Just over half of these complaints (410) were about Telco Pay (trading as Moose Mobile), which migrated its mobile network provider from Optus to the Vodafone mobile network.

Consumers reported long call wait times, disconnected calls and attempting to contact their telco via multiple channels with no success. These experiences can exacerbate the original issue that the consumer was seeking help for.

Financial hardship*

This quarter, we received a total of 475 complaints involving financial hardship. 62.1% of these complaints were about mobile services.

Financial hardship complaints commonly appeared alongside complaints about disputed charges, payment extension or arrangement, compensation for experience or inconvenience and misleading advice or sign-up action, which also increased by 14.5%.

Complaints suggest that some consumers felt their circumstances were made worse after seeking help from their provider.

> "I do not want another vulnerable person to go through this process and end up in a worse position simply because they were trying to keep a phone connected."

Consumers told us they were offered payment arrangements that did not suit their needs, that their payment arrangements were not upheld, credit management action continued, and that their services were disconnected or restricted despite having made their financial circumstances clear.

Inflexible payment arrangement left Chan* worried about disconnection

Chan lives alone on income from his pension. Recently, he has been struggling to pay his bills. He asked his provider for a payment arrangement that would begin when he received his next pension payment.

Chan and his provider agreed on an amount he could afford. However, his provider would not adjust the payment date by two weeks, and Chan could not pay any earlier.

Chan has a blood pressure monitor connected to his home Wi-Fi, so the possibility of being without a connection was causing him significant stress.

Chan contacted the TIO afraid he would be disconnected, putting his health and wellbeing at risk.

**Names of all parties have been changed.*

Top 10 telcos by complaints

Complaints about Telstra, Telco Pay (trading as Moose Mobile), Southern Phone Company and Lycamobile increased this quarter. Complaints about Telstra increased by 21.8%. Driven in part by the July Telstra outage, Telstra network outage complaints increased from 112 to 405 and Telstra complaints about compensation for experience or inconvenience rose from 374 to 877. Overall, Telstra complaints decreased by 5.4% year on year.

Telco Pay complaints surged from 39 to 831 due to issues with its network migration from Optus to Vodafone. Most Telco Pay complaints were about mobile services.

The top issues faced by Telco Pay consumers were provider uncontactable, disputed charges and service not cancelled on consumer request. We heard from consumers struggling to contact Telco Pay across several contact channels. When consumers have difficulty contacting their telco, it can delay getting help and make existing problems worse.

Southern Phone Company complaints increased from 184 to 305. More than half (63%) of these complaints were about internet services. Many complaints were related to the migration of Southern Phone Company accounts and services to entities under Aussie Broadband. Billing issues arising from the migration were a frequent theme within these complaints.

Table 2: Top 10 telcos by complaint numbers[2]					
Telcos	Q1 complaints	% of total complaints	Previous Q complaints	Q on Q % change	Y on Y % change
1. Telstra	4,915	36.8%	4,034	21.8%	-5.4%
2. Optus Group	2,307	17.3%	2,632	-12.3%	-28.1%
3. Vodafone Australia Limited	1,292	9.7%	1,468	-12.0%	-4.9%
4. Telco Pay Pty Ltd (trading as Moose Mobile)	831	6.2%	39	2030.8%	3513.0%
5. Superloop	463	3.5%	500	-7.4%	133.8%
6. TPG Group	445	3.3%	528	-15.7%	-25.2%
7. Southern Phone Company Ltd	305	2.3%	184	65.8%	64.0%
8. Aussie Broadband Limited	232	1.7%	233	-0.4%	14.3%
9. iiNet Ltd	222	1.7%	295	-24.7%	-40.3%
10. Lycamobile Pty Ltd	211	1.6%	175	20.6%	126.9%

Who we heard from

To compare complaint issues across different consumer types, explore the Key summary and Demographics in the data dashboard. For the value of financial outcomes returned to consumers, see the Complaint outcomes in the data dashboard.

Regional consumers

After a 20.3% decline last quarter, regional complaints increased by 9.5% to a total of 2,768. The primary issues for regional consumers were disputed charges, no service and intermittent service and dropouts. Complaints about provider uncontactable and compensation for experience or inconvenience increased the most.

[2] The TIO does not have access to data on the number of active services per provider. This data would provide a fairer basis for comparing complaint volumes across providers, by showing complaints as a proportion of active services.

Poor mobile coverage complaints declined the most, down by 24.9% since last quarter and 26% year on year.

In August 2026, we published a Systemic Insights Report highlighting the unique barriers and experiences that rural, regional and remote Australians have with telco problems.

