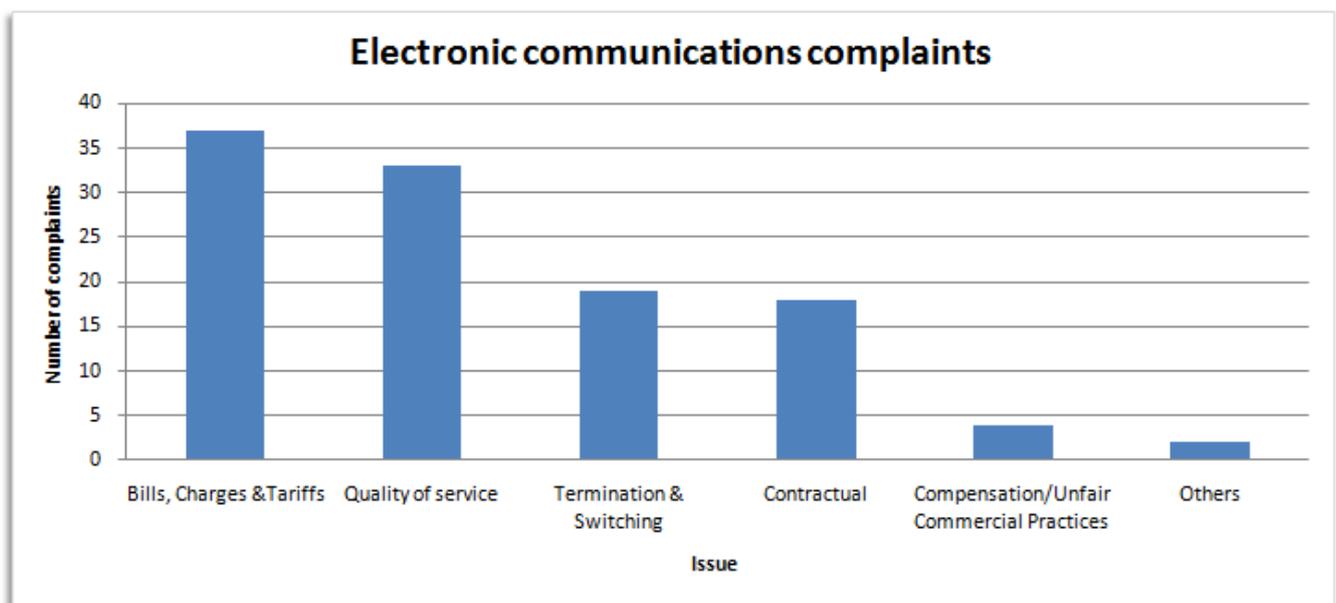


120 consumer complaints and 227 enquiries handled by the MCA during the second half of 2016.

Communications Complaints Report published today

The Malta Communications Authority (MCA) has published a report on the complaints and enquiries received during the second half of 2016 from subscribers of telephony, Internet and television services, as well as individuals using the postal service. As part of its end-user protection function, the MCA manages a complaints-handling mechanism which end-users can resort to in the event that they are unsatisfied with the redress provided by their respective service provider. The very nature of the complaint and the MCA's relevant legal powers determine the extent of the action the MCA can take in relation to a complaint. Although the complaints received relate to a service that is regulated by the MCA, there are instances where the Authority is not empowered by law to intervene and would thus refer the end-users to other competent entities.

During the second half of 2016, the MCA received an average of 20 complaints per month. All the complaints received were closed within 20 working days. The Authority also received 227 requests for information.



Billing issues topped the list of complaints received, with incorrect billing being the most common type of billing-related complaints received. During this report period, the Authority received 30 cases of incorrect billing. In 13 of these cases, following the necessary investigations, the MCA determined that the service provider was required to take necessary remedial action to adjust some of the amounts billed. The matter was raised directly with the responsible service provider, after noting that the majority of reports received were

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against it. As a result of the MCA's enforcement actions, the service provider in question is implementing a number of measures to address MCA's concerns.

Another source of complaint during the second half of 2016 is related to Quality of Service (QoS), with faults being the most common type of QoS complaint received with 21 cases reported. Faults are generally caused by degradation, misuse, force majeure or third party disturbance. Faults could also be the result of damages to the service provider's infrastructure, damages to the subscriber's internal wiring or damages to the physical equipment. In the cases reported to the Authority, the MCA monitored the actions undertaken by the service providers to ensure that faults were repaired within the shortest time possible. In those cases wherein the fault originated from the service providers' infrastructure, subscribers were offered compensation, as required in the terms and conditions of their service contract.

The number of complaints relating to termination and switching declined by 21% when compared to the previous two quarters. In some cases, the Authority actively followed up the matter with the service provider in question until the latter ensured that the services were effectively terminated in line with the subscriber's request. In other cases, the Authority provided guidance to subscribers on the procedure they needed to follow to terminate the service/s.

Other complaints received during the period under review related to contractual issues, compensation and refunds, and unfair commercial practices. The MCA was unable to intervene in all of these cases because it did not have the legal power to address the end-users' concern. In such instances, the MCA referred the case to more appropriate entities for their redress.

With regard to postal matters, the MCA received seven complaints during the second half of 2016. The MCA brought these cases to the attention of the service provider so that it could further investigate the matters raised and address any ensuing issues accordingly. No complaints regarding eCommerce services were registered during this period.

The report also highlights consumer related activities undertaken by the MCA during the period under review including, amongst others, the MCA's decision regarding access of bills for Internet, TV and telephony services, which entitles post-paid subscribers who do not have an Internet subscription to receive their 'standard bills' in hard copy format, free of charge.

The MCA encourages those end-users who encounter any difficulties with respect to the services regulated by the MCA to contact the Authority in the event that they are unsatisfied with the way their service provider handled their complaint. The public can contact the MCA on 21336840 or by email on customercare@mca.org.mt. The MCA regularly publishes information of interest to the general public on its Facebook page and on [its website](#). The general public is invited to catch up on the themes discussed by the MCA representatives on different media by following the MCA's [YouTube channel](#).

The full report can be accessed through this link <http://bit.ly/2l6lyt8>

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