



Telecommunications (Consumer Complaints Handling) Industry Standard Amendment 2025 (No. 1)

The Australian Communications and Media Authority makes the following industry standard under subsection 125AA(1) of the *Telecommunications Act 1997*.

Dated: 24 April 2025

Samantha Yorke
[signed]
Member

Carolyn Lidgerwood
[signed]
Member

Australian Communications and Media Authority

1 Name

This instrument is the *Telecommunications (Consumer Complaints Handling) Industry Standard Amendment 2025 (No. 1)*.

2 Commencement

This instrument commences on 30 June 2025.

3 Authority

This instrument is made under subsection 125AA(1) of the *Telecommunications Act 1997* and in accordance with sections 5 and 6 of the *Telecommunications (Complaints Handling Industry Standard Amendment) Direction 2024*.

Note: The *Telecommunications (Complaints Handling Industry Standard Amendment) Direction 2024* was given to the ACMA by the Minister under subsection 125AA(4) of the *Telecommunications Act 1997*.

The power to make an industry standard determined under subsection 125AA(1) includes the power to amend that standard in a like manner: see subsection 33(3) of the *Acts Interpretation Act 1901*.

4 Amendments

The instrument that is specified in Schedule 1 is amended as set out in the applicable items in that Schedule.

Schedule 1—Amendments

Telecommunications (Consumer Complaints Handling) Industry Standard 2018 [F2018L00727]

Part 1 – Main Amendments

1 Section 5 (after the definition of *advocate*)

Insert:

app means a software application a carriage service provider makes available for consumers to access information in connection with its telecommunications products and communicate with the provider.

2 Section 5 (after the definition of *billing period*)

Insert:

bulk resolution offer means an offer made by a carriage service provider to all its consumers who were affected by a network outage, or a class of those consumers, which may include:

- (a) an offer to pay a specified amount of compensation determined by the provider; or
- (b) an offer to apply a credit to their accounts; or
- (c) any other offer.

3 Section 5 (after the definition of *carriage service provider's website*)

Insert:

CCO Standard means the *Telecommunications (Customer Communications for Outages) Industry Standard 2024*.

Note: The CCO Standard is a legislative instrument registered on the Federal Register of Legislation.

4 Section 5 (at the end of paragraph (b) of the definition of *closed*)

Omit “.”, substitute:

“; or

- (c) for network outage complaints – the default resolution has been implemented in accordance with section 17D.”

5 Section 5 (after the definition of *closed*)

Insert:

communications under the CCO Standard means notices, communications and updates relating to a network outage or restoration of services, that a carriage service provider provides to end-users and the public pursuant to Subdivision 1.2 and Subdivision 1.3 of Part 2 of the CCO Standard.

6 Section 5 (definition of *complaint*)

Repeal the definition, substitute:

complaint means:

- (a) an expression of dissatisfaction made to a carriage service provider by a consumer in relation to its telecommunications products, the application of its complaints handling process or its network outage complaints handling process, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected by the consumer; or
- (b) a network outage complaint;

It does not include an initial call to request information or support or to report a fault or service difficulty, unless a consumer advises that they want that call treated as a complaint, nor an issue that is the subject of legal action.

Note: An initial call from a consumer indicating that they cannot establish or maintain connection with a carriage service is a ***service outage report***.

7 Section 5 (after the definition of *consumer contract*)

Insert:

default resolution with reference to a network outage complaint, means the outcome of restoring a consumer's access to a carriage service affected by a network outage such that the consumer can establish and maintain that carriage service.

8 Section 5 (after the definition for *documented internal processes*)

Insert:

documented internal processes for network outage complaints handling means a carriage service provider's processes mentioned in paragraph 17A(b).

9 Section 5 (definition of *financial hardship*)

Repeal the definition, substitute:

financial hardship assistance has the same meaning as in section 5 of the *Telecommunications (Financial Hardship) Industry Standard 2024*.

financial hardship customer has the same meaning as in section 5 of the *Telecommunications (Financial Hardship) Industry Standard 2024*.

10 Section 5 (after the definition of *internal prioritisation process*)

Insert:

live chat service means an electronic communications method a carriage service provider makes available for consumers to communicate directly with the provider using real-time communications or near real-time communications.

major outage has the same meaning as in section 5 of the CCO Standard.

11 Section 5 (definition of *minimum requirements for consumer complaints handling*)

After "8," insert "8A,"

12 Section 5 (after the definition of *minimum requirements for consumer complaints handling*)

Insert:

minimum requirements for network outage complaints handling means the minimum requirements for the handling of network outage complaints set out in sections 10B, 10C and 10D.

