

**Telecommunications Users and Consumers Advisory Committee (“TUCAC”)**  
**Minutes of the 26<sup>th</sup> Meeting held at 3:00 p.m.**  
**on 29 June 2023 (Thursday) in Conference Room,**  
**Office of the Communications Authority (“OFCA”),**  
**29/F Wu Chung House, Wan Chai**

**Present:**

|                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| Mr. Esmond CHIU (Chairman) | Deputy Director-General                                     |
| Mr. Francis HO             | Representative of Consumer Council                          |
| Mr. Fred SHEU              | Representative of the Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce |
| Mr. Ricky CHONG            | Representative of Communications Association of Hong Kong   |
| Mr. Michael LAI            | Representative of Small and Medium Enterprises              |
| Mr. Tsan SIU               | Representative of the disabled                              |
| Mr. Alex YEUNG             | Representative of the aged community services               |
| Mr. K K LAU, MH, JP        | Member appointed on an ad personam basis                    |
| Dr. K W TANG               | Member appointed on an ad personam basis                    |
| Mr. K L CHAN               | Representative as a member of the public                    |
| Ms. W K CHENG              | Representative as a member of the public                    |
| Mr. L T HUI                | Representative as a member of the public                    |
| Mr. H C HUNG               | Representative as a member of the public                    |
| Mr. Brian KUNG             | Representative as a member of the public                    |
| Dr. K W LAU, MH            | Representative as a member of the public                    |
| Ms. Katy LAU               | Representative as a member of the public                    |
| Ms. Avon YUE               | Representative as a member of the public                    |
| Ms. Jamay WONG (Secretary) | OFCA  |

**In attendance:**

|                 |      |
|-----------------|------|
| Mr. Henry WONG  | OFCA |
| Mr. C H CHAN    | OFCA |
| Dr. Yvonne LEE  | OFCA |
| Mr. Brian LEE   | OFCA |
| Mr. Penny LO    | OFCA |
| Mr. Wilson LEE  | OFCA |
| Ms. Pancy CHENG | OFCA |
| Mr. L H TING    | OFCA |
| Mr. Raymond HO  | OFCA |

Ms. Edith YAU

OFCA

Absent with apologies:

|                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| Mr. Keith LI      | Representative of Hong Kong Wireless Technology Industry Association |
| Mr. C M CHUNG     | Representative of the disabled                                       |
| Mr. Michael LUI   | Representative of Education Bureau                                   |
| Ms. P Y CHAN      | Representative as a member of the public                             |
| Ms. Natalie KWOK  | Representative as a member of the public                             |
| Ms. Peony CHEUNG  | Representative as a member of the public                             |
| Mr. Richard TSANG | Representative as a member of the public                             |

## **I. Minutes of the 25th Meeting of the Telecommunications Users and Consumers Advisory Committee (“TUCAC”)**

1. The Secretary had not received any proposed amendment to the draft minutes of the 25<sup>th</sup> meeting from members prior to the meeting and no amendment was proposed by the members at the meeting. The Chairman announced that the minutes of the 25<sup>th</sup> meeting were confirmed.

## **II. Labelling Scheme for Buildings with Optical Fibre Access**

2. Mr. Henry WONG briefed members on the details of the Labelling Scheme for Buildings with Optical Fibre Access (the “Scheme”), including an introduction to the optical fibre network technology, objectives of the Scheme, its Designated Label, thematic webpage and Register, as well as a series of publicity activities. Mr. Henry WONG also played the relevant TV announcement and reported on the broadband services in Hong Kong. Related information was set out in TUCAC Paper No. 1/2023.

3. The Chairman said that the relevant operators had been making efforts to expand the optical fibre network in Hong Kong. OFCA introduced the Scheme to further enhance public awareness of fibre-to-the-home (“FTTH”) and fibre-to-the-

building (“FTTB”) as well as promoting the development of fibre-based broadband services. In addition, the public could make use of the functions of the Register for a direct search of the information about buildings with optical fibre access on OFCA’s website.

4. Ms. Avon YUE expressed her approval for the Scheme, the TV announcement and the enquiry function of the Scheme. She also suggested that OFCA should launch more publicity initiatives to raise public awareness and to educate the public on how to use the Register for checking the fibre-based broadband service of individual buildings.

