

Utility Consumer Complaints 2007 Annual Report



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Competitive Local Exchange Carriers

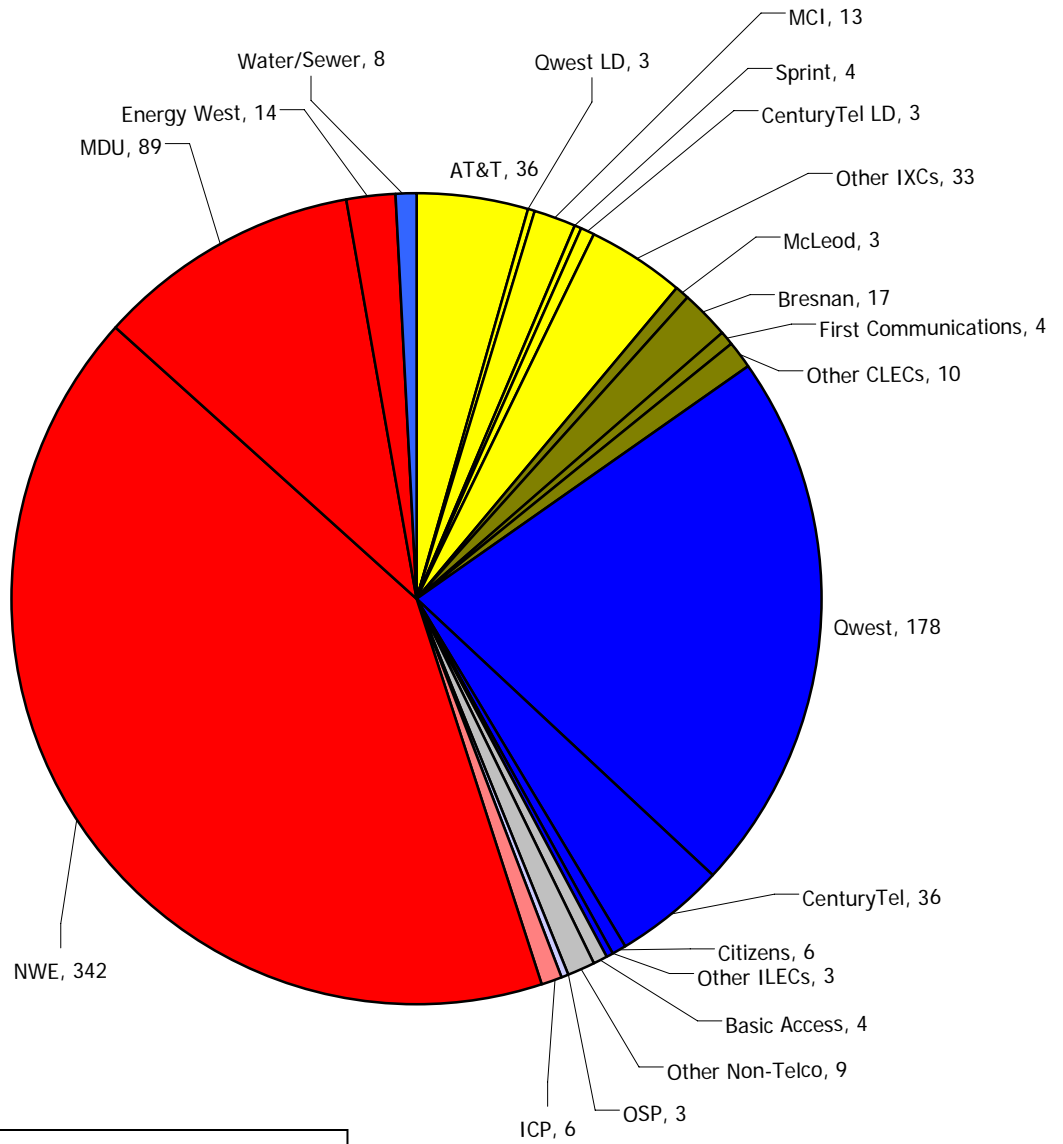
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Year 2007 Consumer Complaints By Utility - Total #
Informal Complaints - 824



ICP - Inmate Calling Providers
OSP - Operator Service Providers

Complaint Percentages by Company

Qwest – 21.60%	.06% (percentage of complaints
CenturyTel – 4.37%	.06% (compared to total MT
Citizens - .73%	.08% (access lines
Other ILECs - .36%	
McLeod - .36%	
Bresnan – 2.06%	
First Comm. - .49%	
Other CLECs – 1.21%	
AT&T – 4.37%	
Qwest LD - .36%	
MCI – 1.58%	
Sprint - .49%	
CenturyTel LD - .36%	
Other IXCs – 4.01%	
NorthWestern – 41.51%	.09% (percentage of
MDU – 10.80%	.11% (complaints compared
Energy West – 1.70%	.05% (to total MT customers
Basic Access - .49%	
Other Non-Telco – 1.09%	
OSP - .36%	
ICP - .73%	
Water/Sewer - .97%	