National Relay Service has the same meaning as in section 5 of the *Telecommunications (Consumer Protection and Service Standards) Act 1999*.

natural disaster has the same meaning as in section 5 of the CCO Standard.

near real-time communications has the same meaning as in section 5 of the CCO Standard.

network outage means a major outage or a significant local outage.

network outage communications procedures means the written procedures a carriage service provider has in place to comply with section 19 of the CCO Standard.

network outage complaint means a service outage report where a carriage service provider has determined under section 17B that there is a reason to suspect a network outage is occurring that is affecting or is likely to affect the consumer.

Note: Subsection 17B(4) provides that where a service outage report relates to a network outage and the sole or predominant cause of that outage is a natural disaster, the report is excluded from the requirements relating to network outage complaints under this instrument. In such cases, a carriage service provider must consider if the service outage report is an ordinary complaint under its complaint handling process pursuant to paragraph 17B(1)(c).

network outage complaints handling process means a carriage service provider's consumer network outage complaints handling process established pursuant to section 10A.

13 Section 5 (definition of *notified mass outage of service*)

Omit "section 25 of the *Telecommunications (Consumer Service Guarantee) Standard 2011*", substitute "section 28 of the *Telecommunications (Consumer Service Guarantee) Standard 2023*"

14 Section 5 (at the end of the definition of *notified mass outage of service*)

Add:

Note: The *Telecommunications (Consumer Service Guarantee) Standard 2023* is a legislative instrument registered on the Federal Register of Legislation.

15 Section 5 (definition of *personal information*)

Repeal the definition, substitute:

personal information has the same meaning as in the *Privacy Act 1988*.

16 Section 5 (after the definition of *personnel*)

Insert:

real-time communications has the same meaning as in section 5 of the CCO Standard.

reason to suspect a network outage is occurring includes a situation where the carriage service provider:

- (a) is also a responsible carrier required to notify other carriers and carriage service providers of a major outage or a significant local outage pursuant to section 8 of the CCO Standard; or
- (b) receives a notification from a carrier about a major outage or a significant local outage under section 8 of the CCO Standard; or
- (c) receives information from a carrier that its telecommunications network is experiencing a network outage.

regional Australia has the same meaning as in section 5 of the CCO Standard.

remote Australia has the same meaning as in section 5 of the CCO Standard.

17 Section 5 (definition of *recorded telephone message*)

Repeal the definition.

18 Section 5 (definition of *resolution*)

After “when used in connection with a complaint,” insert “other than a network outage complaint,”

19 Section 5 (definition of *resolve*)

After “when used in connection with a complaint,” insert “other than a network outage complaint,”

20 Section 5 (after the definition of *resolve*)

Insert:

responsible carrier has the same meaning as in section 5 of the CCO Standard.

service outage report means an initial call or contact from a consumer to a carriage service provider indicating that they cannot establish or maintain connection with a carriage service.

Note: Where a carriage service provider receives a service outage report, it is required to determine if it is a network outage complaint or it should otherwise be treated as a complaint under section 17B.

significant local outage has the same meaning as in section 5 of the CCO Standard.

social media has the same meaning as in section 5 of the CCO Standard.

21 Section 5 (paragraph (a) of definition of *urgent complaint*)

Repeal the paragraph, substitute:

- (a) where the complaint is made by a consumer who is a financial hardship customer and has applied, or entered into an arrangement, for financial hardship assistance;

22 Section 5 (after definition of *urgent complaint*)

Insert:

urgent network outage complaint means a network outage complaint:

- (a) where the consumer indicates that there is a risk to their personal safety or a serious health risk; or
- (b) which involves a priority assistance consumer and the service for which they are receiving priority assistance.

23 Section 5 (note to the section)

Repeal the note, substitute:

Note: A number of other expressions used in this instrument are defined in the Act, including the following:

- (a) ACMA;
- (b) carriage service;
- (c) carriage service provider;
- (d) carrier;
- (e) listed carriage service;
- (f) network unit;
- (g) priority assistance;
- (h) section of the telecommunications industry;
- (i) telecommunications industry;
- (j) Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman; and
- (k) telecommunications network.

24 Section 6 (note 2 to the subsection)

At the end of Note 2, omit “.”, substitute “, which may be accessed free of charge at www.legislation.gov.au.”

25 After the title “Part 2 – Complaints handling process” and before section 7

Insert:

6A Application of this Part

This Part does not apply to network outage complaints.