5. The Chairman responded that owing to the limited airtime, the TV announcement mainly served as a brief introduction to the Scheme. OFCA also promoted and publicised the Scheme and the use of its Register through other publicity activities, such as roving exhibitions and seminars. Furthermore, since the names of the operators actually providing connection of the optical fibre access to individual buildings were considered commercial information, the Government was not in a position to disclose such information to the public. Members of the public could make an enquiry with the relevant building management offices or visit the operators’ websites for such information when needed.

6. Mr. Alex YEUNG enquired whether the Designated Label of the Scheme could help differentiate between FTTH and FTTB buildings. He also enquired about the information of digital terrestrial television (“DTT”) services being displayed on the Register page.

7. Mr. Henry WONG responded that the Designated Label did not differentiate between FTTH and FTTB buildings. However, most of the buildings currently connected with fibre-based broadband services were FTTH buildings and the percentage was on the rise. The Register was currently available in the Databases

for Broadcasting & Telecommunications Infrastructures, which included information about FTTH/B and DTT services. Therefore, the Databases could allow the public to check the information about provision of fibre-based broadband services in individual buildings, as well as the coverage of DTT transmitting stations for the buildings.

### **III. New Measures to Combat Fraudulent Calls**

8. Mr. Penny LO briefed members on the new measures devised and implemented by OFCA to combat fraudulent calls from the telecommunications perspective. He also showed members the TV announcement produced by OFCA with a view to reminding the public to pay attention to alerts from mobile service operators and stay vigilant against suspicious calls. Ms. Pancy CHENG then explained the implementation of the “Code of Practice on Management of Scam Calls by Mobile Service Providers” (the “CoP”) to members at the meeting. Related information was set out in TUCAC Paper No. 2/2023.

9. The Chairman said that OFCA would continue to monitor the situation and trends of fraudulent calls closely. New measures would be devised and implemented in a timely manner to continue combating fraudulent calls. The Chairman advised that the public should remain vigilant and not to easily trust the callers and provide any personal information to them without verifying their identity.

10. Mr. Francis HO said that according to the CoP, mobile service providers would suspend the relevant telecommunications service or function of the local telephone numbers concerned if any suspected scam call pattern was identified. He enquired whether the service providers would pass the information to the Police as intelligence when suspected fraudulent calls were identified, so as to enable the Police to take further follow-up and enforcement action. If not, Mr. Francis HO hoped that OFCA would consider establishing a notification mechanism with the Police in order to refer such useful information to the Police for follow-up action.

11. Ms. Pancy CHENG replied that it was stipulated in the CoP that mobile service providers were required to identify suspicious fraudulent calls based on call patterns and take appropriate action, as well as keeping relevant records. The records could be referred to enforcement agencies for crime prevention or investigation purposes as and when necessary.

12. The Chairman added that the main objective of the CoP was to block fraudulent calls at source. When mobile service operators monitored and identified suspected fraudulent call patterns, such as calls generated to different telephone numbers in a high volume within a short period of time, the network management measures would be implemented, i.e. the operators would suspend the service of the telephone numbers concerned. However, such telephone numbers might not necessarily involve in fraud. To establish a case, there should be reports from the public and police investigation to ascertain the case. During the period of Police investigation, if information was needed, mobile service operators would cooperate with the Police. In addition, OFCA would discuss the relevant arrangements with the Police and the mobile service operators in the working group.

13. Ms. Avon YUE noticed that in one of the TV announcements, while the public were reminded to stay vigilant against calls prefixed with “+852” and originated from outside Hong Kong, the public were also alerted that even if an unknown caller number display had no “+” sign and showed an 8-digit Hong Kong phone number, it might still be a scam call. She agreed with this message and believed that it could avoid tempting the public to lower their guard against unknown caller number display that showed an 8-digit Hong Kong phone number. In addition, Ms. Avon YUE pointed out that the problem of fraudulent short message service (“SMS”) messages and WhatsApp messages was becoming increasingly rampant. She understood that WhatsApp was an application and it was not feasible for mobile service operators to disseminate alert to their users. That said, as SMS was provided by mobile service

operators, she suggested that the operators should make reference to the arrangements for suspicious calls from outside Hong Kong and send certain standard voice alert or text alert to users in respect of the suspicious SMS messages.

