



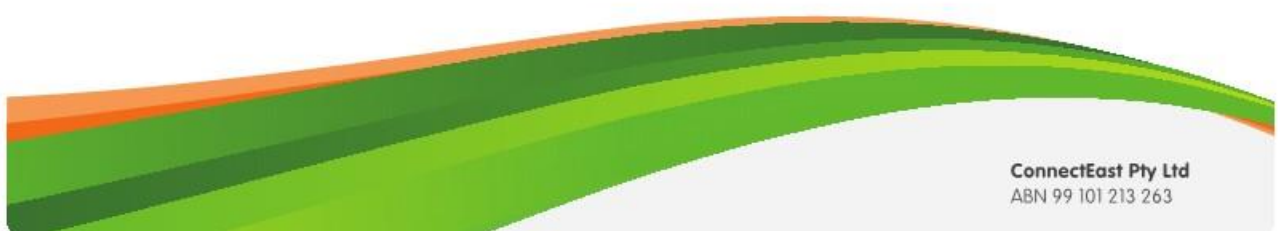
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Time better spent.

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EASTLINK CUSTOMER ADVOCATE REPORT

Q2 2025 (1 APRIL 2025 – 30 JUNE 2025)



ConnectEast Pty Ltd
ABN 99 101 213 263

CONTENTS

1.	EASTLINK CUSTOMER ADVOCATE'S MESSAGE	3
2.	CUSTOMER ADVOCATE CASES DURING THE QUARTER	4
2.1	Cases raised	4
2.2	Cases closed	4
2.3	Case findings	4
2.4	Elapsed time to close cases	5
3.	CUSTOMER ADVOCATE CASE TRENDS	6
3.1	Historical trends	6
4.	HARDSHIP ASSISTANCE	9
4.1	Payment plans	9
4.2	Fines withdrawn due to financial hardship	9
5.	CUSTOMER ADVOCATE CASE EXAMPLES	10
5.1	Customer A (not all toll invoices can be transferred to a tolling account)	10
5.2	Customer B (vehicle details incorrectly specified for trip pass)	10
5.3	Customer C (suspension notices ignored)	10
5.4	Customer D (Victorian resident's vehicle not registered in Victoria)	11
5.5	Customer E (vehicle added to an account too late)	11

1. EASTLINK CUSTOMER ADVOCATE'S MESSAGE

2 July 2025

This report covers the Q2 2025 quarterly period (1 April 2025 – 30 June 2025).

For the fourth consecutive quarter, the number of EastLink Customer Advocate (ECA) cases raised by customers in Q2 2025 (38 cases) was much lower than the nominal case rate (50-60 cases per quarter), however the trend visible from Q3 2024 to Q2 2025 does appear to be returning towards the nominal case rate.

The elapsed time to close ECA cases during Q2 2025 (2.5 calendar days) was slightly higher than the longer term average over the preceding seven quarters (2.4 calendar days), although lower than the previous two quarters Q4 2024 and Q1 2025 and within the normal range of variation.

Two cases in Q2 2025 took a relatively long time to close (13 calendar days and 10 calendar days respectively):

- > In the first of these cases, the delay was attributed to the ECA taking longer than usual to consider the merits of the customer's complaint, which was complex in nature. In this case the complaint was rejected.
- > In the second of these cases, the delay was attributed to the Easter public holiday weekend (4 days) and some staff personal leave.

Excluding these two cases, the average time to close ECA cases during Q2 2025 would fall to just 2.0 calendar days.

58% of the cases raised during Q2 2025 related to toll invoices, which is slightly higher than the longer term average for this case type over the preceding seven quarters (51%). However, there is no indication of a specific or systemic customer service failure contributing to this increase, and the 22 cases raised in relation to toll invoices during Q2 2025 had a broad range of outcomes.

The total amount of refunds and credits during Q2 2025 (\$527) was less than half of the longer term average over the preceding seven quarters (\$1,145).