26 Paragraph 7(1)(b)

Omit “meets”, substitute “complies with”

27 Subsection 7(2)

Omit “Chief Executive Officer (or equivalent)”, substitute “most senior responsible executive”

28 Subsection 8(1)

Repeal the subsection, substitute:

- (1) A complaints handling process must:
 - (a) be set out in writing;
 - (b) be clear and use plain language;
 - (c) be easy to understand and use;
 - (d) use a font style and size that is clear and easy to read;
 - (e) be in a format that is accessible, including to consumers with disabilities, from cultural or linguistically diverse backgrounds or with other special needs;
 - (f) be made available to the public on the carriage service provider’s website in a concise form that sets out the minimum requirements for consumer complaints handling referred to in paragraphs (h), (j) to (t), and sections 8A, 9 and 10;
 - (g) be made available to a consumer on request, or as soon as practicable after a consumer informs the carriage service provider they wish to make a complaint, in a form that is suitable for the consumer and, where appropriate, made available to carriage service providers or carriers identified in sections 23 and 24;
 - (h) be free of charge for consumers to use;
 - (i) be focused on the needs and expectations of consumers making a complaint;
 - (j) state that consumers have a right to make a complaint;
 - (k) set out how a consumer can make a complaint and monitor the progress of their complaint;
 - (l) permit consumers to make complaints:
 - (i) via telephone by speaking with a member of the carriage service provider’s personnel dealing with complaints;
 - (ii) by letter; and
 - (iii) via email, online and any other electronic method, including an app or a live chat service (if the provider uses that other method);
- but need not require the carriage service provider to allow consumers to make complaints via social media platforms;

- (m) permit consumers to make complaints in store and contact the carriage service provider about their complaint during in-store hours, where the carriage service provider offers services at a physical location;
- (n) set out the times during which a consumer can make a complaint and contact the carriage service provider about their complaint by telephone or online;
- (o) specify the telephone number, street or post office box address, email address, web address and any other point of contact the provider makes available (including via an app or a live chat service) where a consumer can make a complaint;
- (p) specify the details that a deaf or hard of hearing consumer may use to contact the National Relay Service to assist the consumer to make a complaint;
- (q) state that members of the carriage service provider's personnel will:
 - (i) clarify with a consumer if they wish to make a complaint where the consumer has made contact and expressed dissatisfaction through one of the channels referred to in paragraph (l) or paragraph (m), and the member of the personnel is uncertain if the consumer wishes to make a complaint; and
 - (ii) provide consumers with help to formulate, make and progress a complaint, including consumers with accessibility requirements or disabilities, and consumers from non-English speaking backgrounds or consumers that are financial hardship customers and have applied, or entered into an arrangement, for financial hardship assistance;
- (r) allow for consumers to nominate a representative to make and handle a complaint;
- (s) set out each potential step in the process for managing a complaint that was unable to be resolved on first contact, including the following steps:
 - (i) communicating to the consumer who made the complaint an acknowledgment that the complaint has been received, a unique reference number or some other unique identifier for the complaint and instructions about how the complaint can be monitored;
 - (ii) initial assessment of a complaint;
 - (iii) investigation of a complaint;
 - (iv) response to a complaint and proposed resolution;
 - (v) communicating the carriage service provider's decision in response to the complaint;
 - (vi) implementation of agreed resolution;
 - (vii) closing a complaint;
 - (viii) the process by which the consumer can refer a complaint to the TIO for external dispute resolution; and

- (ix) the procedures for identifying and handling urgent complaints, including how those procedures differ from handling ordinary complaints; and
- (t) set out that the carriage service provider will provide consumers with confirmation of resolution of a complaint in accordance with paragraph 13(1)(l).

29 After subsection 8(1)

Insert:

- (1A) Where a carriage service provider uses a general enquiries telephone number to comply with paragraph (1)(l) that allows the consumer to select options for assistance, the first set of options presented to the consumer must include an express option for the consumer to elect to speak directly to a member of its personnel dealing with complaints.

30 Subsection 8(3)

Repeal the subsection, substitute:

- (3) A carriage service provider must ensure there is a direct link on the homepage and the help or support section or area of its website via which a consumer can access information displayed on its website that:
 - (a) sets out how to contact the provider to make a complaint, including a table or list of the information referred to in paragraphs (1)(n), (o) and (p); and
 - (b) includes an express statement that the contact information provided under paragraph (a) can be used to make a complaint.
- (4) The links referred to in subsection (3) must be:
 - (a) clear and prominent;
 - (b) include the word “complaint”, or its plural or another variation of that word; and
 - (c) for the link that is included on the help or support section or area of the website - accessible from a main heading.
- (5) A carriage service provider must:
 - (a) display its contact details for making a complaint on bills to consumers; and
 - (b) the contact details for the carriage service provider should be more prominent than contact details for any other organisations that are named on the bill.

