

File HA-AC 4/1/18 Subject GRADE OF SERVICE COMPLAINT
MR ALAN SMITH 055-26 7267

000571

Phone 055-73 0200 From MARK ROSS
CUSTOMER SERVICES MANAGER
HAMILTON - VIC/TAS REGION

To CHRIS DOODY - NETWORK OPERATIONS
GRAEME DAVIES - FAULT BUREAU VIC/TAS

Chris/Graeme

Please find enclosed documentation in regard to a Grade of Service Complaint from Mr Alan Smith of Cape Bridgewater.

Our local technicians believe that Mr Smith is correct in raising complaints about incoming callers to his number receiving a Recorded Voice Announcement saying that the number is disconnected.

They believe that it is a problem that is occurring in increasing numbers as more and more customers are connected to AXE.

Can you please investigate this problem and provide me with a written reply so as I can forward this to Mr Smith and our local Federal Member, before what is already a difficult situation, gets right out of hand.

Mark Ross
Mark Ross
Customer Services Manager - Hamilton

2/7/92

mr1981b3

*Recd to
Chronology.*

19A

Telecom Secret**C04006****Issues Involved During the Resolution - Factors Considered**

1. Alan requested \$150k
2. Chances of legal action - high
3. Chances of media action - 100%
4. Poor performance of Telecom:
 - historically
 - March ? problem
 - Local Portland problem fixed in October
 - wiring and cabling issues
 - RVA on congestion
5. Slow resolution of past problems both technical and claims
6. COT involvement:
 - chances of class action
 - chances of mass media action
 - chances of membership growth
 - Adelaide Pizza
 - Mt Gambia
 - Portland
7. Evidence of problems:
 - Many letters stating the problem of not getting through to Alan Smith
 - People prepared to make statements of problems
 - Claims that Alan had rung himself from his Goldphone and not got through
 - Austel and Ombudsman both had trouble getting through
 - Many claims which might be difficult to substantiate in court but would be credible in the media
 - Viability of business for the future - increased bookings since the servicePeriod of time
8. Costs incurred:
 - Additional phone calls to chase up business - about \$1000
 - Legal costs - about \$1000
 - Camps prepared but not run
 - Advertising
 - Time
9. Alan's time and other consequential costs - health, stress, etc

Telecom Secret

C04007

10. Loss of business:

- Camps lost because party could not contact Alan (evidence in letters - \$10,000 loss of profit)
- Extrapolating - about \$40,000 over a period

11. Loss of partnership:

- Alan claims \$100,000 loss because he had an opportunity to sell a share in his business but this opportunity was lost because the potential partner stated he could not contact Alan Smith initially and lost faith in the telephone service available - hence withdrew his offer

12. Possible legal costs:

- If Alan took legal action Telecom would incur significant legal costs to defend it - about ?
- If Telecom lost, we could also incur Alan Smith's costs
- Estimated what possible bill?

13. Inquiry costs - both Austel and Ombudsman's Office has been actively involved. Enquiries are ongoing. Cost of ? - about

saving

14. Cost of arbitration - Mr Smith wanted to use an independent arbitrator to resolve the dispute - cost in a case in Sydney \$25k

15. Management time - I have spoken to Alan Smith regularly (daily) over a period. I began making appointments for when I would ring him - he nearly always rings me prior to the call. When I did not ring him daily (even if I was not scheduled to) he wrote to Frank Blount and Doug Campbell or both. He had regularly rung Doug Campbell's office (Judy Lanstrom) several times a week and Austel and others in Telecom. This was despite my setting up a regular contact point (Mark Ross in Ballarat) for him and a specialist diagnostic technical manager (Bruce Pendlebury). Mark spoke with Alan Smith once a week at least. Bruce averaged 5-6 calls a week to and from Alan Smith. He also contacted the Area Manager, Don Lucas, on a regular basis. Don also visited Alan Smith at Cape Bridgewater. This was going to continue forever if all matters were not resolved.

16. Legal position - Mr Smith's service problems were network related and spanned a period of 3-4 years. Hence Telecom's position of legal liability was covered by a number of different acts and regulations. The immunity claimed has never been tested in court and the current immunity from paying loss of business compensation depends upon Section 8 of the BCS Tariffs lodged with Austel. This is probably the least clear of the immunities. In my opinion Alan Smith's case was not a good one to test Section 8 for any previous immunities - given his

Telecom Secret

C04008

evidence and claims. I do not believe it would be in Telecom's interest to have this case go to court.