14. The Chairman thanked Ms. Avon YUE for her comments and added that mobile service operators were unable to block fraudulent messages sent on WhatsApp owing to the fact that WhatsApp was an application operating on the Internet. Yet, OFCA had been actively discussing with the Police to work out ways of combating this type of scams, such as requesting mobile service operators to block the hyperlinks attached to the fraudulent messages on WhatsApp in order to prevent members of the public from logging in the links and hence falling victim to scams. In this regard, if someone received fraudulent WhatsApp messages with suspicious hyperlinks, he / she should report to the Police so that the Police could carry out investigation and take action as appropriate. As for SMS messages, OFCA was planning to negotiate with the banking sector with a view to launching the SMS Sender Registration Scheme (the “Registration Scheme”) within this year. The implementation of the Registration Scheme would facilitate verification of the authenticity of sender IDs as the banking sector normally used a specific sender ID to send SMS messages to their clients. OFCA would consider extending this Registration Scheme to other sectors taking into account the effectiveness of the Registration Scheme for the purpose of combating scams.

15. Mr. Fred SHEU shared that he received many calls which were indicating “scam call” or “spam call”. He was unable to decide whether he should answer those calls. He enquired whether the text display was sent from the mobile service operator or generated by his mobile phone automatically, and whether it would charge a fee.

16. Mr. Penny LO responded that the text display should have been sent from an application installed in the mobile phone. Users could decide on their own whether or not to answer these suspicious calls.

17. Mr. L T HUI understood that mobile service operators would suspend the telecommunications services or related functions of the local mobile telephone numbers suspected to have generated scam calls or made any suspicious scam calls based on the information provided by the Police. As the Real-name Registration Programme for SIM Cards (Real-name Registration Programme) was already in force, he asked whether the mobile service operators would suspend the services of all telephone numbers registered under the name of a registered user holding the telephone number of any suspected scam call, and whether the registered user involved could still register other new telephone numbers. Besides, as the Police had to rely mainly on reports from the public before any action could be taken, Mr. L T HUI suggested that the Police should establish some simple and convenient channels of reporting for the public.

18. The Chairman stated that with the full implementation of the Real-name Registration Programme, OFCA required that telecommunications service providers should conduct regular sample checks on the user information of the registered pre-paid SIM (PPS) cards. In the event of any suspicious cases, registered users should be requested to provide their identity information again. Registered users who failed to respond or provide the required information would result in cancellation of their registration and would be asked to provide identity information for the other SIM cards registered under their respective names. Similarly, if the registered users still failed to respond or provide information as required, all the registrations made would be cancelled. However, it was possible for wrongdoers to register or obtain SIM cards by illegal means or using false identity for use in their scams. If suspicious cases were identified, the operators would promptly notify the Police for follow-up action and investigation. In terms of reporting channels, according to his information, the Police

had set up an online reporting mechanism, and the “Scameter” application that had been launched could now be linked to the e-Report Centre such that reporting by members of the public could be made at any time.

19. Mr. Ricky CHONG shared the view that combating scam calls required the collective efforts from various sectors, rather than the operators alone. He also shared that he had just received an unknown message on WhatsApp, and the WhatsApp application instantly prompted him to report or block the number concerned. He suggested that the relevant departments should set up a similar reporting mechanism for SMS messages and incoming calls to collect the telephone numbers reported by the public and suspend the services of these telephone numbers accordingly, while the database could also be shared among the operators so that the possibility of the public receiving suspected fraudulent calls would be minimised.

20. The Chairman thanked Mr. Ricky CHONG for his opinion.

21. Ms. W K CHENG shared that some scammers would simulate voices with artificial intelligence for their scamming purposes. She suggested that OFCA should include such scenarios in its future publicity materials with a view to reminding the public, especially the elderly, to exercise caution even if they received calls from someone with a familiar voice and confirm the caller’s identity by asking him / her questions.