Total – 100%

Complaints by Service Type

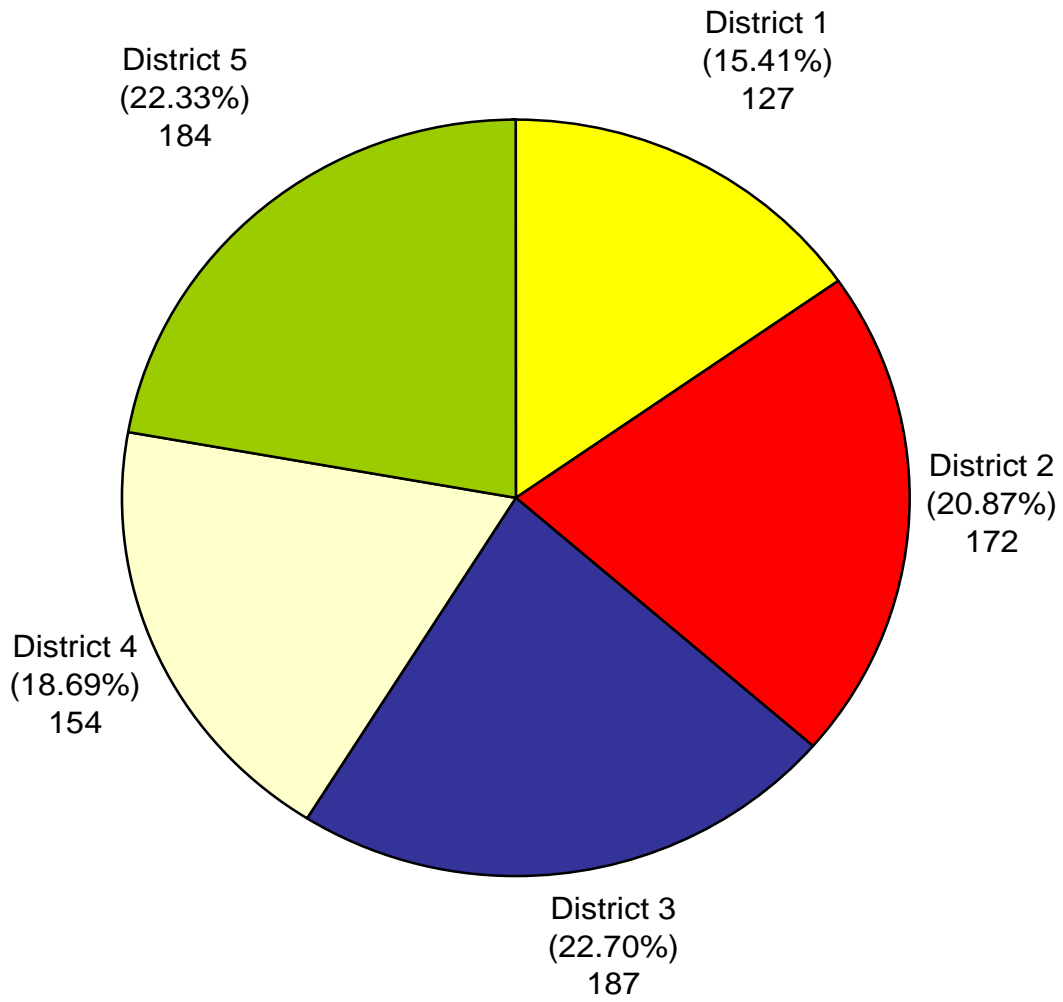
Percentage of Total

Energy – 445	54.01%
Telecommunications – 371	45.02%
Water/Sewer – 8	.97%
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Total – 824	100.00%

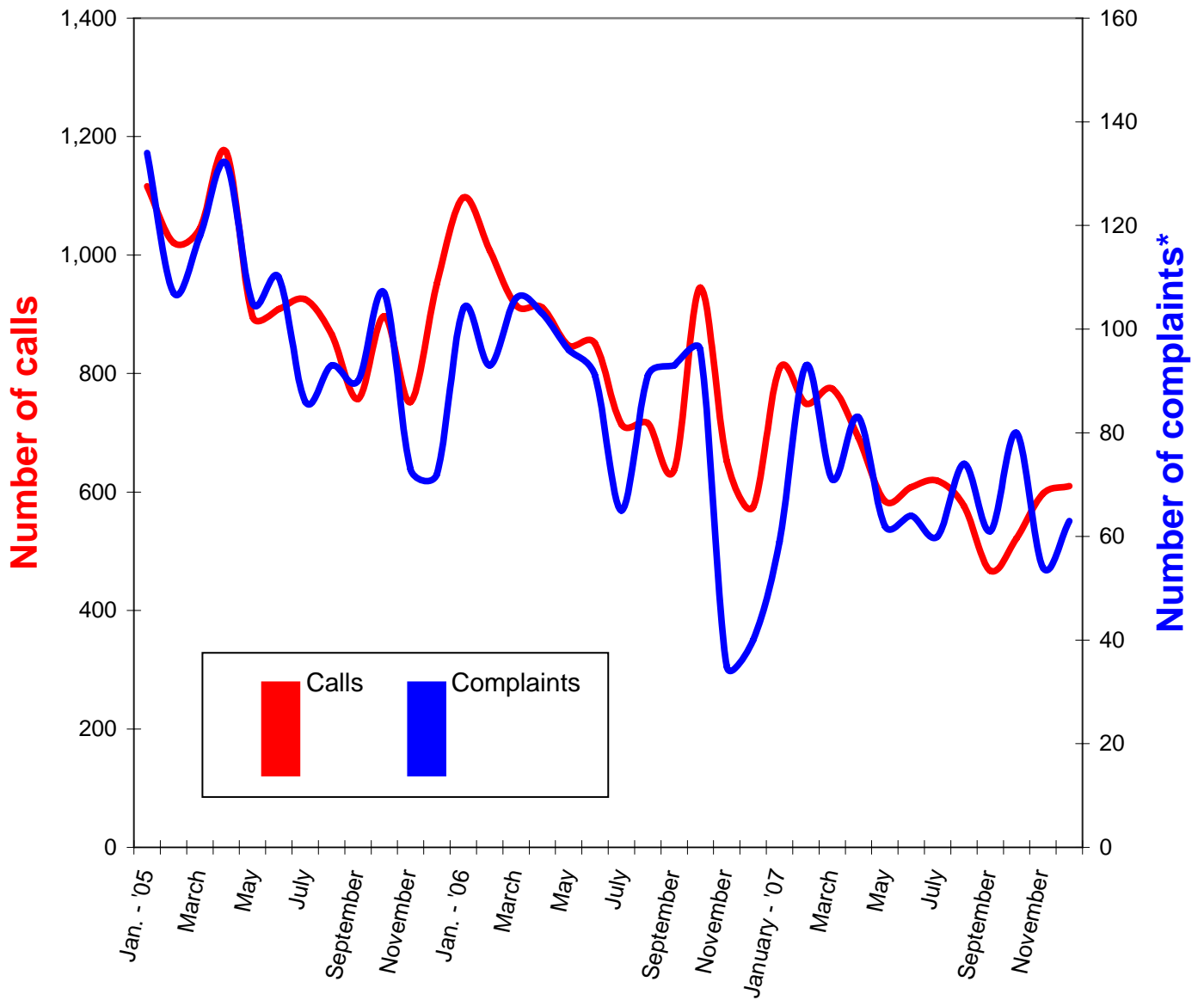
Type and Number of Complaints in 2007 by District