31 After section 8

Insert:

8A Minimum requirements – accuracy and updating information

The information required under subsection 8(3) must be accurate and up-to-date.

32 Section 9

Repeal the section, substitute:

9 Minimum requirements - timeliness

A complaints handling process must:

- (a) minimise waiting time, call transfers and consumers dealing with multiple persons to resolve the complaint; and
- (b) identify the relevant time periods associated with each step in the process set out in subsection 12(2), paragraphs 13(1)(g), (h), (i) and (k), subsection 13(2) and sections 14 and 15.

33 Paragraph 10(d)

Repeal the paragraph, substitute:

- (d) set out a dispute resolution process, which provides a consumer with the right to escalate a complaint to the TIO after the carriage service provider has been given a reasonable opportunity to resolve a complaint, which:
 - (i) sets out details about how a consumer can contact the TIO, including a link to its website and its complaints telephone number; and
 - (ii) includes the statement: “If you are not satisfied with how we have handled your complaint, you have a right to take it to the Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman, which is a free and independent service”; and

34 After section 10

Insert:

Part 2A—Network outage complaints handling process

10A Establish a network outage complaints handling process

- (1) A carriage service provider that offers to supply telecommunications products to consumers under a consumer contract must:
 - (a) establish a network outage complaints handling process that includes the minimum requirements for network outage complaints handling; and
 - (b) implement a network outage complaints handling process that complies with the minimum requirements for network outage complaints handling.
- (2) The carriage service provider’s most senior responsible executive must approve the network outage complaints handling process and be responsible for its implementation and operation.

10B Minimum requirements – accessibility

- (1) A network outage complaints handling process must:
 - (a) be set out in writing;
 - (b) be clear and use plain language;

- (c) be easy to understand and use;
- (d) use a font style and size that is clear and easy to read;
- (e) be in a format that is accessible, including to consumers with disabilities, from cultural or linguistically diverse backgrounds or with other special needs;
- (f) be in a concise form;
- (g) sets out the requirements referred to in sections 10C and 10D;
- (h) be made available to the public on the carriage service provider's website in the same location as the provider's complaints handling process;
- (i) permit consumers to make a service outage report using:
 - (i) the telephone number, email address and web address the carriage service provider has specified under paragraphs 8(1)(o) and (p), unless those contact methods are not available due to the network outage;
 - (ii) the contact methods required to be provided by the carriage service provider in section 16 of the CCO Standard; and
 - (iii) any other contact method not covered under subparagraphs (i) and (ii) that the carriage service provider has made available for the purpose of contacting the provider about a network outage;
- (j) be made available to a consumer as soon as practicable after the provider determines that a service outage report is a network outage complaint under section 17B, by:
 - (i) sending the consumer a link to the website address where the process is located using a method capable of receiving a link while the consumer's service is affected by a network outage; or
 - (ii) if it is not possible to send a link - providing verbal or written instructions to the consumer describing how to locate the process on the provider's website using any other method available;
- (k) be free of charge for consumers to use;
- (l) be focused on the needs and expectations of consumers experiencing a network outage complaint;
- (m) allow for consumers to nominate a representative to make a service outage report and handle a network outage complaint;
- (n) include a link to the website address where the provider's network outage communications procedures are located;
- (o) provide an explanation of the default resolution and state that:
 - (i) the outcome of the default resolution is to restore access to carriage services affected by a network outage; and
 - (ii) the default resolution will be implemented in accordance with section 17D;