22. The Chairman thanked Ms. W K CHENG for her opinion.

23. Mr. Alex YEUNG enquired (1) whether the fixed network service operators would send standardised voice alert or text alert to their subscribers to make them aware of the suspicious calls originated from outside Hong Kong; (2) whether



the measures to combat scam calls were mainly taken to address mobile phone services, and whether OFCA and the Police would work with the fixed network service operators to draw up measures specifically for fixed telephone services.

24. Mr. Penny LO replied that the arrangement of sending standardised voice alert or text alert to subscribers was currently available to mobile services only. In fact, fixed network service operators had also participated in the discussion and implementation of new measures formulated by the working group formed by OFCA, the Police and operators. Under OFCA's co-ordination, both mobile and fixed network service operators had established a liaison protocol with the Police. The operators would take measures to forestall users' access to websites suspected to be used for scamming purpose via the hyperlinks, according to the information provided by the Police.

25. Mr. Wilson LEE said that, given the functional limitation of the fixed-line telephones, fixed network service operators were unable to insert a prefix of "+" sign in the "calling number display" for all incoming calls originated from outside Hong Kong. Mr. Wilson LEE reminded that members of the public should pay special attention to their conversation and requests of the callers, for example, staying vigilant when a caller's conversation involved financial stuff, such as money or bank account information, so as to avoid being scammed.

26. Mr. L T HUI further asked whether it would be possible for the fixed network service operators to implement the same measures as the mobile service operators had put in place to help combat fraudulent calls before devising alternatives or new measures for the fixed network services.

27. The Chairman said that OFCA would cooperate with the Police and closely monitor the trend of scams. According to the Police's statistics, most of the scams involved mobile telecommunications services as the media. Coupling with the

fact that there was a shift of the public's habits from using fixed-line services to mobile services for communications purpose nowadays, the measures currently put in place focused mainly on the mobile services. OFCA would consider extending the existing measures to and devising new initiatives for fixed network services where practicable taking into account the trend of fraudulent calls.

28. Mr. H C HUNG said that at present, telecommunications operators and non-telecommunications operators could provide various tactics to help combat fraudulent calls. He was concerned what channels were available to disseminate information on fraudulent calls to the youngsters and the elderly. He asked whether OFCA could consider working with schools and not-for-profit organisations or institutions to convey messages on how to deal with scam calls to the youngsters and the elderly.

29. The Chairman thanked Mr. H C HUNG for his comments. OFCA recognised the importance of publicity and educational work. As such, OFCA had launched a series of anti-scam publicity and educational initiatives, including community talks, roving exhibitions, roving drama for schools and alike. OFCA would also consider working with social welfare agencies in order to step up its efforts for anti-scam publicity and educational work.

30. Mr. Tsan SIU considered that the “Scameter” launched by the Police was in a sense useful to help members of the public identify scam calls. He hoped that publicity on the “Scameter” could be strengthened in all trades so that more people would be aware and make use of this tool, thereby reducing the risk of being scammed.

31. The Chairman said that OFCA would endeavour to arrange for the relevant publicity and educational activities. As a matter of fact, OFCA staff had been engaged in some of the anti-scam publicity activities conducted on television. We

would also liaise with the Police to explore ways to step up anti-scam publicity and educational work.

32. Mr. Penny LO added that mobile service operators had been assisting the Police in sending SMS messages to their subscribers for promoting the “Scameter” since 2022.

33. Mr. Francis HO agreed with Mr. Tsan SIU that every stakeholder could play a part in helping to publicise the “Scameter”, while the Consumer Council had provided information about the “Scameter” in some consumer brochures (such as the CHOICE Magazine) under suitable columns. Mr. Francis HO noted that the working group mainly conducted studies and research on the trend of fraudulent calls, and devised the combating measures for implementation afterwards. However, the victims had already suffered a loss. He therefore hoped that members of the working group could leverage the expertise of their respective sectors to step up certain preventive work that were supposed to be more forward-looking to guard against deception.

34. The Chairman thanked Mr. Francis HO for his comments and said that OFCA would continue to closely monitor the trend of fraudulent calls and devise new measures through the working group in an effort to adopt a multi-pronged approach to assist in combating fraudulent calls that were delivered through telecommunications networks.