	<u>Dist. 1</u>	<u>Dist. 2</u>	<u>Dist. 3</u>	<u>Dist. 4</u>	<u>Dist. 5</u>	<u>Total</u>
1. Billing/Rates	33	41	47	52	50	223
2. Business Office	35	37	43	37	55	207
3. Cram	2	3	3	2	6	16
4. Payment Arrangements	31	37	29	23	31	151
5. Access to Business Office	2	3	1	4	5	15
6. Repair	14	9	24	16	12	75
7. Slam	0	3	2	2	0	7
8. Delay in Connection	0	6	16	1	6	29
9. Termination	5	13	6	8	4	36
10. Meter Questions	3	9	4	5	3	24
11. Pay-Per-Call	0	0	0	0	3	3
12. Deposits	0	3	2	1	1	7
13. Cost of Construction	0	6	7	1	1	15
14. Directory Listings	1	0	0	1	5	7
15. Quality of Service	1	2	3	1	2	9
Total	127	172	187	154	184	824

2007 Complaints by PSC District



Calls to PSC toll-free complaints number and level of monthly utility consumer complaints 2005-2006-2007



*A consumer call or letter is not logged as a complaint unless PSC staff must contact the utility in order to resolve it.

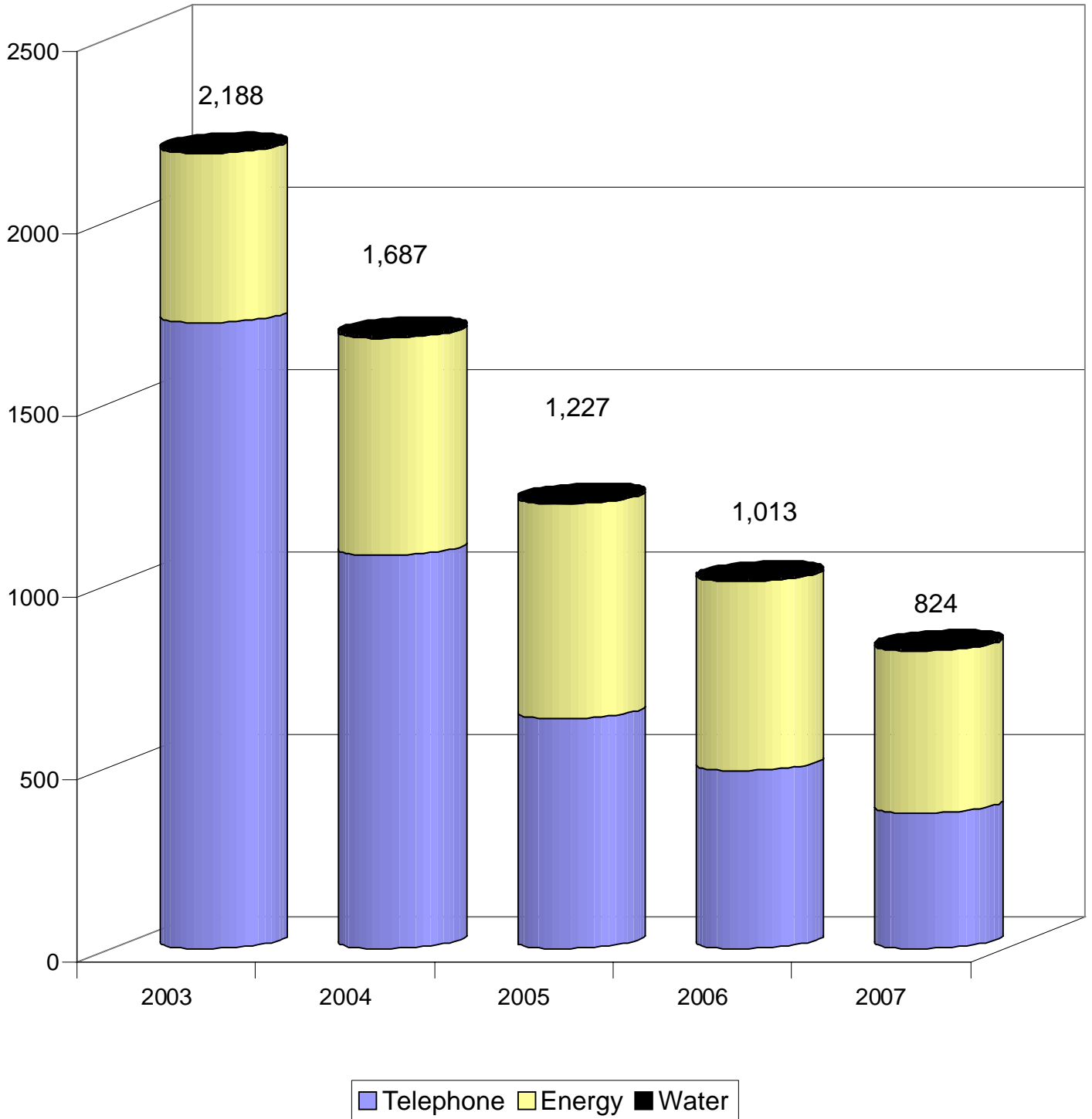
Number of Calls
(Comparing 2006 and 2007)

	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>% of Change</u>
January	1,097	809	(26.25%)
February	1,008	749	(25.69%)
March	915	774	(15.41%)
April	911	692	(24.04%)
May	847	585	(30.93%)
June	851	608	(28.55%)
July	714	619	(13.31%)
August	716	576	(19.55%)
September	638	467	(26.80%)
October	945	522	(44.76%)
November	653	597	(8.58%)
December	575	610	6.09%
	<hr/>	<hr/>	
Total	9,870	7,608	(22.92%)