The following hardship assistance data is sourced from EastLink's hardship team:

- > The number of payment plans created during Q2 2025 (1,346 plans created) was 23% higher than the longer term average over the preceding seven quarters (1,091 plans created), and was the highest number recorded in any quarter. The average value of payment plan created during Q2 2025 (\$273) was similar to the longer term average over the preceding seven quarters (\$283).
- > The number of fines withdrawn by EastLink due to hardship during Q2 2025 (1,424 fines withdrawn) was 15% higher than the longer term average over the preceding seven quarters (1,242 fines withdrawn). The number of people assisted with fines withdrawn during Q2 2025 (106 people assisted) was 41% higher than the longer term average over the preceding seven quarters (75 people assisted).

If you are experiencing financial hardship and are seeking assistance in relation to any EastLink debt, please email hardship@connecteast.com.au or phone EastLink's customer services team in Melbourne on (03) 9955 1400 during business hours Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays).

For more information about EastLink's hardship policy (which outlines available options and how to request hardship assistance), visit www.eastlink.com.au/hardship.

For more information about the role of the EastLink Customer Advocate, visit www.eastlink.com.au/customeradvocate.

Doug Spencer-Roy
EastLink Customer Advocate



2. CUSTOMER ADVOCATE CASES DURING THE QUARTER

2.1 CASES RAISED

Most of the cases raised during Q2 2025 related to the following:

- > Toll invoices (58%)

Table 1: ECA cases raised

ECA CASES RAISED	Apr 2025	May 2025	Jun 2025	Q2 2025
Toll invoice	8	6	5	19
Toll invoice communications	1	1	1	3
Account charge	0	2	1	3
Account charge for a sold vehicle	0	1	0	1
Account closure	0	0	1	1
Website	0	0	1	1
Hardship assistance	1	2	0	3
Infringements (fines)	0	1	2	3
Incident response	0	1	0	1
Debris damage	1	0	1	2
Signage	0	0	1	1
TOTAL	11	14	13	38

2.2 CASES CLOSED

All of the cases raised during Q2 2025 have been closed. The last of these cases was received on 27/6/2025, investigated and closed on 27/6/2025, with the customer notified of the ECA's finding on the same day.

Table 2: ECA cases closed

ECA CASES CLOSED	Apr 2025	May 2025	Jun 2025	Q2 2025
Q1 2025 cases closed (as at date of report)	11	14	13	38
Q1 2025 cases still open (as at date of report)	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	11	14	13	38

2.3 CASE FINDINGS

In 29% of cases during Q2 2025, although EastLink was not at fault and there was no valid complaint, the ECA arranged for EastLink's customer service team to assist the customer with their predicament via expedited service.

18% of cases in the quarter were fully upheld, and a further 11% of cases were partially upheld.

In 34% of cases the complaint was rejected with no practical customer service assistance identifiable.

Two customers were referred to another tollway operator or other body.

One customer provided insufficient details to allow the case to be investigated (despite specific information requested and reminders sent).

Table 3: ECA case findings

ECA CASE FINDINGS	Apr 2025	May 2025	Jun 2025	Q2 2025
Service expedited (no valid complaint)	7	2	2	11
Complaint upheld	0	5	2	7
Complaint partially upheld	2	0	2	4

ECA CASE FINDINGS	Apr 2025	May 2025	Jun 2025	Q2 2025
Complaint rejected	1	7	5	13
Referred to another tollway operator etc.	0	0	2	2
Insufficient details provided	1	0	0	1
TOTAL	11	14	13	38

Most cases involved complaints about modest sums – in particular, the fee component of a toll invoice but not the toll component, or the image processing fee component but not the toll component. In general, it is usually not the trip or toll that is disputed, but whether the trip is able to be charged to a valid account or pass, or if the trip is subject to additional fees such as the toll invoice fee or image processing fee.

This means that the refunds and credits awarded can vary significantly from month to month, depending on whether there are any of the more unusual, higher value cases during the month, and whether those complaints are upheld or rejected.

Table 4: ECA case findings – refunds & credits

ECA CASE FINDINGS – REFUNDS & CREDITS	Apr 2025	May 2025	Jun 2025	Q2 2025
Refunds & credits awarded	\$192	\$242	\$93	\$527

2.4 ELAPSED TIME TO CLOSE CASES

The average elapsed time to close ECA cases during the quarter was 2.5 calendar days. This elapsed time metric (calendar days) includes days on weekends and public holidays, and is synonymous with customer wait time.