Overall, Mr Smith's telephone service had suffered from poor grade of network performance over a period of several years; with some difficulty to detect exchange problems in the last 8 months.

In the media Telecom would not have looked good at a time when we are working hard to improve general customer perceptions.

In a legal battle, Telecom's chance of winning would have to be about 50/50. The bad publicity for Telecom would have been significant.

In my view were Alan Smith to win a legal battle he could have been awarded payment as high as \$40,000. If we went to arbitration a payout of the order of \$80,000 would not be out of the question; with costs of setting up the arbitration extra.

In the interests of expediency and Commercial judgement I considered it better to reach a commercial settlement.

Mr Smith's communication arrangement is questionable:

- other ways eg second line, fax, 008, etc of contacting him not set up
- use of answering machine improper or incorrect
- answering arrangements when Mr Smith was not there *not satisfactory*
- Telecom's defence in some doubt on causality

There is no payment note received at the time of settlement. Alan Smith do was not prepared to provide both substantiation of his claim.

Ronnie Pittard

19B

DAVID HAWKER MP
Federal Member for Wannon



15 September 1993

Mr Graham Schorer

Fax: (03) 328 4462

What follows is a list of the ten detailed complaints David Hawker has recently received regarding Telecom's service in the Western Districts of Victoria. Mr Alan Smith's complaints have not been included in this list as I understand you already have a detailed record.

- | | |
|------------------------|---|
| PENSHURST | 1. Difficulty in having outgoing calls connected, receives a recorded message saying wrong number when dialling out, but number is correct. Gazette exchange. |
| | 2. Continuous problems with new fax machine - believes because of age of exchange equipment. |
| APSLEY | 3. Difficulty with outgoing calls, takes 1/2 hour of trying on Sunday evenings. Receives recorded message that wrong number. Bringalbert exchange. |
| HAMILTON | 4. A business. 25% of calls not connected, all area codes. Advised by Telecom engineers that, probably the exchange, not their telephones. |
| TIMBOON | 5. For 3 months incoming callers have been cut off after 2 rings. |
| VICTORIA VALLEY | 6. For 18 months incoming callers have received a recorded message that the number is not connected. Victoria Valley exchange. |
| HARROW | 7. Incoming callers receive an engaged signal when phone not in use. Telephone rings when no caller. Telephone cuts out after a few rings. |
| APSLEY | 8. Incoming callers receive engaged signal when phone not in use. |

19c

- 2 -

PORTLAND

9. For a number of years incoming callers receive engaged signal when phone not in use, and caller says telephone rang out when no ring heard.

TIMBOON

10. Outgoing calls not connected.

Mr Hawker also received a number of complaints about the reduced services offered in country areas, in particular that itemised accounts are not available.

Other complaints related to the time taken to service difficulties, one complaint about a "draping" telephone line (now fixed), and one complaint about the time taken for Telecom to pay an account (also fixed).

Trust this is of assistance. Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can be of further assistance.

Yours sincerely



KATE HARVEY
Research Assistant

Ref: L156KH.93

19c

19-10-1995 21:05

FROM CAPE BRIDGE HDAY CAMP

TO

032778797

P.04



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

97 THOMPSON STREET
HAMILTON, VIC. 3300
TEL (065) 72 1100

188 KOROH STREET
WARRNAMBOOL, VIC. 3280
TEL (068) 82 6672

DAVID HAWKER, M.P.
MEMBER FOR WANNON

18 August 1993

LC105KH.93

Mr Alan Smith
Cape Bridgewater Holiday Camp
PORTLAND VIC 3305

Dear Mr. Smith

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Alan".

Further to your conversations with my electorate staff last week and today I am enclosing a copy of the correspondence I have received from Mr Harvey Parker, Group Managing Director of the Commercial and Consumer division of Telecom.

I wrote to him outlining the problems of a number of Telecom customers in the Western Districts, including the extensive problems you have been experiencing.

Thank you once again for keeping me informed of developments at your end.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "David Hawker".
DAVID HAWKER, MP

19c

DAVID HAWKER MP
Federal Member for Wannon

~~Shadow Minister for Land Transport~~



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

9 December 1993

Mr Alan Smith
Cape Bridgewater Holiday Camp
RMB 4408
CAPE BRIDGEWATER VIC 3305

Dear Mr Smith

Thank you for your letter of 6 December 1993 enclosing the Coopers and Lybrand report and Warwick Smith's correspondence.

I appreciate being kept informed of developments and would like to congratulate you in your persistence to bring about improvements to Telecom's country services. I regret that it was at such a high personal cost.