- (p) set out each potential step in the process for dealing with a service outage report and a network outage complaint, including the steps for:
 - (i) determining if a service outage report is a network outage complaint under section 17B;
 - (ii) requesting information from the consumer to assist with that decision, including examples of any information that may be requested;
 - (iii) communicating to the consumer who made the service outage report an acknowledgment that it will be treated as a network outage complaint under section 17C;
 - (iv) giving a unique reference number or some other unique identifier for the network outage complaint to the consumer and instructions about how the complaint can be monitored;
 - (v) implementing the default resolution under section 17D;
 - (vi) providing information about the status of a network outage and providing updates under section 14 of the CCO Standard, including the kinds of information to be made available, how it will be made available and how often it will be updated;
 - (vii) notifying a consumer that the network carriage services have been restored under section 15 of the CCO Standard;
 - (viii) a consumer to make an urgent network outage complaint, including the options available under section 17D;
 - (ix) responding to a consumer who indicates that the provider's attempt to implement the default resolution has been unsuccessful;
 - (x) closing a complaint, including when a network outage complaint is considered to be closed;
 - (xi) a consumer to take if they are not satisfied with the default resolution; and
 - (xii) the process by which the consumer can make a complaint if they are not satisfied with the default resolution and a link to a copy of the provider's complaints handling process.
- (2) A carriage service provider must ensure there is a direct link on the homepage of its website:
 - (a) via which a consumer can access information that sets out how to contact the provider to report a service outage using the available methods referred to in paragraph (1)(i); and
 - (b) which includes an express statement that the contact information provided under paragraph (a) can be used to make a service outage report, or an enquiry about a network outage.
- (3) A carriage service provider must ensure that its personnel dealing directly with consumers:

- (a) have access to a copy of:
 - (i) its network outage complaints handling process; and
 - (ii) any documentation setting out its documented internal processes for network outage complaints handling;
- (b) are given an alert with details about a suspected network outage and how it is, or may be, affecting its consumers as soon as practicable after it has reason to suspect that a network outage is occurring and affecting any of its consumers; and
- (c) understand the minimum requirements for network outage complaints handling, their roles and responsibilities under the provider's network outage complaints handling process and any requirements under the documented internal processes for network outage complaints handling.

10C Minimum requirements – accuracy and updating information

A carriage service provider must ensure that the contact information made available on its website pursuant to paragraph 10B(2)(a) is accurate and up-to-date, including by updating its website to set out information about any new contact method it makes available under paragraph 10B(1)(i), as soon as practicable, but no later than 2 hours after it is made available.

10D Minimum requirements – timeliness

A network outage complaints handling process must:

- (a) provide that the default resolution of network outage complaints must occur as soon as practicable;
- (b) identify the relevant time periods associated with each step in the process set out in sections 17B, 17C and 17D; and
- (c) identify the relevant times for communications under the CCO Standard.

35 After the title “Part 3 – Complaints management and response times” and before section 11

Insert:

10E Application of this Part

This Part does not apply to network outage complaints.

36 Subparagraph 11(b)(iv)

Omit “suffering financial hardship”, substitute “consumers that are financial hardship customers and have applied, or entered into an arrangement, for financial hardship assistance”

37 Subparagraph 11(c)(ii)

Omit “paragraphs 8(1)(h) and 8(1)(i)”, substitute “paragraphs 8(1)(l) and 8(1)(m)”

38 Subsection 12(2)

Repeal the subsection, substitute:

- (2) A carriage service provider must acknowledge a complaint in accordance with subsection (1):
 - (a) where the complaint was received:
 - (i) via a real-time communications method, including by telephone or a live chat service; or
 - (ii) via a near real-time communications method, including via a live chat service or a provider's app; or
 - (iii) in store – immediately; or
 - (b) where the complaint was received by:
 - (i) email; or
 - (ii) post – within 2 working days of receiving the complaint.

39 Subsections 13(1) and (2)

Repeal the subsections, substitute:

- (1) A carriage service provider must:
 - (a) use its best efforts to resolve a complaint on first contact, or if this is not possible, as soon as practicable after first contact;
 - (b) make all reasonable efforts to resolve complaints in a manner that best suits the needs of the consumer, where a consumer has expressed a particular need to the carriage service provider;
 - (c) implement processes for the identification, management and resolution of urgent complaints;
 - (d) investigate a complaint to the extent that is commensurate with the seriousness of the complaint, where it is not possible to resolve a complaint to the satisfaction of the consumer at first contact or without an investigation;
 - (e) ensure that its personnel understand what remedies are available to assist with the resolution of a complaint;
 - (f) tailor any remedy offered to a consumer so that, as far as practicable, the remedy addresses the main cause of the complaint, and the individual circumstances of the consumer;
 - (g) resolve complaints about alleged billing errors no later than the end of the billing period immediately following the consumer's current billing period, or within 30 calendar days, whichever occurs first;
 - (h) provide confirmation of a proposed resolution of a complaint, within 10 working days of receiving the complaint;