Major cities consumers

We received a total of 9,822 complaints from consumers in major cities, up by 7.4%. Consistent with regional areas, the primary issues for consumers were disputed charges, no service and intermittent service or dropouts. The largest increases were about provider uncontactable and compensation for experience or inconvenience.

Complaints about slow data speeds decreased the most, falling 19.2% since last quarter and 11.1% year on year.

First Nations consumers

There were 520 complaints this quarter from people who identified as First Nations.

The primary issues raised by First Nations consumers were disputed charges, advantage taken of vulnerable consumer and misleading advice or sign-up actions.

Complaints about compensation for experience or inconvenience increased the most, up by 89.7% (an additional 52 complaints) to 110. This was followed by complaints about misleading advice or sign-up actions, which increased by 60.9% (an additional 28 complaints) to 74.

Residential consumers

Complaints by residential consumers continue to make up most of the complaints this quarter, rising by 8.6% to 11,896.

The leading issues for residential consumers were disputed charges (3,718 complaints), compensation for experience or inconvenience (1,863) and intermittent service or dropouts (1,174).

Having declined last quarter, mobile complaints increased by 19.1%. Internet and landline complaints decreased by 10.9% and 11.8% respectively. No service and disputed charges were among the primary issues for each service type.

Small businesses

Complaints made by small business consumers increased by 7.3% to 1,447, though they remain stable year on year.

The leading issues faced by small business consumers were disputed charges (433 complaints), compensation for financial loss* (375 complaints) and compensation for experience or inconvenience (169 complaints).

After a drop last quarter, mobile service complaints rose 39.8%. Internet and landline complaints fell 25.1% and 14.7% respectively.

Complaints by service type

Mobile

Following a decline last quarter, mobile complaints rose 20.7% to 6,935. Mobile complaints accounted for 52% of all complaints.

Provider uncontactable complaints recorded the largest increase, followed by compensation for experience or inconvenience, service not cancelled on consumer request and no service. Poor mobile coverage complaints decreased the most, falling by 28.3% to 486. This decline may indicate a restabilising of complaints after they increased following the transition to 5G and the 18 September 2025 Optus outage, which heightened consumer concerns about contacting emergency services.

Internet

Accounting for 33.1% of all complaints, internet complaints fell 12.1% to 4,411. Complaints about compensation for experience or inconvenience increased the most. Several issues declined, led by no service, service not cancelled on consumer request and slow data speed.

Landline

Landline complaints continue to steadily decrease, dropping 12.8% to 550. Complaints are down 37% year on year. 35.8% of landline complaints were made by small business consumers.

Multiple

Complaints involving multiple service types increased 68.7% to 1,267. This is an 11.9% increase when compared with the same period last year.

State by state

All states except the Northern Territory saw an increase in complaints this quarter. However, all states and territories declined when compared with the same period last year.

Table 5: Complaints by state

State	Complaints	% of total complaints	Previous Quarter	Q on Q % change	Y on Y % change
NSW	4,110	30.8%	3,861	6.4%	-3.4%
VIC	3,921	29.4%	3,535	10.9%	-0.2%
QLD	2,363	17.7%	2,197	7.6%	-3.6%
WA	1,116	8.4%	1,069	4.4%	-0.4%
SA	991	7.4%	933	6.2%	-1.9%
TAS	231	1.7%	189	22.2%	-0.9%
ACT	192	1.4%	186	3.2%	-9.9%
NT	59	0.4%	74	-20.3%	-29.8%

For information on complaint demographics and issues categorised by state, see the Complaints by location in the data dashboard.

Methodology

On 1 July 2026, the TIO introduced an updated complaint keyword framework. All reporting from this date uses the new keyword structure, including historical cases included in reporting outputs.

The updated framework includes new, renamed, merged, split and removed keywords. These changes improve how complaint issues are categorised and provide more detailed insight into the issues people experience with their phone and internet services.

Because some complaint issue categories have changed, not all complaint data published from July 2026 onwards can be directly compared with earlier reporting periods. Quarter-on-quarter and year-on-year comparisons are not available for some keywords where historical data is not comparable. Changes in reported volumes may also reflect updated definitions and categorisation, rather than changes in complaint trends.

To support reporting continuity, the TIO applies approved mapping between old and new keyword categories where appropriate. New keywords are reported under the new framework, while some merged, split and removed categories are mapped differently to preserve the integrity of historical reporting.

When interpreting complaint issue data, users should consider the impact of the July 2026 keyword changes, particularly when comparing results across reporting periods that span the implementation date.

Unless specified, this report compares data from Quarter 4 FY26 with Quarter 1 FY27.