



THE HON PAUL FLETCHER MP
Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts

MEDIA RELEASE

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Telecommunications complaint numbers down

The Morrison Government has welcomed the release of the Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman's (TIO) Annual Report 2019-20. Published today, the report shows that complaints to the TIO about internet and phone services decreased by four per cent overall in the last financial year.

Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts, the Hon Paul Fletcher MP, said it was pleasing to see complaints were slightly down, reflecting efforts by the telecommunications sector to improve customer service and delivery.

"The past 12 months have been challenging for many Australians – with the terrible bushfires last summer followed by the global COVID-19 pandemic," Minister Fletcher said.

"The shutdown of overseas call centres put significant pressure on the telecommunications industry, and created a very significant increase in the number of complaints from consumers who were unable to contact their service provider.

"The telecommunications industry was severely impacted by COVID-19, with shutdowns of call centres. Telecommunications providers and consumers were forced to adapt in rapidly changing circumstances"

"There was also an unprecedented spike in people working and learning from home, which caused National Broadband Network traffic to soar to record levels."

When the impact of the COVID-19 crisis became apparent in March, NBN Co acted quickly to support customers and the industry by offering 40 per cent additional capacity to retail service providers at no extra cost. The ongoing efforts by NBN Co to excel through the impact of COVID-19 and record significant customer and data growth, is a testament to what a critical asset this is for the nation.

To read the full report visit: <https://www.tio.com.au/reports-updates/annual-report-201920>

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Key points from the Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman (TIO) Annual Report

- 318,797 complaints received by the TIO in 2019-20
- 127,151 complaints referred by the TIO in 2019-20 (4% decrease from 2018-19).
 - 108,673 complaints from residential consumers (3.7% decrease).
 - 18,472 complaints from small businesses (5.2% decrease).
- Complaints about internet services accounted for 33.7% of all complaints.
- There was a very significant increase in complaints from users who were unable to contact their internet providers (1500% increase), due to the closure of overseas call centres during COVID-19.