



# Submission on the Commerce Commission's open letter aimed at increasing consumer awareness of TDRS Non-Membership

8th August 2022

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## Introduction

1. TUANZ is pleased to submit in relation to the open letter sent by the Commerce Commission to stakeholders on the 18th July 2022 with options aimed at increasing consumer awareness of the TDRS (Telecommunications Disputes Resolution Service). This submission is a Public Version and contains no confidential information.
2. Our address is PO Box 65503, Mairangi Bay, Northshore 0754 or Level 7, 62 Victoria Street West, Auckland Central. Our email address is [office@tuanz.org.nz](mailto:office@tuanz.org.nz) and our website can be found at <https://www.tuanz.org.nz>.

## The Technology Uses Association of NZ Inc (TUANZ)

3. TUANZ is the association for the users of digital technology and connectivity which is in its 35th year since incorporation. We are unique - **we believe there is no other group or organisation that is representative of the people and organisations that are the end users of digital technologies in the manner that TUANZ is. We value our independence and will always seek to speak for users without undue influence.**
4. Our members want to see a lift in the digital economy along with the continued development of strong markets across the technology and connectivity sectors providing real choice for end users – whether corporations or consumers. We seek a national drive to leverage the opportunities that we have with our world leading digital networks. **TUANZ has the vision where New Zealand is one of the top 10 digital ready nations by 2030.**
5. TUANZ position is consistent and clear: **The availability of competitively priced, good quality, fast connectivity in all parts of NZ is a critical economic enabler for the future of the NZ economy.**
6. TUANZ is a not-for-profit membership association with over 170 members, predominantly large organisations with a strong dependency on digital technology and connectivity as well as small enterprises and individual members. These small businesses and residential users are the customers of our large corporate members, who are just as focused on the quality of their customers' connectivity as their own.

## **Our position on TDRS remains consistent**

7. As stated in our previous submissions, our position in regards to the TDRS has not significantly changed since we made submissions during the most recent review of the Telecommunications Act.
8. Specifically we continue to believe there should be a requirement for all providers of telecommunications services in New Zealand to end users to be part of an approved disputes service such as the TDRS.
9. However, given that this requirement was not included in the changes to the Telecommunications Act, we support moves to strengthen protections for all users through the use of the TDRS.
10. As a minimum, there should be a requirement on members of the TDRS to advertise the fact through their website and customer communications.
11. We support and agree with the Commission's moves and provide answers to the questions included in the open letter.

## **Response to Questions**

- 12. Do you agree it is necessary to take steps to increase consumer awareness and understanding in this area?**

As stated above, we support any steps taken to improve consumer protections. In line with our position and with our experience of consumer queries that we receive, we agree that it is necessary to increase awareness and understanding.

- 13. Which of the three options outlined do you prefer and why?**

We prefer the combined pathway - option 3. We believe that Option 1, while a good first step, still means that many consumers will remain unaware of the status of their provider's membership of the TDRS. Option 2 will ensure that consumers are aware of the provider's position before signing up to take services. Option 3 means that both are in place and consumers can check on the Commission's website prior to engaging with a provider, as well as provide an independent check on providers.

- 14. Are there any other options not considered in this letter?**

The only other option that we would like to see in line with these moves is a requirement for the TCF to list on their website members of the TDRS

even if they are not TCF members. They should also be required to include information on their website about the Commission Disclosure (Option 1).

- 15. Should there be an exception for smaller providers for any disclosure requirements? If so, on what basis, and what threshold should apply?**

We do not believe that there should be any exceptions to these requirements. Given the wide use of electronic communications and websites, it should be a simple change to meet these requirements.

- 16. What period of time should be allowed for non-members to join TDRS under Option1?**

We are comfortable with the period being either 60 or 90 days.

- 17. Do you agree that a Commission Code would be the most effective way of implementing disclosure obligations under Option 2?**

We do not have a particular view on this question.

### **Final Comments**

18. TUANZ welcomes the opportunity to provide the Commission with this submission in regards to the proposals in regards to increasing consumer awareness of the TDRS. This paper provides answers to questions in the letter based on our experiences that represent actual users of technology and digital communications. As always we have attempted to provide a succinct and clear enunciation of the views of our members.
19. We look forward to working further with the Commission on this matter..

### **Contact**

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