Please find enclosed your copy of the Coopers and Lybrand report.

With best wishes for a safe and happy Christmas and New Year.

Yours sincerely


DAVID HAWKER, MP

enc
L21404.93

197



Minister for Communications

The Hon. David Beddall, MP

9 DEC 1993

Senator Michael Baume
Senator for New South Wales
PO Box 473
WOLLONGONG EAST NSW 2520

Dear Senator Baume

Thank you for your representations of 5 November to Senator the Hon Bob Collins, Minister for Transport and Communications, on behalf of Mr Alan Smith, Cape Bridgewater Holiday Camp, RMB 4408, Cape Bridgewater, Victoria, concerning the standard of service he has received from Telecom Australia. Senator Collins has referred your letter to me in view of my responsibility for matters relating to telecommunications.

I wrote directly to Mr Smith on 10 November 1993 with regard to this issue.

Let me say that the Government is most concerned at allegations that Telecom has not been maintaining telecommunications service quality at appropriate levels. I accept that in a number of cases, including Mr Smith's there has been great personal and financial distress. This is of great concern to me and a full investigation of the facts is clearly warranted.

I have personally communicated these concerns to the Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Telecom and asked them to take a direct interest in the resolution of the so-called "Casualties of Telecom" (COT) cases.

You may be aware that AUSTEL, the independent telecommunications regulatory authority, has a clear function of safeguarding consumer interests. It has powers under the Telecommunications Act 1991 to investigate consumer complaints about the supply of telecommunications services.

AUSTEL is currently conducting a thorough investigation to determine the exact nature and extent of the problems experienced by some Telecom customers. AUSTEL expects to finalise its report shortly.

190

Telecom, for its part, has deployed a dedicated customer service review team to work with affected customers to rectify their problems. It has also commissioned independent experts to assess Telecom's technical and administrative responses to complaints of this nature, and to recommend changes to improve its complaints handling procedures.

I will be giving close attention to AUSTEL's report on the results of its investigations and proposed action to address these issues.

Yours sincerely



DAVID BEDDALL

The fast track settlement proposal, with Dr Gordon Hughes at the helm, had foundered during November and December 1993. By March 1994 TELSTRA were using their corporate strength to force the C.O.T. members into expensive and time-consuming legal processes. If TELSTRA could not get the arbitration process they had wanted since September 1993 it appeared that they would pick up their ball and go home.

19D

0102



To Manager
 Warrnambool COG
 [Redacted]

From [Redacted]
 Pair Gains Support

File XS13/2.

Date 12th July 1993.

National Switching Support (Nss)

9th Floor
35 Collins St
Melbourne 3000
Australia

C.C. Manager Network Investigations Att. D.Stockdale
 Manager Commercial Network Support Att. R.Morris.

**PORTLAND - CAPE BRIDGEWATER
 RCM SYSTEM.**

At the request of [Redacted] Manager, Warrnambool COG. (CPE), NSS-Melbourne, Pair Gain Support Section, visited Portland exchange on 2nd March '93, to investigate problems reported on the Portland - Cape Bridgewater RCM system.

Initial reports where of a vocal customer at Cape Bridgewater complaining of VF cut-offs in one direction. The customer had been transferred off system 1, onto systems 2 and 3 on the 24th February '93, and had experienced no further problems. Investigations revealed that system 1 was running a large number of degraded minutes (DM) and errored seconds (ES) in the Portland to Cape Bridgewater direction, these errors could have caused the VF cut-off problem.

Initial error counter readings:-

Portland to Cape Bridgewater direction:-

	System 1	System 2	System 3
SES	0	0	0
DM	45993	3342	2
ES	65535	65535	87

5

Cape Bridgewater to Portland direction:-

	System 1	System 2	System 3
SES	0	0	0
DM	1	1	0
ES	246	751	23

At this stage we had no idea over what period of time these errors had accumulated.

Attempts to test the inground repeaters using the "trios" system where unsuccessful as the strapping records could not be located.

Other faults identified with the Cape Bridgewater installation where:-

- the presence of 500Hz. noise on all customer lines at -58 dBm causing minor noise problems.

19D

- cable ducts into both the cross connect cabinet and the concrete hut were sealed allowing the ingress of moisture, which could affect the error counts detailed above.
- the alarm system on all three RCM systems had not been programmed. This would have prevented any local alarms being extended back to Portland.

0.01

The bearer performance was monitored overnight and revealed that system 1, in the Portland to Cape Bridgewater direction, accumulated approximately 450 DM's and 43500ES's while systems 2 and 3 recorded no errors in either direction.