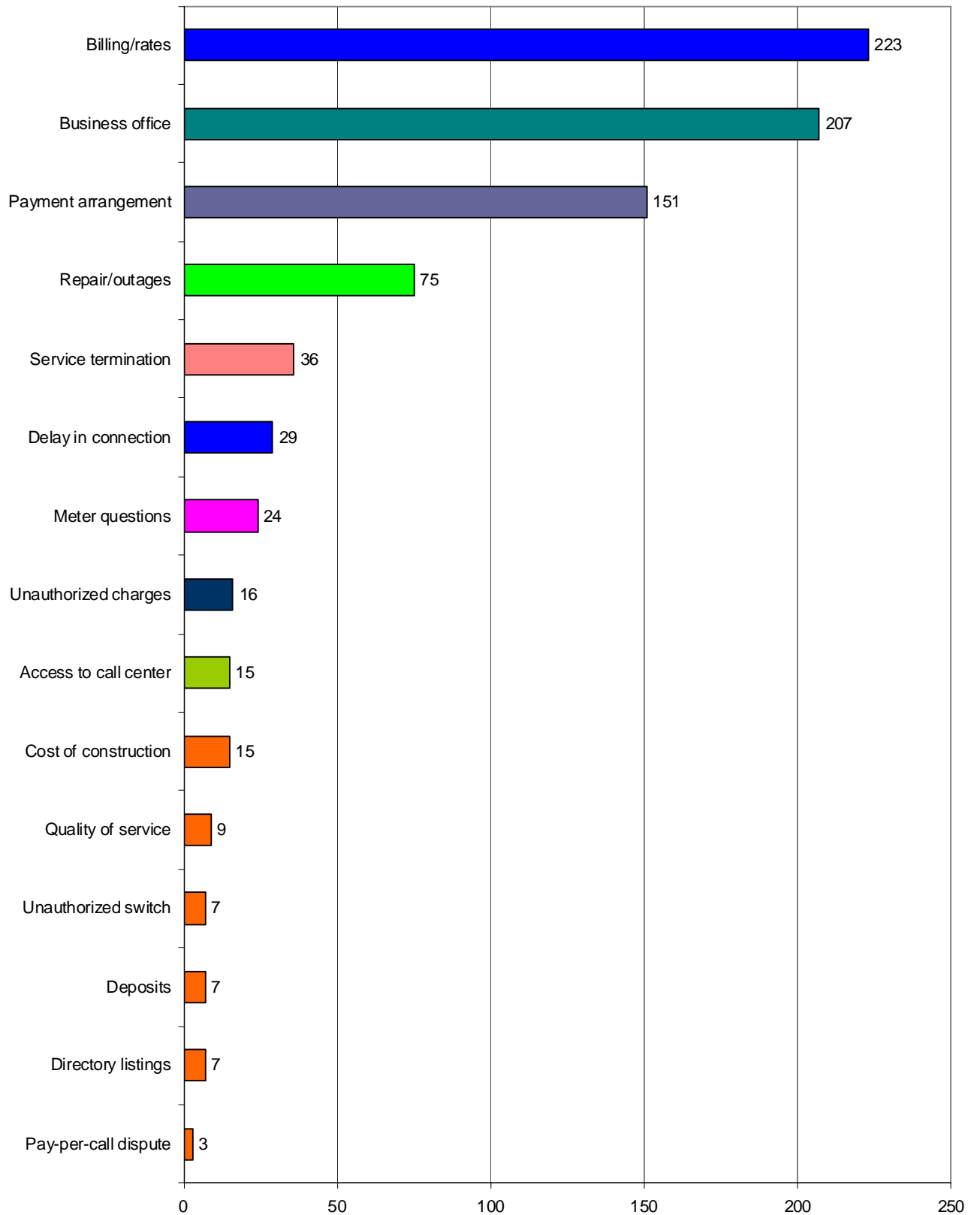
Number of Complaints
(comparing 2006 and 2007)

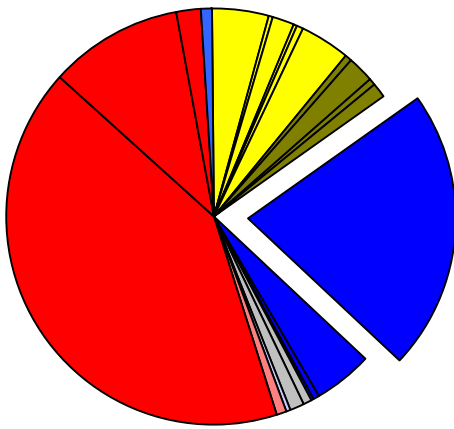
	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>% of Change</u>
January	104	59	(43.27%)
February	93	93	None
March	106	71	(33.02%)
April	103	83	(19.42%)
May	96	62	(35.42%)
June	91	64	(29.67%)
July	65	60	(7.69%)
August	91	74	(18.68%)
September	93	61	(34.41%)
October	96	80	(16.67%)
November	35	54	54.29%
December	40	63	57.50%
Total	<u>1,013</u>	<u>824</u>	(18.66%)

