

Complaints Received

INITIALISMS KEY	
C	Complainant
T	Trader (Vodafone New Zealand Ltd)

ENQUIRY 319092 – 8 OCT 2016

Description	<p>C states:</p> <p>"Vodafone has renamed its cable network as "FiberX"</p> <p>I feel this is misleading, and therefore a breach of the fair trading act.</p> <p>Naming convention for retail internet products is to refer to the "last mile" technology (i.e. what feeds into the customer's house)</p> <p>My concern is that Vodafone is trying to pass its co-axial cable network off as a true FTTH (fiber to the home) network, and hence cause confusion between their cable offering and the UFB network (which is legitimately a fiber network).</p> <p>Vodafone's justification for the use of the term "Fiber" in the product name, appears to be due to the use of optical fibers to provide backhaul from their cabinets. This practice is at least a decade old in NZ, and industry convention (and consumer expectation) is that the name of the product they buy reflects the "last mile" connection type. (for example 3G, LTE, ADSL, VDSL)."</p>
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ENQUIRY 319812 – 8 NOV 2016

Description	<p>C states:</p> <p>"If the commission is not investigating Vodafone for its new FibreX product it should.</p> <p>The marketing(http://www.vodafone.co.nz/broadband/ultra-fast-fibre/fibrex/) is based around misinformation. The product is not Fibre unless you're willing to accept that Cellphones ADSL and VDSL are also Fibre.</p> <p>Also it markets itself as gigabit but it is not, 1000Mbps is Gigabit, 900Mbps is not.</p> <p>Vodafone are attempting to mislead consumers."</p>
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ENQUIRY 323816 – 16 MAR 2017

Description	<p>"Recently I upgraded my unlimited Vodafone broadband to Fibre as it had become available in my area. The upgrade was via a door to door seller. I signed up for Fibre 200 as it would work out faster and at a similar price to my existing ADSL broadband. I attached the January bill to show the pre change amount. I did speed tests before and after the change and the speed did change from about 16Mbps to close to 200Mbps.</p> <p>When the February bill (attached) arrived it was full of errors. They had not applied the correct discounts and they were billing me for things that were to be free. I rang them to</p>
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	<p>have this fixed and the woman said my account was marked as being upgraded to Fibre Max. I said no, and pointed out that I signed up for Fibre 200 and that's all I want/need. They said it, and the other errors, would be sorted out.</p> <p>When this months (March) bill arrived I see they had changed me from 200 to Max, something I VERY specifically said I didn't sign up for or want and signed my up for, and billed me for Max.</p> <p>I rang them to complain but before doing so I ran a couple of speed tests which returned 189Mbps and 195Mbps. Unfortunately I did not screenshot these until after the phone call so the time on the desktop is after I had made the call (I used the browser back button to get the previous results). I found it odd that they had billed me for something I didn't want but weren't actually providing that speed.</p> <p>During this call they had to transfer me to some special team. I again said I never asked for Max, my contract clearly states 200 and at no point had I asked to be upgraded. They said they would fix it and it would take 48 hours and that I would then need to ring the billing team again (third time!) when the next bill arrived. I pointed out to them that even though they were billing for Max the speed was only 200. They checked and said no, my connection was at maximum. I believe this was a lie and they changed it at that point.</p> <p>Immediately after the call I ran a speed test again and this time it did return much faster speeds. I am now getting in the 800-900 Mbps range.</p> <p>I am not looking for any recompense but I am concerned that their billing is almost incomprehensible, in fact it seems designed to confuse, and that they don't seem to be giving people what they sign up for. Errors and mistakes seem common and then take effort, and not inconsiderable time, to resolve. Also that their representatives seem to stretch the truth about certain things. I know, from testing, my connection speed was not what they claimed it was until after I told them it was wrong at which point it magically changed. I will retest the speed in 48 hours to see if it drops back to 200 again."</p>
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ENQUIRY 324245 – 13 APR 2017

Description	<p>C says that T advertises a broadband plan called FibreX but the lines are allegedly not all made out of fibre. The cables laid are allegedly partially made with copper.</p> <p>C says she had asked a few people to explain the system who had said the cables are Fibre running to the cabinets for the wiring, but they are copper from the cabinet to the house.</p> <p>C believes it is misleading to advertise the plan as fibre when it is not completely.</p>
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ENQUIRY 500868 – 13 APR 2017

Description	<p>C states:</p> <p>"I am looking at getting fibre installed at my house, and on the vodaphone website they have a great offer under their fibrex plan - \$79.99 per month. That's amazing.</p>
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<https://www.vodafone.co.nz/broadband/high-speed-cable/?data=unlimited&speed=ufbv200&phone=no&tv=no>

However, when I click on buy now, it asks for my address [REDACTED] and then the price changes.

