FC’s case study:

Vodaphone’s Request for information re DV:

**Here’s part of Vodaphone’s response to my request for a Debt waiver based on DV situation:**

“As you can see on the July 2020 invoice this service was fully utilised until Vodafone blocked the services on the 22/07/2020 due to non-payment.  The last successful payment made into this account was on the 06/05/2020 which cleared the April Invoice charge.

Please confirm who was utilising this service and device.

1. If it was the Domestic Violence perpetrator I will require the following items for Debt Waiver review:-

* Completed Stat Declaration
* Police Report
* IVO/AVO
* Supporting documents from Domestic Violence Case Worker”

Sought advice from Julia Bidstrup, Consumer Legal Adviser LSC who sent me the information and link below

**This may be useful for Vodafone and others, especially see 5.4 – Accept the word of the customer and do not ask for additional evidence:**

<https://www.commsalliance.com.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0003/61527/Communications-Guideline-G660-Assisting-Customers-Experiencing-Domestic-and-Family-Violence.pdf> which includes the following recommendations

COMMUNICATIONSALLIANCE LTD

INDUSTRY GUIDELINE G660:2018

ASSISTING CUSTOMERS EXPERIENCING DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE

**5.2.1 Facilitating Access to an Authorised Representative or Advocate**

The TCP Code currently states that a “Supplier must ensure that a Consumer can appoint an Authorised Representative to act on their behalf,”5and that “a Supplier must ensure that a Consumer can easily use an Advocate to communicate with the Supplier, if the Consumer requires.”This includes allowing those who have experienced domestic and family violence to be represented by a domestic and family violence advocate, legal advocate or **financial counsellor in relation to discussions regarding their account, and facilitating the appointment of these representatives by accepting relevant forms and documentation in a range of easily accessible methods**

**5.4 Communicating in a Supportive and Safe Way**

There are a range of practices providers can use to make it easier for survivors to communicate with their provider. This section provides background information for providers on the importance of considering their communication methods, and possible options to support those who have experienced domestic and family violence.

On a high level, the recommended approach is for providers to:

•accept the word of those who have experienced domestic and family violence and not require them to provide additional evidence or specific details; and

•where possible and wished for by the customer, not require someone to explain that they are experiencing domestic and family violence more than once

I find it very interesting that a well known and well established TELCO is requesting so much information against all their own guidelines, especially given the size of the debt.