PSC complaints from 2003 through 2007 by service type

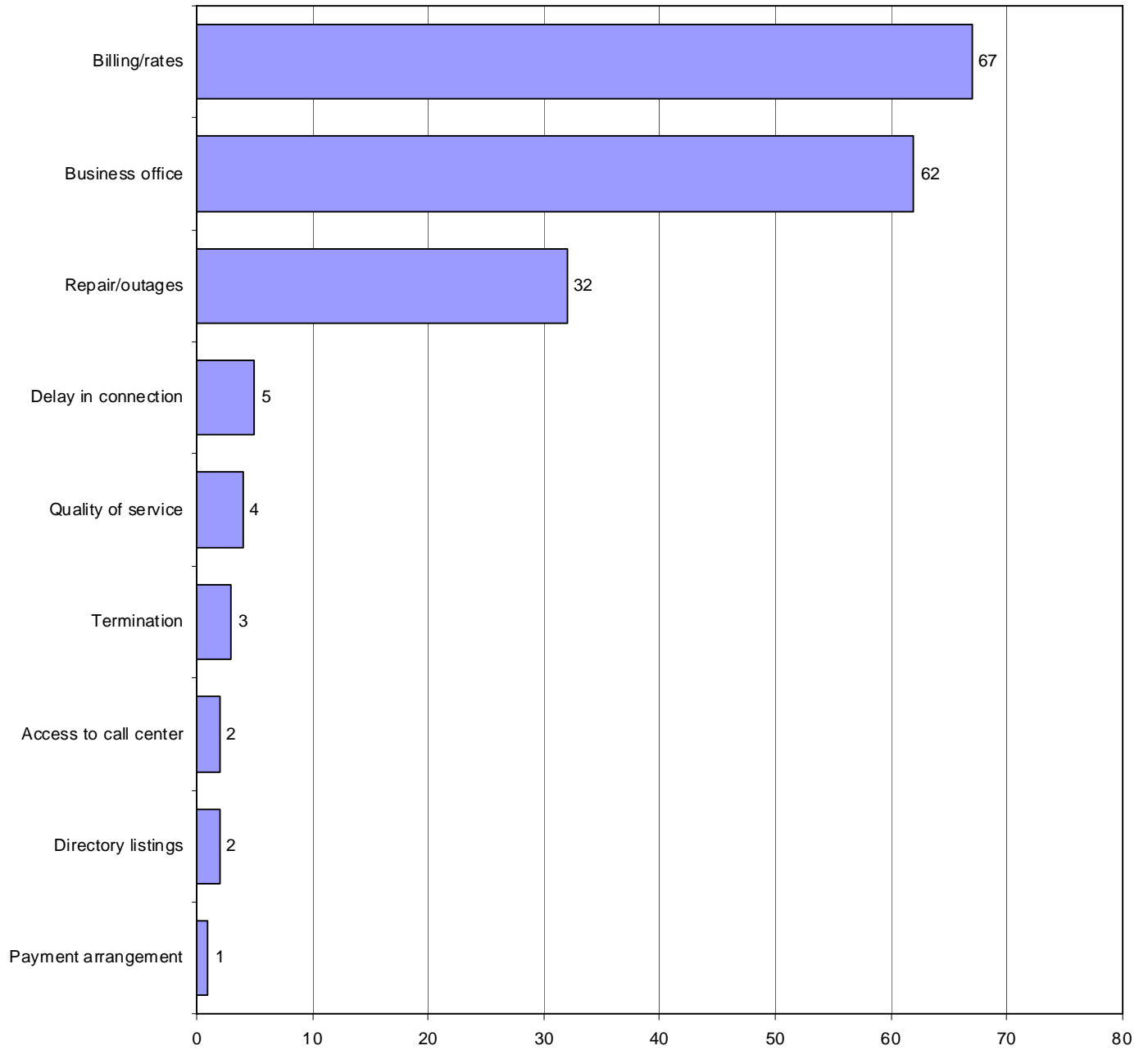


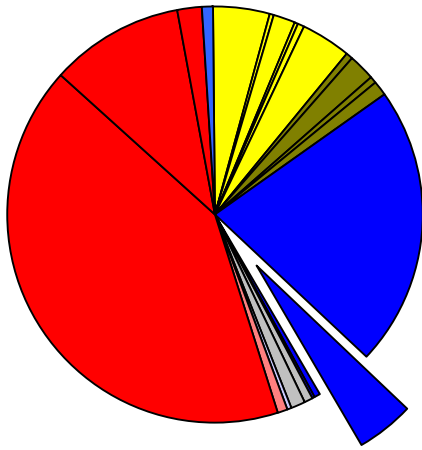
Year 2007 PSC Consumer Complaints by Complaint Category