Table 5: Elapsed time to close ECA cases

ELAPSED TIME TO CLOSE ECA CASES	Apr 2025	May 2025	Jun 2025	Q2 2025
Average time to close cases (calendar days)	3.6	2.5	1.5	2.5

Case Study – vehicle added to a tolling account weeks after EastLink travel

The Customer added their vehicle to a tolling account operated by another tollway operator some weeks after EastLink travel.

However, the other tollway operator does not provide any backdating of coverage for EastLink travel on their accounts.

Two EastLink toll invoices were issued for the unpaid EastLink travel, one of which was not paid by its due date resulting in an EastLink overdue notice being issued.

The outstanding toll invoice was paid by the customer, but the customer was seeking a waiver of the fees in the overdue notice.

Investigation did not reveal any error by EastLink. The customer was informed that the overdue notice remained payable in full. To provide assistance, the due date for the overdue notice was extended.

3. CUSTOMER ADVOCATE CASE TRENDS

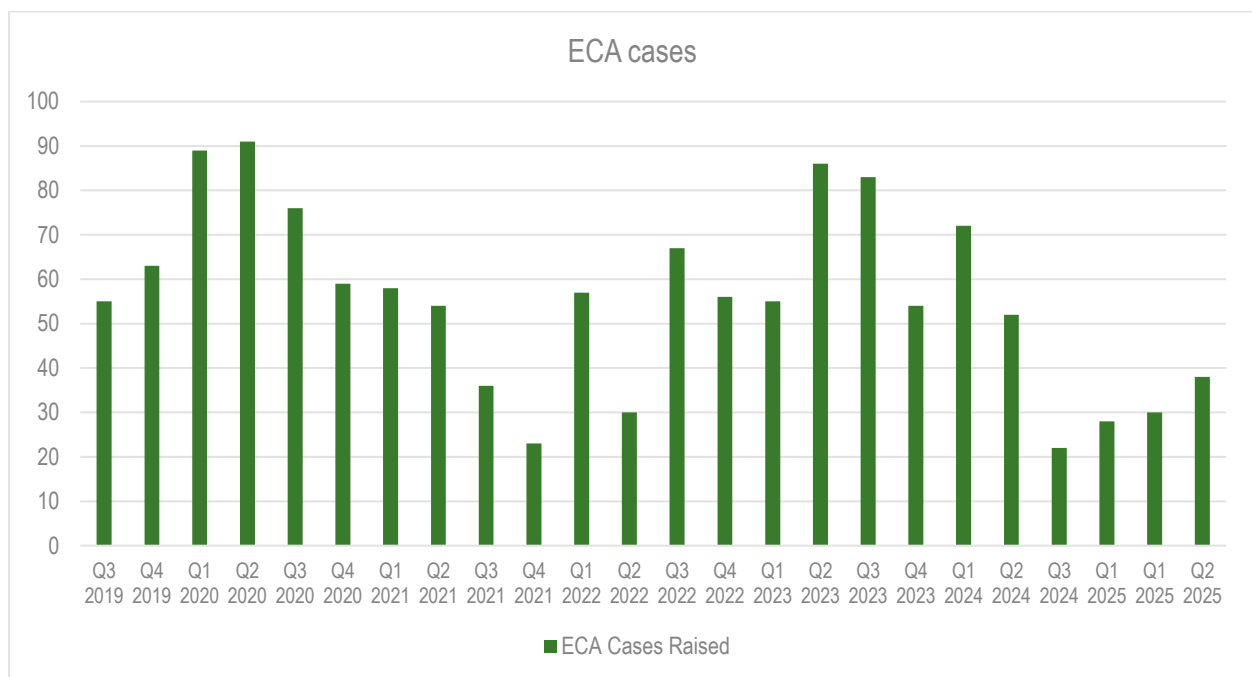
3.1 HISTORICAL TRENDS

Chart 1 shows the number of cases raised in each quarter since the commencement of the ECA role at the start of Q3 2019.

The chart shows a wave of additional cases during the first half of 2020, when the COVID-19 pandemic first emerged and impacted the economy. More recent waves in the middle quarters of 2023 and in Q1 2024 are attributed to increases in cost of living pressures. The chart also indicates that the nominal case rate is in the 50 to 60 cases per quarter range.