#### **IV. Any Other Business**

##### **Latest Statistics on Consumer Complaints**

35. The Secretary reported that the CA had received 324 and 338 cases of consumer complaints in the 4th Quarter of 2022 and the 1st Quarter of 2023

respectively. All cases (100%) in the said two quarters were outside the CA's jurisdiction. These complaints primarily involved dissatisfaction with customer services, disputes over contracts / service termination, dissatisfaction with the quality of mobile communications / fixed network / Internet services and disputes over billing. No substantiated case was confirmed to be in breach of the Telecommunications Ordinance or licence conditions in the aforesaid two quarters. The latest consumer complaint statistics are in Annex 1.

#### Date of Next Meeting

36. The Chairman said that the next meeting would be held in the fourth quarter of 2023. Members would be notified of the exact time of the meeting later.

37. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:35 p.m.

# Report on Consumer Complaints on Telecom Services

The Telecommunications Users and  
Consumers Advisory Committee  
The 26<sup>th</sup> Meeting  
29 June 2023



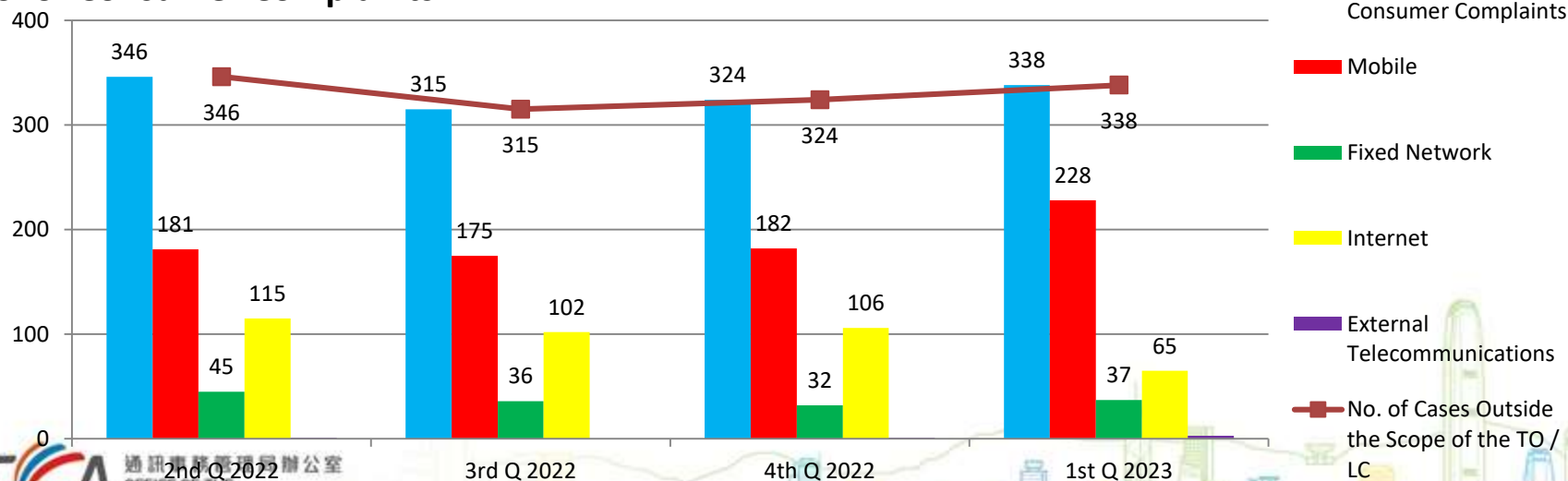
# Overview (4<sup>th</sup> Quarter 2022 and 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter of 2023)