- (i) provide confirmation of a proposed resolution of an urgent complaint, and if the consumer accepts the proposed resolution, implement that resolution, within 2 working days of receiving the urgent complaint;
 - (j) where a complaint is indicative of a broader problem or systemic issue, seek to resolve the main cause of that problem or issue;
 - (k) complete all necessary actions to implement a proposed resolution, within 5 working days of the consumer accepting that resolution, except where:
 - (i) otherwise agreed with the consumer; or
 - (ii) the consumer agreed to undertake actions to implement the proposed resolution by a specified time, but did not complete the actions as agreed; or
 - (iii) the complaint is an urgent complaint and paragraph (i) applies;
 - (l) provide confirmation in writing to a consumer that their complaint has been resolved within 5 working days after the carriage service provider completes its investigation of the complaint; and
 - (m) only allow a complaint or an urgent complaint to be closed with the consent of the consumer, or where the carriage service provider has complied with subsection 15(2), section 16 or section 17.
- (2) A carriage service provider must, upon receiving a request from a consumer to provide written confirmation of the matters set out in paragraphs (1)(h) or (i), provide that confirmation in writing to the consumer within 5 working days after receiving the request.

40 Paragraph 14(2)(a)

Repeal the paragraph, substitute:

- (a) a complaint of the type referred to in paragraph 13(1)(g) can be resolved within the relevant billing period or within 30 calendar days, whichever occurs first; or

41 Paragraph 14(2)(c)

Omit “15”, substitute “10”

42 Paragraph 14(2)(f)

Omit “avenues for external dispute resolution including the TIO,”, substitute “information referred to in paragraph 10(d),”

43 Subsection 15(1) and (2)

Repeal the subsections, substitute:

- (1) Where a consumer communicates to a carriage service provider:
 - (a) that they are dissatisfied with the response times that apply to the handling or management of their complaint; or
 - (b) that they reasonably want their complaint to be assessed and treated as an urgent complaint,

the carriage service provider must, within 24 hours after receiving that communication, provide the consumer with advice about:

- (c) its internal prioritisation process;
- (d) its internal escalation process; and
- (e) the information referred to in paragraph 10(d).

(2) Where a consumer:

- (a) communicates to a carriage service provider that they are dissatisfied with the progress or resolution of a complaint; or
 - (b) enquires about their options to pursue a complaint further,
- a carriage service provider must, within 24 hours after receiving that communication, advise the consumer about:
- (c) its internal escalation process; and
 - (d) the information referred to in paragraph 10(d).

44 At the end of subsection 15(4)

Add:

- (5) If a complaint is not resolved within 30 calendar days after it was received, a carriage service provider must, unless it has already been provided, provide the information referred to in paragraph 10(d) to the consumer on the next working day after the end of that period.

45 Subsection 16(2)

Omit “options for external dispute resolution, including the TIO.”, substitute “the information referred to in paragraph 10(d).”

46 After section 17

Insert:

Part 3A—Network outage complaints – management and response times

17A Network outage complaints management

A carriage service provider must ensure that:

- (a) its network outage complaints handling process is managed by a senior manager who is required to maintain the effective and efficient operation of that process in accordance with the minimum requirements for network outage complaints handling;
- (b) it has in place, and implements, documented internal processes for:
 - (i) making a determination under section 17B and providing an acknowledgment under section 17C; and
 - (ii) resolving network outage complaints and implementing the default resolution for those complaints as soon as practicable;

- (c) its personnel dealing directly with consumers or network outage complaints:
 - (i) can make a determination under subsection 17B(1) and provide the acknowledgment in section 17C within the timeframes specified under subsection 17B(2);
 - (ii) manage and resolve network outage complaints in an effective and efficient manner in accordance with the minimum requirements for network outage complaints handling;
 - (iii) treat consumers making network outage complaints with fairness and courtesy;
 - (iv) can manage network outage complaints in accordance with each of the provider's processes mentioned in paragraph (b); and
 - (v) understand the provider's network outage complaints handling process and the requirements in Part 2A and this Part.

17B Determining if a service outage report is a network outage complaint

- (1) Where a carriage service provider receives a service outage report, it must determine:
 - (a) if there is a reason to suspect a network outage is occurring; and
 - (b) if so, whether the consumer is affected or likely to be affected by that network outage; or
 - (c) if not, or subsection (4) applies, whether the report should be treated as a complaint under its complaints handling process.
- (2) A carriage service provider must take all reasonable steps to make a determination under subsection (1), and if relevant, provide the acknowledgment in subsection 17C on first contact.
- (3) If a carriage service provider determines that there is a reason to suspect a network outage is occurring and the consumer is being affected by a network outage under subsection (1), it must treat the service outage report as a network outage complaint unless subsection (4) applies.
- (4) Where a service outage report relates to a network outage and the sole or predominant cause of that outage is a natural disaster, none of the requirements in this instrument that relate to network outage complaints apply to that report.