For the fourth consecutive quarter, the number of cases raised in Q2 2025 (38 cases) was much lower than the nominal case rate (50-60 cases per quarter), however the trend visible from Q3 2024 to Q2 2025 does appear to be returning towards the nominal case rate.

Chart 1: ECA cases trend



58% of the cases raised during Q2 2025 related to toll invoices, which is slightly higher than the longer term average for this case type over the preceding seven quarters (51%) – see Table 6.

However, there is no indication of a specific or systemic customer service failure contributing to this increase. Of the 22 cases raised in relation to toll invoices during Q2 2025, there was a broad range of outcomes:

- > 4 of these toll invoice cases were of finding type “complaint upheld”
- > 4 of these toll invoice cases were of finding type “complaint partially upheld”
- > 6 of these toll invoice cases were of finding type “service expedited (no valid complaint)”
- > 7 of these toll invoice cases were of finding type “complaint rejected”
- > 1 of these toll invoice cases were of finding type “insufficient details provided”

Table 6: ECA cases trend

ECA CASES	2023		2024				2025	
	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
Toll invoice	35	31	39	15	10	18	22	19
Toll invoice communications	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	3
Toll invoice payment	0	0	3	0	0	1	1	0
Account notice	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Account payment	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Account charge	9	5	2	2	4	3	1	3
Account charge for a sold vehicle	0	1	1	6	2	1	1	1
Account charge for stolen plates/vehicle etc	5	2	1	1	0	1	1	0
Account charge for an LPN error	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Account suspension	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Account closure	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	1
Deceased account	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tags	0	2	1	0	1	0	0	0
Tolls	2	1	2	0	0	0	0	0
Tolling class	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Trip pass	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0
Debt recovery	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Customer service	24	4	8	12	1	0	0	0
Payment options	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Website	1	3	4	2	1	1	2	1
Hardship assistance	2	1	0	3	1	1	0	3
Payment plan	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Third party scam	1	0	3	2	0	0	0	0
Infringements (fines)	0	1	3	2	0	0	1	3
Incident response	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Debris damage	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Abandoned vehicle	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Road maintenance	0	1	3	0	0	0	0	0
Signage	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Litter	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Noise	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Speed limit	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Graffiti	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Landscaping, public artworks	1	0	0	1	1	2	0	0
EastLink Trail	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Wildlife	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Privacy	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unknown (withdrawn, insufficient details)	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Police enquiry	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
CCTV request	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Insurance claim	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	83	54	72	52	22	28	30	38

As outlined earlier in section 3.1, the number of cases in Q2 2025 (38 cases) was much lower than the nominal case rate (50-60 cases per quarter), however the trend visible from Q3 2024 to Q2 2025 does appear to be returning towards the nominal case rate.

The distribution of these cases across each category of case findings indicates a relatively high proportion of rejections in Q2 2025 compared to previous quarters – see Table 7. This is not believed to be the result of a systemic issue.

Table 7: ECA case findings trend

ECA CASE FINDINGS	2023		2024				2025	
	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
Service expedited (no valid complaint)	49	18	31	27	8	12	10	11
Complaint upheld	14	9	13	7	6	7	8	7
Complaint partially upheld	5	14	14	9	4	3	8	4
Complaint rejected	12	11	14	6	4	5	4	13
Referred to another tollway operator etc.	3	1	0	2	0	0	0	2
Insufficient details provided	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1
TOTAL	83	54	72	52	22	28	30	38

The total amount of refunds and credits during Q2 2025 (\$527) was less than half of the longer term average over the preceding seven quarters (\$1,145) – see Table 8.

The mean average refund/credit per case during Q2 2025 (\$14) was half of the longer term average over the preceding seven quarters (\$28), although it was still double the Q3 2023 amount.

Table 8: ECA case findings – refunds & credits trend

ECA CASES – REFUNDS & CREDITS	2023		2024				2025	
	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
Refunds & credits awarded	\$573	\$1,619	\$1,307	\$1,492	\$905	\$1,035	\$1,085	\$527
Mean average per case (all cases, rounded)	\$7	\$30	\$18	\$29	\$41	\$37	\$36	\$14

The elapsed time to close ECA cases during Q2 2025 (2.5 calendar days) was slightly higher than the longer term average over the preceding seven quarters (2.4 calendar days), although lower than the previous two quarters Q4 2024 and Q1 2025 and within the normal range of variation – see Table 9.

