



Calls to 190 and other premium service numbers

Frequently asked questions

What are premium services?


Premium services are content or live advice services which can be accessed by making a phone call. Premium service numbers usually start with 188, 19, 190, or an international number, for example 0011. Examples of premium services are adult services, psychic lines, weather services, voting lines for television shows or competition lines, chat services or ring tones. Premium services can also include high school test result hotlines. You can also access some of these services through another provider by dialling their override code followed by the service number.

Proprietary network services also offer access to premium data services. Examples of such premium services include news updates, sports or weather reports, ring tones or wallpaper.

How can you be charged?

You can be charged for premium services in several ways.

- Flat rate – this is where you are charged a fixed amount for each call you make. It is a good idea to keep track of how many calls you make as the cost can quickly add up.
- Timed rate – this is where your calls are timed and charged at a rate per minute (or other time unit used by the supplier). A fixed setup or connection fee may also apply. Keeping track of how long you spend on the call will help to keep your costs to a minimum. (The average cost of a premium service can range from several cents to a few dollars per minute, depending on the service, which depends on the supplier.)
- By data volume – this is where you are charged according to the amount of data you download from, or via, a proprietary network.



You should always check the cost of the premium service before you use it. It is also a good idea to keep track of how many calls you make, or how often you access these services and how long they last as the cost can quickly add up, possibly creating an unexpected high bill and potentially contributing to financial difficulty.

Failure to be able to pay a phone bill could result in the restriction of your phone service and ultimately could result in the recording of a default in your record with credit rating agencies, reducing your ability to obtain credit for other purposes in the future.

What is the liability for cost?


You are usually responsible for the cost of any calls made from your phone, including calls made by family and friends, even when made without your knowledge. There are a number of specific rules that relate to the provision of premium services aimed at ensuring that customers are fully informed about the price and content of the services. If these rules have been broken, your provider may not be able to ask you to pay for the service.

Note: if you are deaf or have a hearing or speech impairment and wish to make calls to premium service numbers via the National Relay Service, then you must have an account with Australian Communication Exchange and you will be charged for the calls.

What steps can you take to lessen the risk of high, unexpected bills?

To limit access to premium services, TransACT can activate call barring for specific numbers.

Please call one of our customer service representatives on 13 30 61 to discuss your barring options. Fees for call barring apply as per TransACT's *Schedule of charges*.



You can bar access to some or all premium services using one of the following options.

- Barring only 190 calls – this means all calls to 190 numbers are barred permanently.
- Barring access to proprietary networks – this means all access to a proprietary network can be barred at your request if the proprietary networks number is given.
- Barring all calls (excluding local calls) – this means all national, international, calls to mobiles and calls to 190 numbers are barred permanently through TransACT.
- If you wish to bar all international numbers with TransACT, but don't have a bar put on override codes, you could be charged by another service provider for an international call. Override codes are four digit numbers starting with the prefix 14 and allow customers to use another service provider on a call by call basis for long distance and international calls.

Monthly limit on calls to 190 numbers

There is a default spend limit of \$550 per month (including GST) per service for calls made to 190 numbers. Once this per service limit is reached access to all 190 services will be restricted for the remainder of the calendar month. This limit may be increased by calling TransACT on 13 30 61.

Other options to control your phone bill

Your computer modem may dial an international number by using internet dialler software to access content on internet sites, known as internet dumping. This can lead to unexpected high bills. A fact sheet on internet dumping is available on the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) website and explains what internet dumping is and how you can protect yourself from it.

Concerned about your use of premium services?

To discuss any concerns you have about premium services or the costs you have incurred, please call us on 13 30 61.

If we are unable to resolve this matter you can contact the Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman (TIO). The TIO is an office of last resort for complaints about phone and internet services.

Freecall - 1800 062 058

Freefax - 1800 630 614

TTY - 1800 675 692

Translator and interpreter service - 13 14 50

Email - tio@tio.com.au

If you have a complaint about the content of a 190 service you can contact the Telephone Information Services Standards Council (TISSC). TISSC investigates complaints about message content and advertising of 190 premium services.

Phone - 1300 139 955

Fax - 02 9211 4447

Email - tissc@tissc.com.au

You can also contact the ACMA for information on telecommunications issues. The ACMA is a Commonwealth government agency responsible for regulating the telecommunications industry.

Phone - 1300 850 115



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