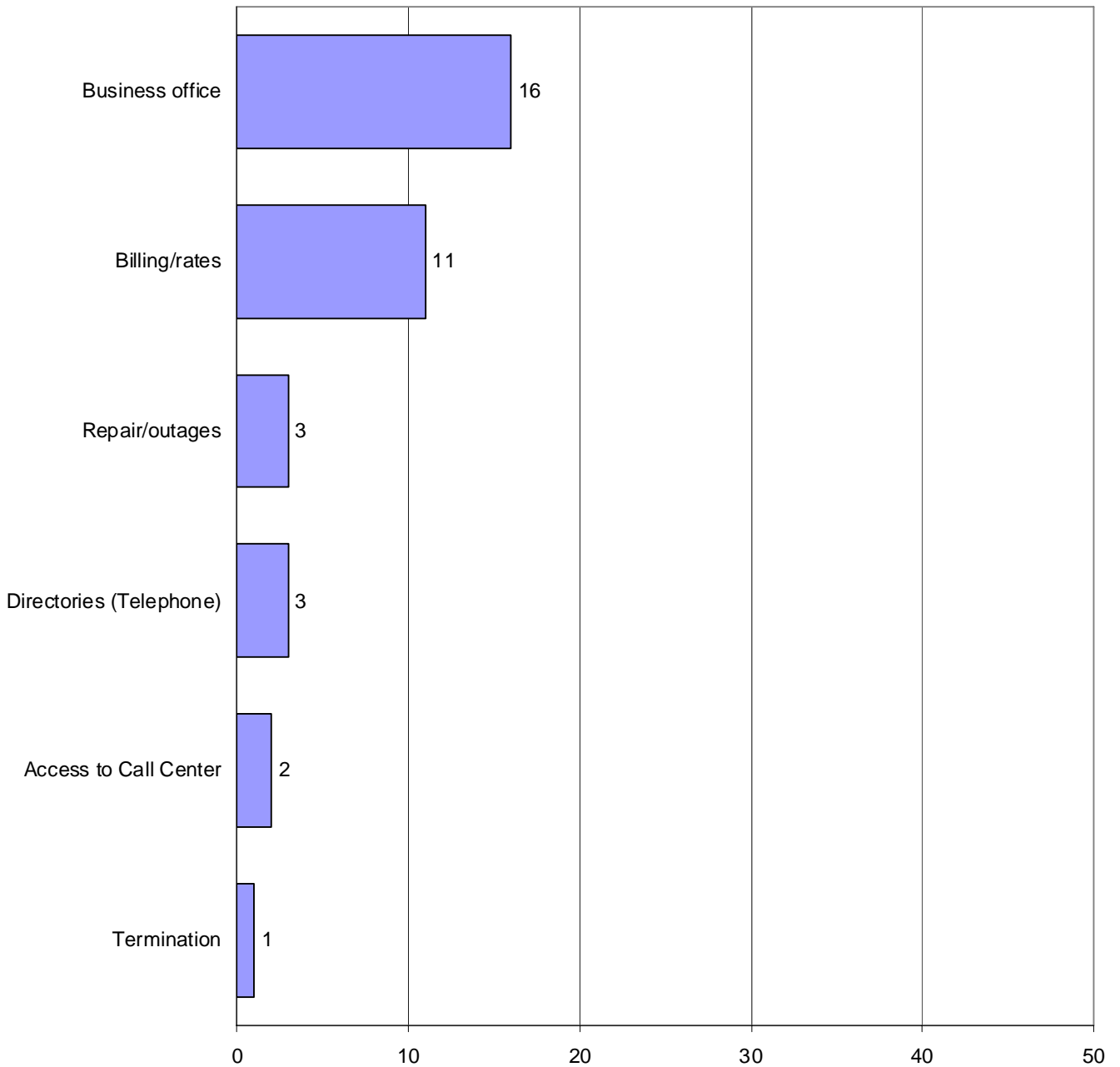


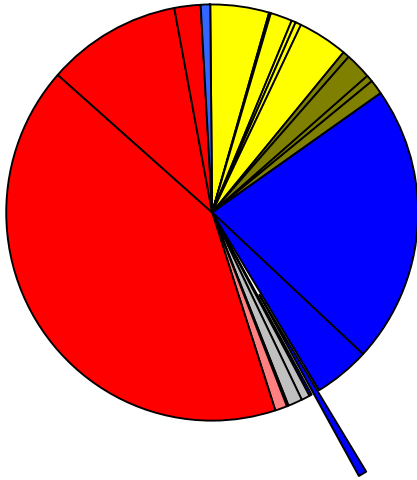
**Qwest Corporation
2007 Complaints
178 Total**



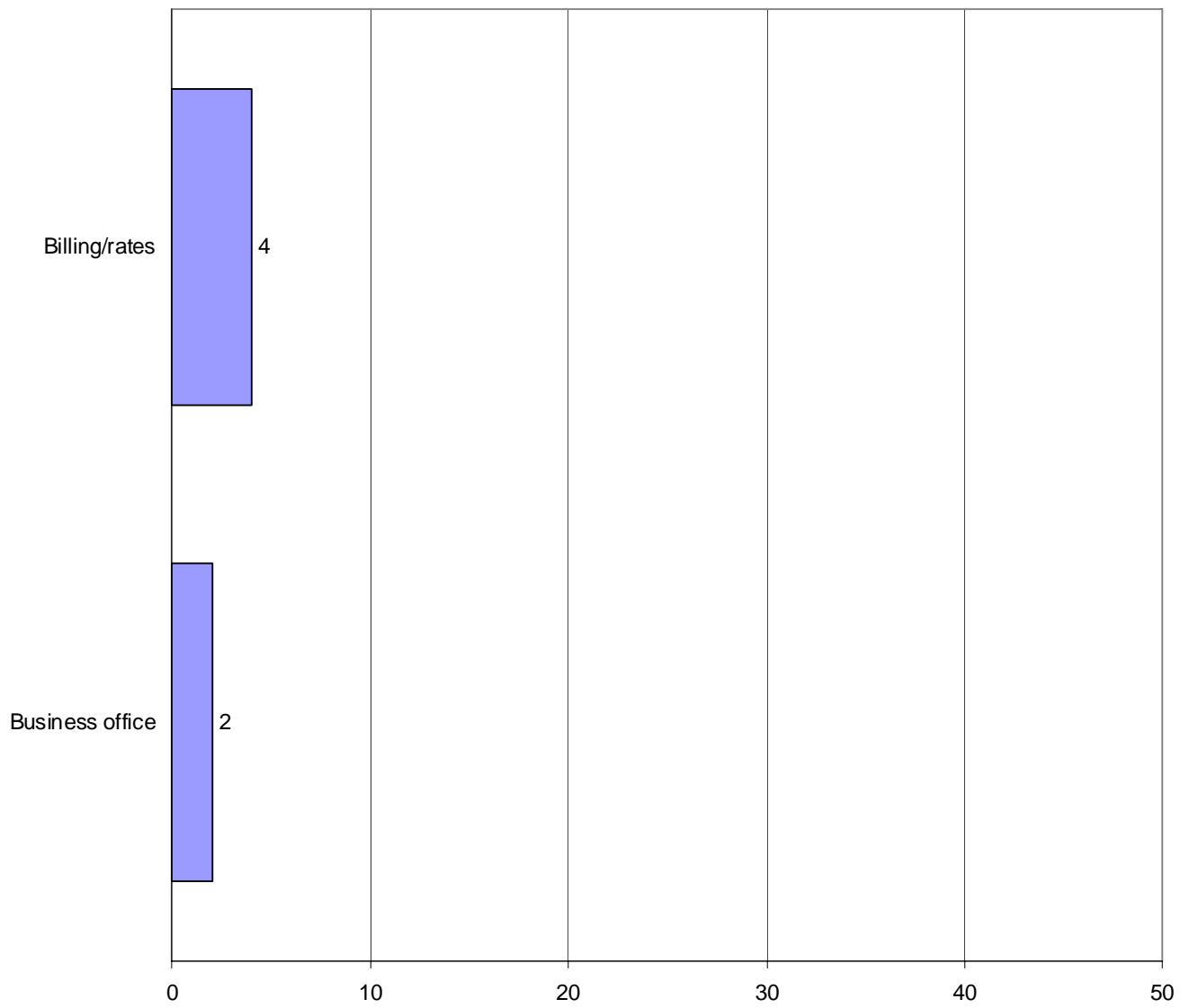


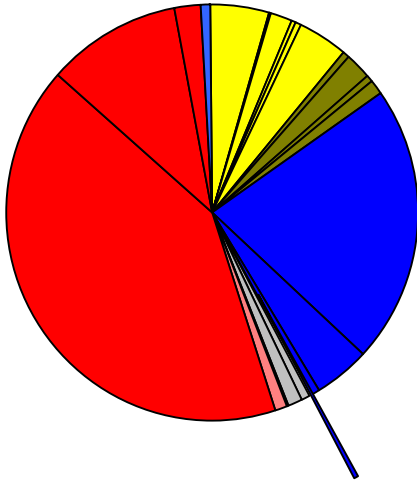
**CenturyTel of Montana
2007 Complaints
36 Total**