*(Categorised by service types)*

|   | <u>2<sup>nd</sup> Q 2022</u> | <u>3<sup>rd</sup> Q 2022</u> | <u>4<sup>th</sup> Q 2022</u> | <u>1<sup>st</sup> Q 2023</u> | <u>4<sup>th</sup> Q 2022</u> | <u>1<sup>st</sup> Q 2023</u> |
|---|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>Total No. of Consumer Complaints</b> | <b>346</b>                   | <b>315</b>                   | <b>324</b>                   | <b>338</b>                   | <b>324</b>                   | <b>338</b>                   |
| Mobile                                  | 181                          | 175                          | 182                          | 228                          | 182                          | 228                          |
| Fixed Network                           | 45                           | 36                           | 32                           | 37                           | 32                           | 37                           |
| Internet                                | 115                          | 102                          | 106                          | 65                           | 106                          | 65                           |
| External Telecommunications             | 1                            | 0                            | 1                            | 3                            | 1                            | 3                            |

**No. of Cases Outside the Scope of the Telecommunications Ordinance ("TO") / Licence Conditions ("LC")**

## No. of Consumer Complaints



## No. of Complaints (4<sup>th</sup> Quarter 2022 and 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter of 2023)

In the 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter of 2022, the Communications Authority (“CA”) received 324 cases of consumer complaints, representing a slight increase of 2.9% from the 315 cases received in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter. In the 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter of 2023, the number of CA received consumer complaints increased 4.3% to 338 cases.

No. of cases not involving any breach of the TO or LC : 324 and 338 cases in the 2 Quarters respectively

The cases mainly involved :

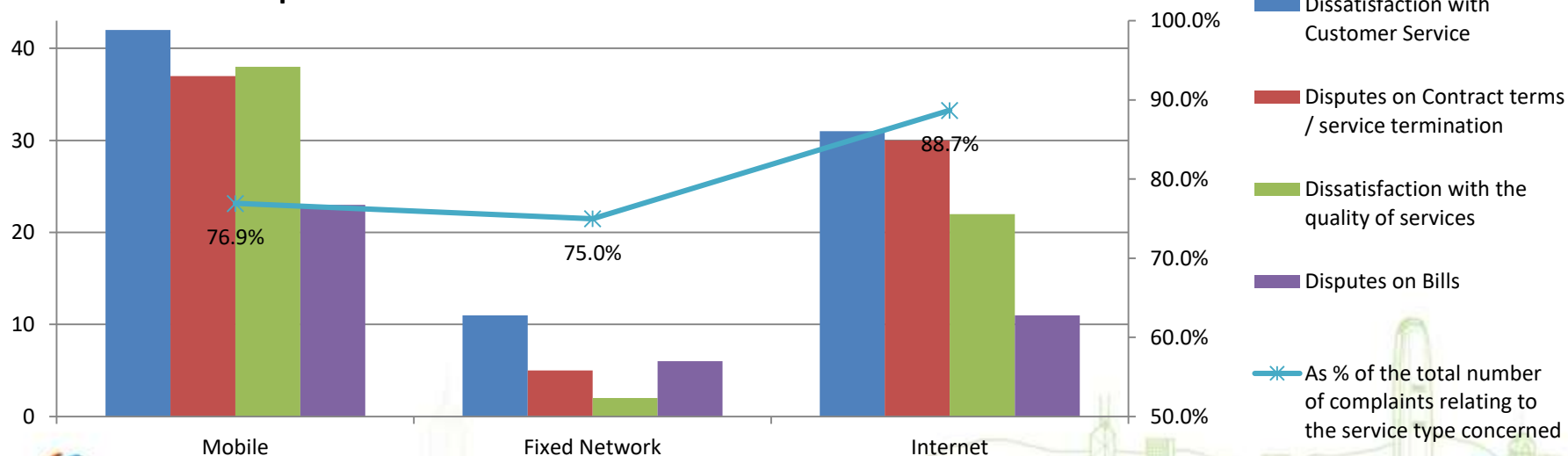
|  | <u>4<sup>th</sup> Q 2022</u> | <u>1<sup>st</sup> Q 2023</u> |
|--|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| ➤ Dissatisfaction with customer service :  | 86 cases                     | 99 cases                     |
| ➤ Disputes on contract terms / service termination :                               | 72 cases                     | 79 cases                     |
| ➤ Dissatisfaction with the quality of mobile/<br>fixed network/Internet services : | 62 cases                     | 55 cases                     |
| ➤ Disputes on bills :  | 40 cases                     | 42 cases                     |