Surely that is some sort of false advertising or bait & switch - stating one price and then changing the price after the customer has decided to buy.

Just thought you would like to know."

ENQUIRY 400276 – 01 MAY 2017

Description

C states:

"Vodafone is currently offering a service called "FibreX". I was searching around to actually uncover what "FibreX" is and why it is different from normal fibre. After looking into it further, it seems Vodafone has re-branded it's HFC (cable) network and given it a slight upgrade. The issue here is that they are calling it "FibreX" when in reality, it does not involve a fibre optic cable going to the property. I think they are misleading people by calling it Fibre rather than cable. Nowhere in any of it's advertisements do they mention that it's running over a coax cable network, rather than fibre. "

ENQUIRY 500767 – 03 MAY 2017

Description

C states:

"I wanted to let you know about my recent experience with Vodafone as I have concerns their advertising and current policy are in breach of the Fair Trading Act.

I have been a Vodafone broadband and mobile customer for some time, and I received the attached letter about FibreX. I already had a request underway to upgrade our broadband connection underway but it was taking sometime so I asked if I was eligible (yes) and to initiate a FibreX connection so that I could hopefully get it within 3 days, rather than wait for Chorus to do the installation for the other Vodafone Fibre option I'd originally requested.

On March 14 2017 I received an email confirming my FibreX order. On 12 April I called Vodafone because I hadn't heard anything else about it, and I wanted to check that I would get the \$100 credit. At the same time I received a message from Chorus advising they would finish my original Fibre installation request that day.

Vodafone then refused to give me the \$100 credit as I was not going ahead with the FibreX connection. I said I was reluctant to cancel Chorus as I'd been waiting months for the upgrade and I didn't have confidence in Vodafone to install FibreX promptly.

Since then I have emailed Vodafone and they have contacted me, apologised and given me the \$100 as well as waiving my first month of broadband so I am happy with the outcome I have achieved for myself. However, I am concerned other customers are waiting extended periods of time and then being denied the credit which is clearly promised in their

advertising if they get fed up of waiting and cancel their order.

Please give me a call if none of this makes sense or you need more information."

ENQUIRY 501870– 07 MAY 2017

Description

C states:

“Has Vodafones product 'FibreX' been investigated by the CC?

To add context, It's their Hybrid Fibre-Coaxial product, that is delivered to the home via Coax cable. The Coax cable connects to Fibre a few hundred meters away. That's why they call it FibreX, but many customers will confuse this with other ISP's 'True Fibre' where the fibre goes right into your house.

It is FTTN - Fibre to the Node, (cabinet). DSL is also FTTN however the cable is capable of greater speeds. Truenet reports and geek zone users also indicate that the connection is quite up and down in terms of stability.”

ENQUIRY 501076 – 12 MAY 2017

Description

C states:

"Vodafone are advertising their new internet plans as FibreX. This however is not Fibre internet, it is co-axial cable running to the houses backed by a fibre infrastructure network. This is grossly misleading, as the accepted descriptor of any internet connection type is dictated by the final part of the network. If we were to follow Vodafone's tortured logic, you could call any internet for the last decade fibre, as all internet trails back to fibre as some point.

Nowhere on their website do they indicate that you are not actually getting fibre being run to your house, and I suspect a lot of people are getting caught out buying a product that is being advertised falsely.

<http://www.vodafone.co.nz/broadband/ultra-fast-fibre/fibrex/>"

ENQUIRY 501646 – 12 MAY 2017

Description

C states:

"I recently signed up to Vodafone's FibreX package. I assumed it was using Fibre to the door technology, like many other internet providers. In reality it doesn't. It uses Vodafone's cable technology. I didn't find this out until Vodafone's contractor Downer turned up at home to dig a ditch up our drive to lay a cable. I was surprised because I assumed they would use the fibre cable that was laid when we subscribed to Spark 18 months ago. When I spoke to them about this they said that it is Fibre speeds, even though it doesn't use Fibre. They do of course, use Fibre in their network, but no where near our house.

