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Media Release

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Telco complaints fall, but still work to do

The Australian Communications Consumer Action Network (ACCAN) has welcomed the findings of the Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman (TIO)'s latest Annual Report showing that complaint numbers have declined notably in the last 12 months.

TIO data published today demonstrates a 16.5% reduction in complaints in 2022-23 compared with the previous year. While this is a welcome trend, mobile service complaints now account for 48% of all complaints lodged with the Ombudsman, and are proportionally at their highest level in over six years.

“While we understand this was partly attributed to the September 2022 Optus data breach, we agree with the Ombudsman of the necessity for consumers to have access to these services and get help when things go wrong.” said ACCAN CEO Andrew Williams.

“It is positive to see an aggregate fall in complaints to the Ombudsman, with the decrease in complaints from small businesses being a particularly pleasing outcome. Conversely, the increase in complaints relating to financial hardship is of concern, and shows that the current cost of living situation is continuing to put pressure on households. This highlights the importance of the Government’s current initiative to strengthen consumer protections in this area.”

“Decreasing TIO complaint numbers is a great development, but the fact remains that this year alone Australians have lodged over one million complaints to their telecommunications providers. ACCAN agrees with the ACMA that this remains too high and we look forward to working with the sector to maintain focus on reducing this further.”

The Australian Communications Consumer Action Network (ACCAN) is Australia's peak communication 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.