No. of cases involving possible breach of the TO or LC : 0 case in the 2 Quarters

# No. of Complaints (4<sup>th</sup> Quarter of 2022)

| <i>(Categorised by major service types)</i> | <u>Dissatisfaction with customer service</u> | <u>Disputes on contract terms / service termination</u> | <u>Dissatisfaction with the quality of services</u> | <u>Disputes on bills</u> | <u>As percentage of the total number of complaints relating to the service type concerned</u> |
|---|--|---|---|--------------------------|---|
| Mobile                                      | 42   | 37  | 38  | 23                       | 76.9%   |
| Fixed Network                               | 11   | 5   | 2   | 6                        | 75.0%   |
| Internet                                    | 31   | 30  | 22  | 11                       | 88.7%   |

No. of Consumer Complaints

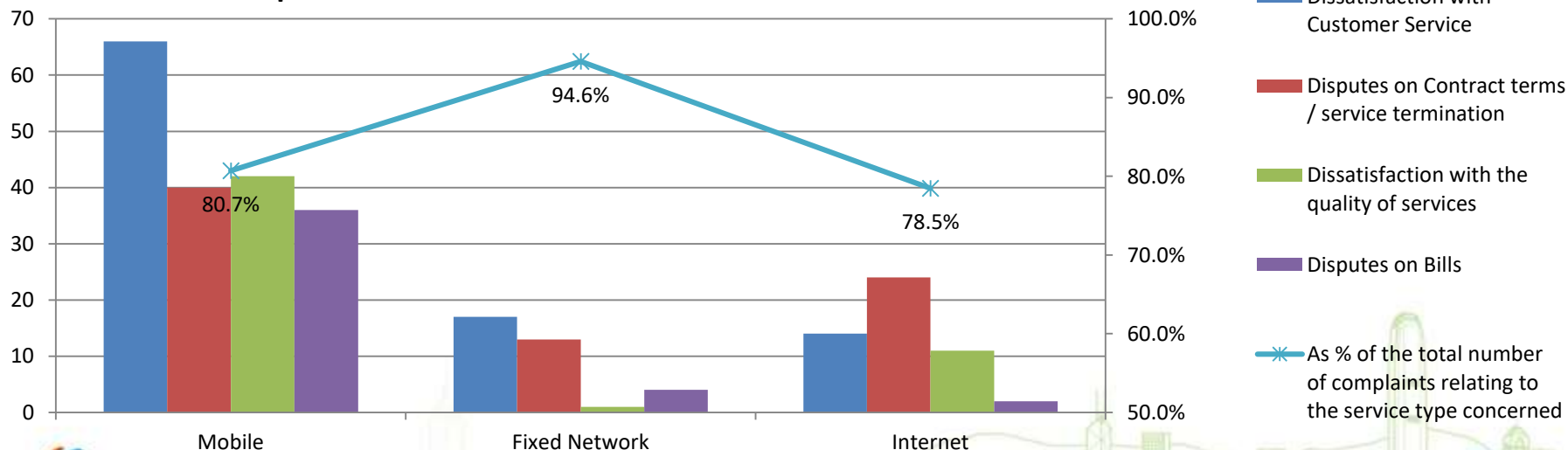




# No. of Complaints (1<sup>st</sup> Quarter of 2023)

| <i>(Categorised by major service types)</i> | <u>Dissatisfaction with customer service</u> | <u>Disputes on contract terms / service termination</u> | <u>Dissatisfaction with the quality of services</u> | <u>Disputes on bills</u> | <u>As percentage of the total number of complaints relating to the service type concerned</u> |
|---|--|---|---|--------------------------|---|
| Mobile                                      | 66   | 40  | 42  | 36                       | 80.7%   |
| Fixed Network                               | 17   | 13  | 1   | 4                        | 94.6%   |
| Internet                                    | 14   | 24  | 11  | 2                        | 78.5%   |

No. of Consumer Complaints



# No. of Complaints (4<sup>th</sup> Quarter 2022 and 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter of 2023)

## Case Analysis of Breach of the TO / LC

In the 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter 2022 and 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter of 2023, there was no substantiated case of breach of the TO/LC.



# Thank You