Note: Where subsection (4) applies, a carriage service provider must consider if the service outage report is an ordinary complaint under its complaints handling process pursuant to paragraph 17B(1)(c).

17C Acknowledgement of network outage complaints

A carriage service provider must acknowledge a network outage complaint by providing the consumer with a written or verbal response confirming:

- (a) that the service outage report is being treated as a network outage complaint;

- (b) a unique reference number or some other unique identifier for the complaint;
- (c) that network outage complaints are handled under the provider's network outage complaints handling process;
- (d) that the outcome of the default resolution is to restore access to carriage services affected by a network outage;
- (e) details of the contact methods the provider has made available under section 16 of the CCO Standard;
- (f) that the provider will attempt to notify the consumer when the services affected by the network outage have been restored in accordance with paragraph 17D(3)(b) and subsection 17D(4);
- (g) where on the carriage service provider's website they can access:
 - (i) the provider's network outage complaints handling process;
 - (ii) a summary of each of the communications required under the CCO Standard;
 - (iii) relevant information that is known about the network outage and its impact on the provider's telecommunications products; and
 - (iv) options the carriage service provider makes available regarding other remedies for consumers affected by the network outage including any bulk resolution offer.

17D Default resolution

- (1) A carriage service provider must complete all necessary actions within its capacity to implement the default resolution as soon as reasonably practicable for network outage complaints and urgent network outage complaints.
- (2) A carriage service provider must make all reasonable efforts to assist a consumer with an urgent network outage complaint to stay connected to a carriage service during the network outage, including by considering alternative or interim options where available.
- (3) A network outage complaint is resolved when:
 - (a) services affected by the network outage are restored; and
 - (b) the carriage service provider has notified the consumer that services have been restored under section 15 of the CCO Standard; and
 - (c) the carriage service provider has notified the consumer in writing confirming:
 - (i) how they can make a complaint seeking a tailored resolution if they are not satisfied with the default resolution;
 - (ii) what steps to take if they believe the provider's attempt to implement the default resolution has been unsuccessful;
 - (iii) the methods by which a consumer can easily and accessibly request further assistance from the carriage service provider if their service has not been restored; and

- (iv) if the provider has a bulk resolution offer, details about the nature of that offer and any timeframes for accepting that offer.

Note: The notification under paragraph (3)(c) could also include advice about solving common post-network outage technical issues or a link to the CSP's website with such information.

- (4) The notification in paragraph (3)(c) must be sent as soon as practicable after a notification under section 15 of the CCO Standard has been sent.
- (5) A carriage service provider must seek confirmation from a consumer who made an urgent network outage complaint about whether the provider's attempt to implement the default resolution has been successful within 2 calendar days of sending the notification in paragraph (3)(c).
- (6) If a consumer, who has made an urgent network outage complaint responds to a notification given under paragraph 17D(3)(c) or responds to the confirmation sought in subsection 17D(5) indicating that the default resolution has been unsuccessful, the carriage service provider must take steps to implement the default resolution no later than 2 working days after receiving that response.
- (7) A carriage service provider must not close an urgent network outage complaint until the service has been restored for the consumer.
- (8) A carriage service provider must not close a network outage complaint less than 3 working days after sending the notification in paragraph (3)(c), unless the consumer has indicated to their carriage service provider that the default resolution has been successful.

47 Heading to section 19

Omit "process", substitute "processes"

48 Paragraph 19(b)

Omit "complaint handling process", substitute "complaints handling process and its network outage complaints handling process"

49 Paragraph 19(f)

Omit "complaints handling process.", substitute "provider's complaints handling process and network outage complaints handling process."

50 Section 20

Repeal the section, substitute:

20 Requirements to keep records of complaints

- (1) A carriage service provider must keep records of complaints that are not network outage complaints, which include:
 - (a) the name and contact details of the consumer making the complaint, and their representative where applicable;