To me, this is misleading. I assumed because of the name that I was getting fibre, but I'm getting copper cable. I assumed they could use our existing fiber cable, but had to suffer the

	<p>(albeit minor) inconvenience and delay of having our driveway dug again. I may well get the speeds that they said I would, although with my long driveway I'm not sure this will be the case. Even if they do deliver the speeds they claim now, their cable is not future proofed. The capacity of fibre far exceed the capacity of copper from what I understand. I would have liked to have known what I was buying so I could make an informed decision.</p> <p>I think they should change the name of the product, or at least inform people of what they are buying. I noticed today that their website mentions the technology they use as DOCSIS 3.1 technology. However I don't think this is clear that it's not fibre. I've attached a copy of the brochure that led me to sign up with them. It makes no mention of the DOCSIS 3.1 tech and mis led me to believe I was getting fibre."</p>
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ENQUIRY 501971 – 31 MAY 2017	
Description	<p>C states:</p> <p>"I would like to say that I was mislead On this service. I was advised that I would get steady and reliable speeds as fast or faster than fibre Unfortunately I cannot get fibre where I am</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>Given the opportunity I would happily opt out of this service but was signed up for 2 years</p> <p>The service I receive constantly disconnects Poor speeds and hangs</p> <p>I have given up on contacting vodaphone due to there excuses and long wait times getting thru</p> <p>I have asked them to send an Engineer out to test They say nothing is wrong</p> <p>I have logged into the router which they supplied and have had over 980 disconnects</p> <p>More than happy to put my complaints forward due to the misleading service I was sold</p> <p>Many thanks"</p>

ENQUIRY 501975 – 01 JUN 2017	
Description	<p>C states:</p> <p>"I was just "upgraded" to fibrex by vodafone and in fact I wondered if it was better than what I had as I already experienced internet radio cutting off when ot was fne before. I did think it was fibre though...."</p>

ENQUIRY 501976 – 01 JUN 2017**Description**

C states:

"I just resigned with vodafone on the fibre X unlimited broadband. On their website on the front page one of the adds that comes up is \$300 joining credit and neon on us for a year. The details for the Neon offer state from 8 March 2017 for a limited time it's free for 12 months. When I called up I was offered it for 3 months only, the lady stated the offer was expired and had been since 30 April. I'm not sure how they can continue to offer that deal without specifying an end date then decline to honour it. I have lodged a complaint through vodafone as well."

ENQUIRY 501977 – 01 JUN 2017**Description**

C states:

"I'm just getting in contact about issues with Vodafone's FibreX

We moved to a property in Island Bay in November last year. A door-to-door sales rep for Vodafone approached us with an offer for FibreX which was sold to us as 'essentially fibre' with the same speeds.

Unfortunately we've had significant issues both with connectivity and speeds over the past ~6 months. Weekly dropouts, leaving us disconnected for several hours at a time, have amounted to a considerable length of time on the phone with Vodafone. Engineers we've spoken to have told us that the network 'simply can't cope with the load'. Congestion during peak use periods have left us with a basically unusable connection at times.

What's been the most frustrating, is that while Vodafone seemingly can't cope with the current load, we've seen large advertising campaigns and even direct mailers in our area advertising the network.

When it works, it's great, but the persistent issues and lack of alternatives have left us in a frustrating position."

ENQUIRY 501980 – 01 JUN 2017**Description**

C states:

"I have read some article about the fibreX connection in Newlands and that it is misleading etc.

When we switched from the internet connection we had to Fibrex earlier this year we were told that the fibre connection is faster than the cable connection. That it will be heaps quicker than the previous internet. We took their word and changed to FibreX (both connections with Vodafone). The connection has never been faster and there more times then not that the connection is so slow that it loses connection and you have to reboot the system.

Where do we go from here as we are on a contract with Vodafone and this seems to be a common thing among other users in the area. We are paying more for this connection also.

Any advice would be awesome."

ENQUIRY 501982 – 01 JUN 2017**Description**

C states:

"I was recently researching internet plans and came across Vodafone FibreX:
<https://www.vodafone.co.nz/broadband/ultra-fast-fibre/fibrex/>

I was disappointed to find out upon reading the fine print this is not fibre to my home, like other fibre internet plans. It is fibre to the local exchange (somewhere in the neighborhood) and then regular copper wire to my home.

I believe this is incredibly misleading, using "fibre" in the brand name for their product which is not actually a fibre connection. I suspect the bulk of NZ consumers are not tech-savvy enough to know the difference between fibre to the home vs fibre to the local exchange and are being taken for a ride by Vodafone's slimy marketing."

ENQUIRY 501992 – 06 JUN 2017**Description**

C states:

"Their FiberX offering is very misleading. I signed up to the Vodafone FiberX 200Mbps Unlimited believing it was a fiber connection and in talking with their customer service center I have been repeatedly told that I am a fiber customer. I've since learnt that I don't have a fiber connection, but a cable connection instead. I don't think the 'X' suitably distinguishes the offering from a fiber connection and is very misleading to someone who doesn't have a strong understanding of technical jargon so relies upon the guidance of Vodafone and their representatives."

ENQUIRY 501999 – 08 JUN 2017**Description**

C would like to report Vodafone's Fibre X plan but the network is not a Fibre network but a copper wire. Claims to be comparable to Fibre but it is regular cable and network and feels misled.