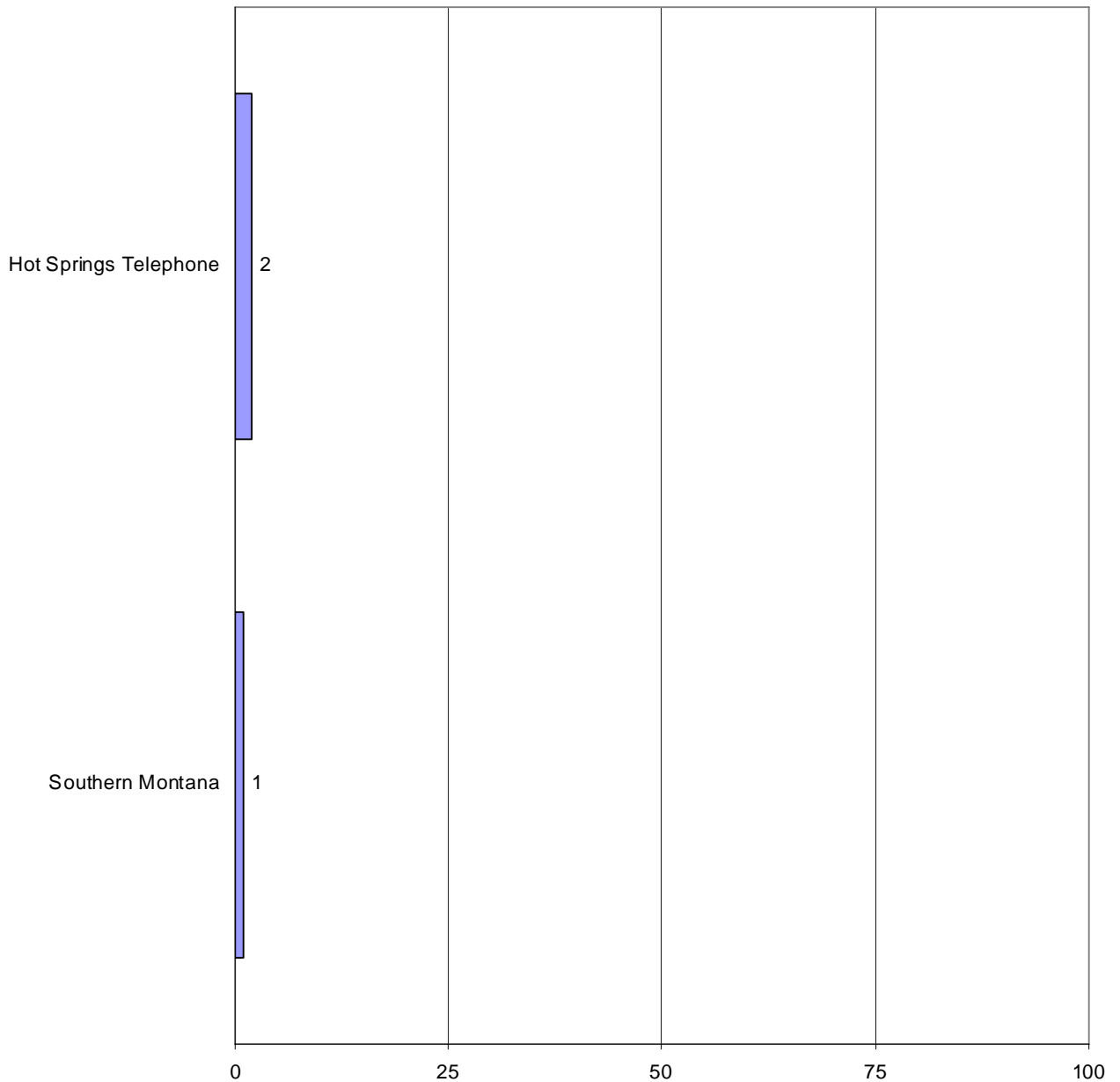


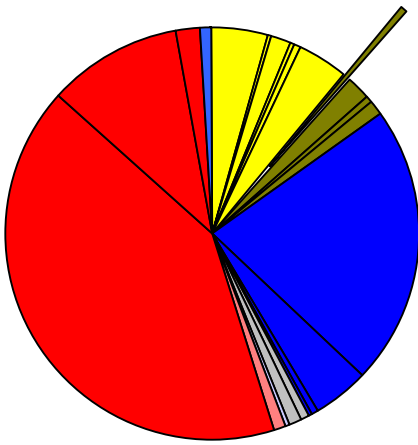
**Citizens Telecommunications
2007 Complaints
6 Total**