A problem with the installation of the enhanced lightning protection modules in the IDS block at Cape Bridgewater was discovered. After this problem was rectified and the bearer monitored overnight, no DM's or ES's were recorded.

All the SE boards used in the Portland - Cape Bridgewater RCM system have now been modified to eliminate the 500Hz. noise problem. SE boards installed in the Portland - Alcoa RCM system were also modified to eliminate a 500Hz. noise problem on cut over.

The problem of sealing the cable ducts has since been rectified by the local lines staff.

NSS-Melbourne has continued to monitor the Portland - Cape Bridgewater bearers since the 3rd March '93. In the period from the 3rd March '93, to the 17th March '93, the errors on all three bearers have been minimal.

- ie:- Portland to Cape Bridgewater direction:- system 1, 4 ES
- system 2, 3 ES
- system 3, 0 ES

- Cape Bridgewater to Portland direction:- system 1, 1 ES
- system 2, 1 ES
- system 3, 3 ES



for Supervising Engineer, National Switching Support - Melbourne.

D. MADDEN & CO.
Lawyers of Warrnambool

Ausdoc DX 28001

Facsimile : (055) 62 0545

Telephone : (055) 62 4855

1A Liebig Street,

WARRNAMBOOL. 3280

FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION

To :

CAPE BRIDGEWATER HOLIDAY CAMP

Fax No. :

26 7230

re :

TELECOM FAULTS

Your ref :

ALAN SMITH

Our Ref :

B. JOHNSON

Date :

10-11-93

Number of Sheets
(excluding this page) :

2

Any Special Instructions :

199

1A Liebig Street,
WARRNAMBOOL, 3280
Fax: (055) 62 0545

10 November 1993

Mr. Alan Smith,
Cape Bridgewater Holiday Camp,
PORTLAND, 3805
Fax: 26 7230

Dear Mr. Smith,

re: TELECOM FAULTS

I am writing in reference to the proposed Senate committee investigation into Telecom.

As you are aware, I am employed as telephonist with a large legal firm in Warrnambool. In the course of my employment, and particularly during the months of July and August this year, numerous service faults have been brought to my attention. These problems include:-

1. Calls being disconnected during conversation.
2. Recorded messages informing Melbourne clients and callers that the number has been disconnected when the correct number was dialled;
3. An engaged signal received by callers despite a number of lines being available;
4. Complaints from callers that the line has rung out when no ringing tone has been received at the number dialled.

Our firm duly contacted Telecom on a number of occasions in an effort to have these faults rectified. However, Telecom Technicians were constantly unable to identify the numerous problems and subsequently remedy our complaints.

It is evident that problems such as these have cost many companies in which the telephone plays a substantial role, a great deal of business.

Not only does poor telephone contact have a negative effect on business, but it is also a poor reflection on the telephonist who more often than not, bears the brunt of such grievances.

I strongly support Senator Ron Boswell's call for an inquiry into the problems with the Telecom network.

.../2

190

- 2 -

Mr. Alan Smith

10 November 1993

I am hopeful this letter will assist in reaching results which will compensate for the losses suffered by business and personal customers alike.

Yours faithfully,

TPV 0201(S) SON
SECTION 1
PAGE 1 REVISION A

1. GENERAL

Crossbar equipment was originally designed to have an operational life in excess of 40 years, before major upgrading of equipment would be required.

It was expected that a small number of components (generally relays) would fail at an earlier time, but maintenance philosophies, using indicators, would identify these faults and have them rectified before degradation to service was noticed by the customer.

Experience with Crossbar common control equipment has shown that the operational life, before major upgrades are required, is closer to 20 years than 40 years due to :-

- Increasing and higher traffic rates than expected.
- Low maintenance effort.
- Under dimensioning of some ranks of equipment.
- Working environment.

Also a number of relays have been found to have a short operational life due to factors such as :

- Number of Operations per year.
- Sequencing of springsets and contacts.
- Design problems causing contact erosion.

These problems have caused early crisis periods in equipment performance.

The following conditions have been observed when an exchange reaches a relay wear crisis point:

- Service to the customer is degraded.
- Current indicators do not highlight the problem area.
- Existing resources, using normal maintenance practices cannot rectify all faults and problems.

When relay wear becomes significant, a different approach to maintenance practices is required if the same performance targets are to be achieved with existing resources.

The intention of this manual is to provide information relating to:-

- Alternative maintenance practices.
- Mechanisms and effects of relay wear.

K42771

902905

19D