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AUSTRALIAN TELECOMMUNICATIONS AUTHORITY

# THE COT CASES

AUSTEL's  
Findings  
and  
Recommendations

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## CHAPTER TWO

### THE COT CASES, THEIR COMPLAINTS AND THE EXTENT OF THE PROBLEM

*This Chapter provides an overview of the COT Cases, their complaints and the extent of the problem. Further detail of their complaints may be found in Chapter Five and the following Chapters.*

#### THE COT CASES

*COT* (an acronym for *the Casualties of Telecom*) has been coined by a group of Telecom's customers to describe their loose association for the purpose of bringing pressure to bear on Telecom to resolve their individual complaints about Telecom's service.

2.2 The members of *COT*, or the *COT Cases* as they call themselves, are persons who are, or were, the proprietors of small businesses that rely, or relied, very much on the telephone to conduct their business and to generate business. For example, some came from the hospitality industry and were dependent on telephone bookings and reservations. Another runs a courier service.

#### *The original COT Cases*

2.3 The persons referred to in this report as the *original COT Cases* were -

- Mr Graham Schorer, Golden Messenger, North Melbourne, Victoria (spokesperson)
- Mrs Ann Garms OAM, Tivoli Restaurant, Fortitude Valley, Queensland
- Mrs Maureen Gillan, Japanese Spare Parts, Enoggera, Queensland
- Mr Alan Smith, Cape Bridgewater Holiday Camp, Cape Bridgewater, Victoria
- Ms Shelagh Hawkins, Society Restaurant, Melbourne, Victoria.

2.4 It is relevant to note that Ms Hawkins no longer carries on the business referred to and there is minimal further reference to her case. Also, Mrs Gillan ceased to carry on her business and certain of the monitoring and testing

- a RAM relay armature problem which posed a risk to services using a rotary hunting facility
- local access network problems in the Fortitude Valley area
- problems inherent in the use of diverters
- Telecom's number assignment procedures for rotary hunting group line assignments which may, as suggested by Bell Canada International, lead to problems.

AUSTEL's finding that the above matters have the potential to affect the services of particular *COT Cases* does not extend to whether Telecom has failed to meet acceptable service standards or caused the losses claimed - those are issues to be addressed in the *Fast Track Settlement* and proposed arbitration procedures.

**The extent of the problem**

1.15 While the information available to AUSTEL does not allow it to determine with real precision the number of Telecom's customers who have experienced, or are experiencing, service difficulties and faults like those experienced by the *COT Cases*, it is reasonable for AUSTEL to conclude that -

- the number of Telecom customers experiencing *COT* type service difficulties and faults is substantially higher than Telecom's original estimate of 50
- the number of Telecom customers who are in the *COT Cases'* category, that is, customers who have -
  - experienced *COT* type service difficulties and faults; and
  - received similar treatment in Telecom's handling of their complaints,

is higher than Telecom's original estimate of 50.

Telecom has conceded that its original estimate requires revision - see paragraph 1.65.