Two cases in Q2 2025 took a relatively long time to close (13 calendar days and 10 calendar days respectively):

- > In the first of these cases, the delay was attributed to the ECA taking longer than usual to consider the merits of the customer's complaint, which was complex in nature. In this case the complaint was rejected.
- > In the second of these cases, the delay was attributed to the Easter public holiday weekend (4 days) and some staff personal leave.

Excluding these two cases, the average time to close ECA cases during Q2 2025 would fall to just 2.0 calendar days.

Table 9: Elapsed time to close ECA cases trend

ELAPSED TIME TO CLOSE ECA CASES	2023		2024				2025	
	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
Average time to close cases (calendar days)	1.4	2.5	2.8	2.1	2.5	2.7	2.7	2.5

4. HARSHIP ASSISTANCE

This is a recently introduced section within the ECA quarterly report, introduced for the first time in Q4 2024.

This section includes hardship assistance data that is sourced from EastLink's hardship team, who administer EastLink's hardship assistance programs.

4.1 PAYMENT PLANS

The number of payment plans created during Q2 2025 (1,346 plans created) was 23% higher than the longer term average over the preceding seven quarters (1,091 plans created), and was the highest number recorded in any quarter – see Table 10.

The average value of payment plan created during Q2 2025 (\$273) was similar to the longer term average over the preceding seven quarters (\$283).

Table 10: Payment plans created

PAYMENT PLANS CREATED	2023		2024				2025	
	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
Payment plans created	1,007	885	1,178	1,169	1,107	1,076	1,216	1,346
Total value of plans created	\$268,666	\$204,248	\$283,100	\$310,302	\$367,300	\$325,471	\$417,163	\$367,104
Average value of plan created	\$267	\$231	\$240	\$265	\$332	\$302	\$343	\$273

4.2 FINES WITHDRAWN DUE TO FINANCIAL HARSHIP

Fines for unpaid EastLink tolls are issued by Victoria Police and administered by Fines Victoria.

For a single vehicle, a maximum of one EastLink fine can be issued per seven day consecutive period.

In cases of financial hardship, EastLink can request withdrawal of EastLink fines.

The number of fines withdrawn by EastLink due to hardship during Q2 2025 (1,424 fines withdrawn) was 15% higher than the longer term average over the preceding seven quarters (1,242 fines withdrawn), although within the normal range of variation – see Table 11.

The number of people assisted with fines withdrawn during Q2 2025 (106 people assisted) was 41% higher than the longer term average over the preceding seven quarters (75 people assisted), although within the normal range of variation.

The average number of fines withdrawn per person during Q2 2025 (13 fines withdrawn per person) was 13% lower than the longer term average over the preceding seven quarters (15 fines withdrawn per person), although within the normal range of variation.

Table 11: EastLink fines withdrawn due to hardship

FINES WITHDRAWN DUE TO HARSHIP	2023		2024				2025	
	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
Fines withdrawn	734	898	528	963	3,813	825	935	1,424
Individual people assisted	52	55	53	91	132	59	81	106
Average fines withdrawn per person	14	16	10	11	29	14	12	13

5. CUSTOMER ADVOCATE CASE EXAMPLES

This section only shows a very brief summary of each case example. The detailed circumstances of every case are unique, so these case examples should not be read as precedents for other cases.

5.1 CUSTOMER A (NOT ALL TOLL INVOICES CAN BE TRANSFERRED TO A TOLLING ACCOUNT)

Customer A's vehicle was associated with a NSW tolling account, which was suspended for four months.

While the account was suspended, Customer A's vehicle made one EastLink trip.

As there was no arrangement to pay the toll, one EastLink toll invoice was issued. The toll invoice was not paid by its due date, so an EastLink overdue notice was issued. The overdue notice was not paid by its due date.

Customer A wanted to transfer the overdue notice to their NSW tolling account, however toll invoice debts cannot be transferred to this specific tollway operator's tolling accounts and EastLink's customer service team declined the transfer request.

