

complaint handling within two weeks and preliminary advice from staff being called in to review the work is complimentary. This together with the Privacy Policy and voice monitoring Guidelines and the new dispute procedure currently being documented with Warwick Smith will provide a very positive group of initiatives by around mid march.

Steve Black

From: Blount, Frank
To: Black, Stephen; Krasnostein, David
Cc: Campbell, Ian new; Campbell, Doug; Parker, Harvey
Subject: RE: COT Cases - call from Alan Smith
Date: Thursday, 3 March 1994 7:30AM

Stephen:

Before you agree to meet with him, please talk to Harvey Parker about my discussion with him following my call to Alan Smith yesterday or the day before.

I have asked for the data on failure and/or fault rates attributed to the Portland AXE exchange (Alan's change) and historical fault data for all of the cable/outside plant/CPE reports for the Portland change area as well. I want to compare that historical data against the average for all of Victoria or all of Australia to ascertain if in fact our reported and cleared troubles in Portland indicate a pattern suggested by Alan.

I don't know whether such analysis has been done on this case before, but if it hasn't, I would be quite surprised. I want to personally get across such data so I can stand up with confidence and say that I have seen the raw data and I personally can attest to it.

I also am not certain from my discussion to Alan that he expects anything else at this point. He simply states that he is still having major problems as late as the day he placed the call to me. He says he has several examples of potential customers to his Camp that claim they had tried to call for hours the day before and got either no answer, no ring, or engaged and Alan claims he was never on the phone for the duration when customers claimed they tried to reach him. He gave me two such recent examples over the phone. He persists in telling me that my people are not telling me the truth.

It may be time to have an auditor reporting to me review the Portland trouble reporting procedures and data in and around Portland.

Thank,

Frank

N00168

From: Black, Stephen
To: Krasnostein, David; Blount, Frank
Subject: FW: COT Cases - call from Alan Smith
Date: Wednesday, March 02, 1994 9:53PM

Frank

I have discussed this with David Krasnostein and Ian Campbell. The recommendation is that I pick this matter up as your representative and meet with Mr Smith and Mr Schorer and that I be accompanied by an second impartial person such as Warwick Gilbert the Chief Internal Auditor.

At this meeting Mr Smith's proposal can be put forward discussed and, if appropriate, subsequently responded to by Telecom.

The suggestion from Mr Smith appears to indicate a desire to offer a settlement rather than enter the arbitration process. He will raise this in the discussion if this is his intention.

Steve Black

From: Blount, Frank
To: Scott, Sue
Cc: Black, Stephen; Krasnostein, David; Campbell, Ian
Subject: RE: COT Cases - call from Alan Smith
Date: Tuesday, 1 March 1994 5:08PM

Senate Estimates Hearing - 25 February 1994

Telstra Corporation Limited

Senator Alston asked the following Question on Notice:

25. An Internal Telecom Minute in relation to Mr Alan Smith of Cape Bridgewater states "Our local technicians believe that Mr Smith is correct in raising complaints about incoming callers to his number receiving a recorded voice announcement saying 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" (Attachment 1)

- a) Could you explain why more problems are occurring as more and more customers are connected to the upgraded AXE exchange and has this problem since been rectified? If not, why not?
- b) Could you advise how widespread this problem is with other exchanges which have been upgraded to AXE?
- c) As Telecom intends on upgrading all exchanges to AXE by 1997 does it expect the same problems to occur as outlined in this minute?

Answer

The issue referred to relates to the procedures for the initial loading of data into AXE exchanges which, at the time, did not ensure a centralised approach. The problem arose from the method of preparing and verifying routing data for loading into AXE exchanges, particularly as more small analogue exchanges were converted to digital. Network Operations management was already aware of the need for centralisation and tighter control over verification and was in the process of developing this when the fault report from Mr Alan Smith was received. A two pronged approach has been implemented to improve the processes:

- 1) The Data Production Group underwent a quality accreditation process to ensure that the data received by the Data Cells in the field locations was error free.
- 2) The number of groups loading these data changes into the AXE sites was significantly reduced. In country Victoria, it was reduced from 40 to 5 and it is planned to be further reduced.

H-B

The substantially reduced numbers of staff involved allow better training and control procedures to be implemented and there is no record of any further faults of this type occurring in the Country Victorian network.

In summary, there was a single fault incident which affected Portland AXE Exchange for a short period of time. This was not a generic problem in the network, but reflected the need for improved verification in the data preparation and loading procedures relating to AXE exchanges. Revised procedures were introduced promptly.

- a) The reference in Question (a) is considered to relate to the potential for loading errors if verification procedures for routing data were not tightened.
- b) This issue is now believed to be resolved.
- c) The new procedures now successfully implemented will ensure that this particular problem does not recur.

L4-B