- (b) a unique reference number or some other unique identifier that will ensure the carriage service provider can subsequently identify the complaint and its subject matter;
 - (c) a description of the nature of the complaint and the issues raised as part of the complaint;
 - (d) a description of the resolution proposed by the carriage service provider or the consumer, including the date by which the consumer must provide a response in relation to the proposed resolution;
 - (e) a description of the results of any investigation;
 - (f) a description of the carriage service provider's reasons for its proposed resolution;
 - (g) the consumer's response to the proposed resolution of the complaint, any reasons given by the consumer for their response, and if they have requested the proposed resolution in writing, that this request has been made;
 - (h) a description of the agreed resolution of the complaint, including any associated commitments and the date this is communicated to the consumer;
 - (i) the implementation of any required actions; and
 - (j) copies of any correspondence sent by or to the consumer regarding the complaint.
- (2) A carriage service provider must keep records of network outage complaints, including:
- (a) the name and contact details of the consumer who made the service outage report, and their representative where applicable;
 - (b) a unique reference number or some other unique identifier that will ensure the carriage service provider can subsequently identify the network outage complaint and its subject matter;
 - (c) a description of the nature of the issues raised as part of the service outage report;
 - (d) the time and date the provider:
 - (i) received the service outage report;
 - (ii) made a determination under subsection 17B(1);
 - (iii) acknowledged the network outage complaint under section 17C as required under subsection 17B(2);
 - (iv) notified the consumer under paragraph 17D(3)(c); and
 - (v) closed the network outage complaint;
 - (e) whether the consumer was dissatisfied with the default resolution and made a complaint, that is not a network outage complaint but is related to the network outage, seeking other remedies;

- (f) where the consumer has expressed dissatisfaction with the default resolution of a network complaint, the reasons the consumer gives for that dissatisfaction;
 - (g) copies of communications under the CCO Standard that were provided to the consumer during the network outage under that Standard and subsection 17D(4); and
 - (h) copies of any correspondence sent by or to the consumer regarding the default resolution of the network outage complaint and any bulk resolution offer.
- (3) If a complaint is due to a consumer's dissatisfaction with the resolution of a network outage complaint, the unique reference number or other unique identifier used for their network outage complaint, should be linked with the complaint.

51 Section 21

Repeal the section, substitute:

21 Record retention

- (1) A carriage service provider must:
- (a) keep records that are sufficient to demonstrate its compliance with the requirements under Parts 2 to 5 of this instrument;
 - (b) keep the records required to be kept by paragraph (a) for at least two years from the date of creating the record; and
 - (c) make those records available to the ACMA upon receiving a written request from the ACMA.
- (2) Where a carriage service provider keeps records under this Part or section 28 it must take such steps as are reasonable in the circumstances:
- (a) to protect the information from misuse, interference and loss, unauthorised access, modification or disclosure; and
 - (b) to ensure the information is disposed of, or destroyed, in a secure manner where the record is no longer necessary under this instrument or any other applicable laws.

52 Paragraph 22(a)

At the end of the paragraph add "or"

53 Subparagraph 25(b)(i)

Omit "paragraph", substitute "subparagraph"

54 Paragraph 26(c)

Repeal the paragraph, substitute:

- (c) ensure that the inbox for the email address or other method of contact identified in paragraph (b) is monitored:

- (i) each working day; or
- (ii) each calendar day if the provider has a reason to suspect that a network outage is occurring;

55 Paragraph 26(d)

Omit “request for reasonable assistance within 2 working days;”, substitute:

request for reasonable assistance:

- (i) within 3 hours for network outage complaints; and
- (ii) within 2 working days for all other complaints;

56 Paragraph 26(f)

Repeal the paragraph, substitute:

- (f) confirm any proposed resolution for complaints other than network outage complaints as soon as practicable after completing its investigation of the issues set out in the request; and

57 Paragraph 26(g)

Omit “Part 3”, substitute “Parts 3 and 3A”

58 Section 27

Omit “in section 23 (and a carrier identified in section 24”, substitute “in section 23, and a carrier identified in section 24,”

59 Part 7

Repeal the Part, substitute:

Part 7—Transitional

29 Transition arrangements - unresolved complaints

Where a complaint was made by a consumer to a carriage service provider prior to the commencement of the *Telecommunications (Consumer Complaints Handling) Industry Standard Amendment 2025 (No.1)* (the **amending instrument**) that:

- (a) was acknowledged as a complaint by the provider in accordance with section 12 of this instrument prior to the commencement of the amending instrument; and
- (b) remains unresolved at, or after, the date of the commencement of the amending instrument,

the complaint must be assessed and dealt with under this instrument as in force immediately prior to the commencement of the amending instrument.

Part 2 – Bulk amendment of references to “industry standard”

60

The following provisions are amended by omitting “industry standard” (wherever occurring) and substituting “instrument”:

- (a) section 4
- (b) section 5 (definition of *resolution*)
- (c) section 5 (definition of *resolve*)
- (d) section 6
- (e) section 17
- (f) subparagraph 19(b)(iii)
- (g) subparagraph 25(b)(iv).