The overdue fee was waived by the customer service team as gesture of goodwill.

Investigation did not reveal any error by EastLink. The customer was informed that the overdue notice remained payable. To provide assistance, the due date for the overdue notice was extended.

5.2 CUSTOMER B (VEHICLE DETAILS INCORRECTLY SPECIFIED FOR TRIP PASS)

Customer B purchased an EastLink trip pass online but made 2 errors:

- > Vehicle's licence plate number was specified incorrectly (a typo)
- > Light commercial vehicle class was selected in correctly for the vehicle (instead of heavy commercial vehicle).

One EastLink trip was made by Customer B's vehicle.

As there was no arrangement to pay the toll (due to Customer B's errors), one EastLink toll invoice was issued. The toll invoice was not paid by its due date, so an EastLink overdue notice was issued.

Customer B's vehicle is now listed on a tolling account and being tolled normally.

Investigation did not reveal any error by EastLink, however the customer did not intend to make the errors and had quickly corrected the issue for future travel. The overdue notice (more than \$35) was waived as a gesture of goodwill.

5.3 CUSTOMER C (SUSPENSION NOTICES IGNORED)

The last payment to Customer C's EastLink account was in February 2023.

Tollway travel in 2023 reduced the pre-paid account balance to just \$0.98.

In May 2025, a single tollway trip pushed the account balance below \$0.

A suspension warning notice was issued to Customer C's current email address. However, there was no account payment.

An account suspended notice was issued. However, there was no account payment.

Travel on another tollway decreased the account balance to nearly \$50 overdrawn.

Customer C claims to have had trouble with BPAY, but there was no error by EastLink.

Customer C claims to have emailed and called multiple times, but EastLink has no records of any contact from Customer C following a phone call in June 2023 until the EastLink Customer Advocate was contacted in May 2025.

Investigation did not reveal any error by EastLink.

Customer C was provided with the BPAY details for the account, as well as other payment options.

Customer C was also provided with information about arranging a payment plan and account closure options.

5.4 CUSTOMER D (VICTORIAN RESIDENT'S VEHICLE NOT REGISTERED IN VICTORIA)

Customer D's vehicle is associated with a tolling account operated by another tollway operator. The tolling account has a history of account suspensions.

Customer D's vehicle is registered in the ACT, however Customer D moved to Victoria at least 8 months ago and: (i) has not updated their address with the ACT vehicle registration authority; and (ii) has not registered their vehicle with VicRoads.

Customer D's vehicle travelled numerous times on EastLink while the tolling account was suspended.

This led to 11 EastLink toll invoices and 10 overdue notices being issued for the unpaid travel, and sent by post to Customer D's former address in ACT.

EastLink was subsequently able to successfully charge 7 of the 10 overdue notices to the tolling account, avoiding fines and clearing most of the outstanding debt.

Investigation did not reveal any error by EastLink.

As a gesture of goodwill, the toll invoice fees on the outstanding 3 overdue notices and the 1 outstanding toll invoice were waived (amounting to nearly \$50).

To provide assistance, the due dates were extended.

Customer D was provided with information about arranging a payment plan.

Customer D was reminded about the meaning of tag beeps.

Customer D was provided with information on registering an interstate vehicle in Victoria.

A recommendation was made to Customer D to contact the other tollway operator for advice on how to better manage the account balance.

5.5 CUSTOMER E (VEHICLE ADDED TO AN ACCOUNT TOO LATE)

Customer E added their vehicle to a tolling account operated by another tollway operator.

However, Customer E's vehicle travelled on EastLink 36 times over two months prior to being added to the account.

This led to EastLink toll invoices and EastLink overdue notices being issued.

Although two toll invoices were paid, 2 toll invoices and 4 overdue notices remained outstanding.

Travel by Customer E's vehicle is now being charged normally to the account.

Customer E is relatively high value to EastLink, based on the high frequency of EastLink trips.

Investigation did not reveal any error by EastLink.

As a gesture of goodwill in recognition of Customer E's value to EastLink, all of the additional fees on the outstanding toll invoices and overdue notices were waived (amounting to nearly \$90).

For further information:

Doug Spencer-Roy, EastLink Customer Advocate
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www.eastlink.com.au/customeradvocate

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