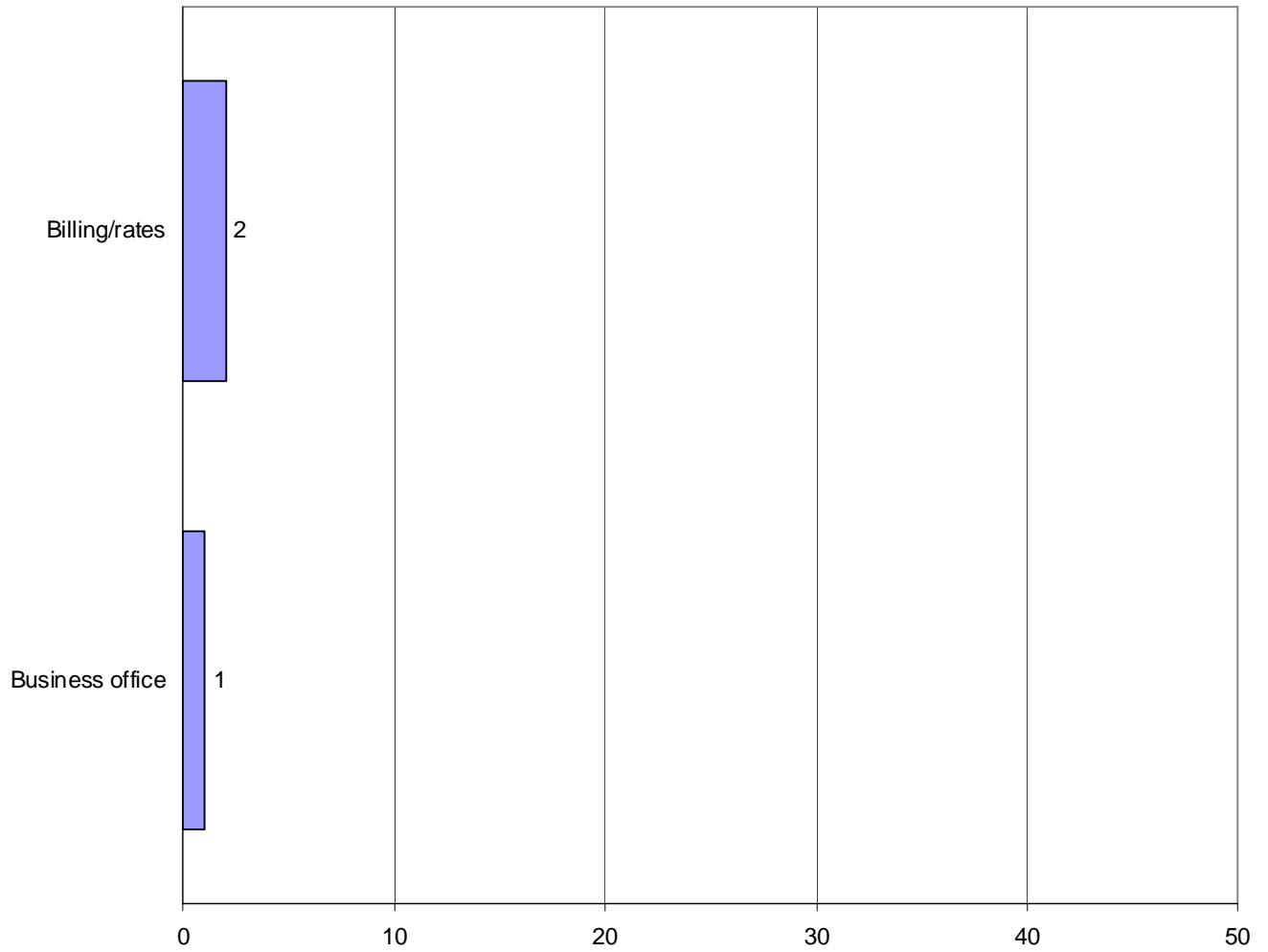


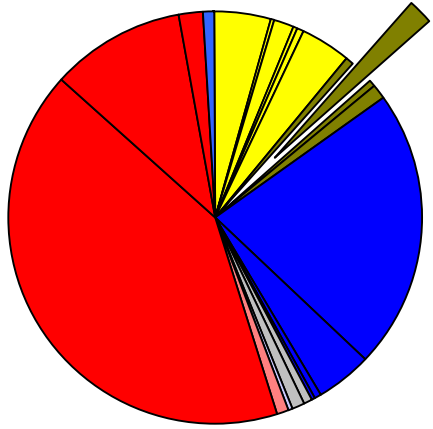
**Other Incumbent Local Exchange Carriers (ILECs)
2007 Complaints
3 Total**



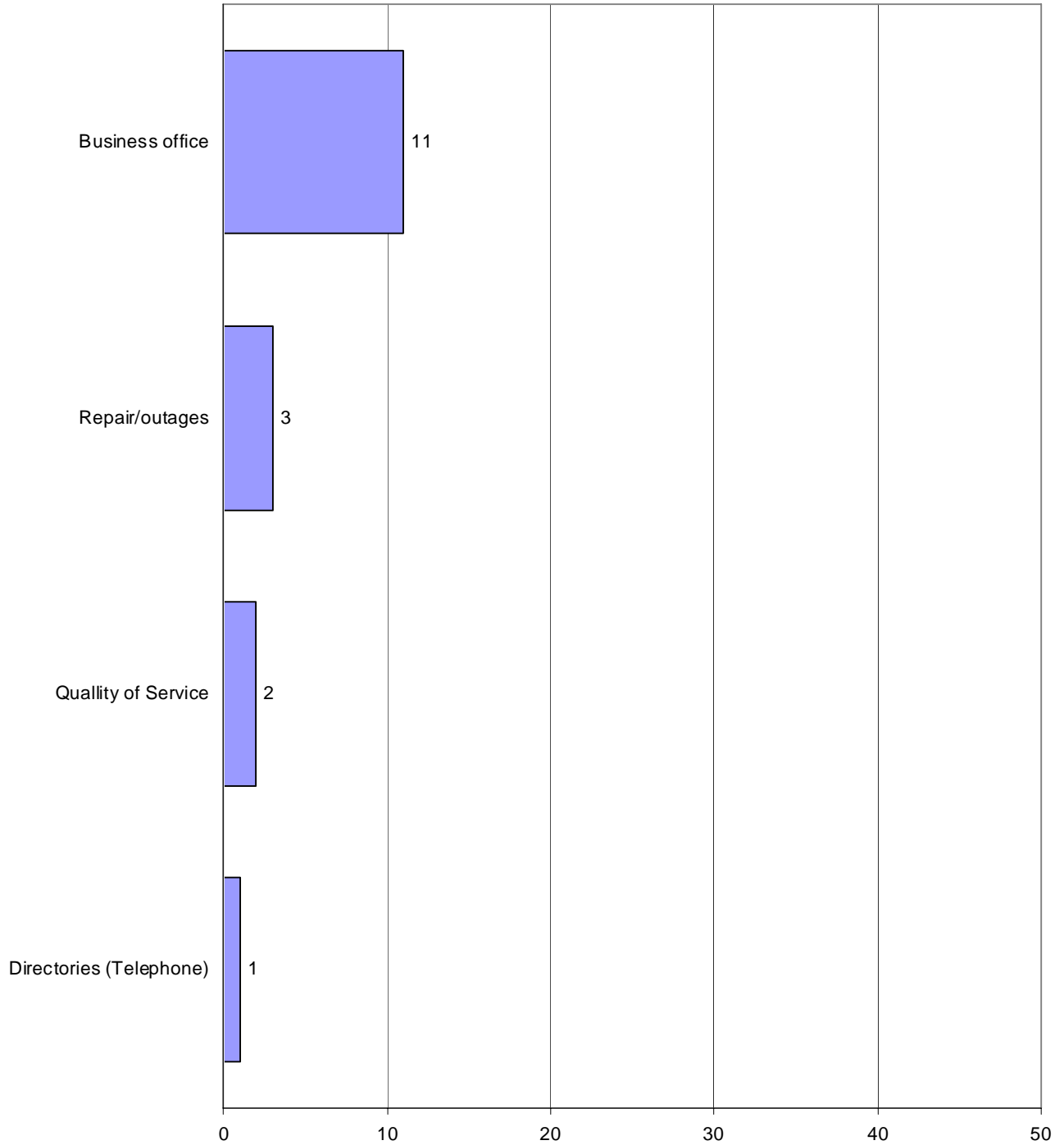


**McLeodUSA
Telecommunications
2007 Complaints
3 Total**

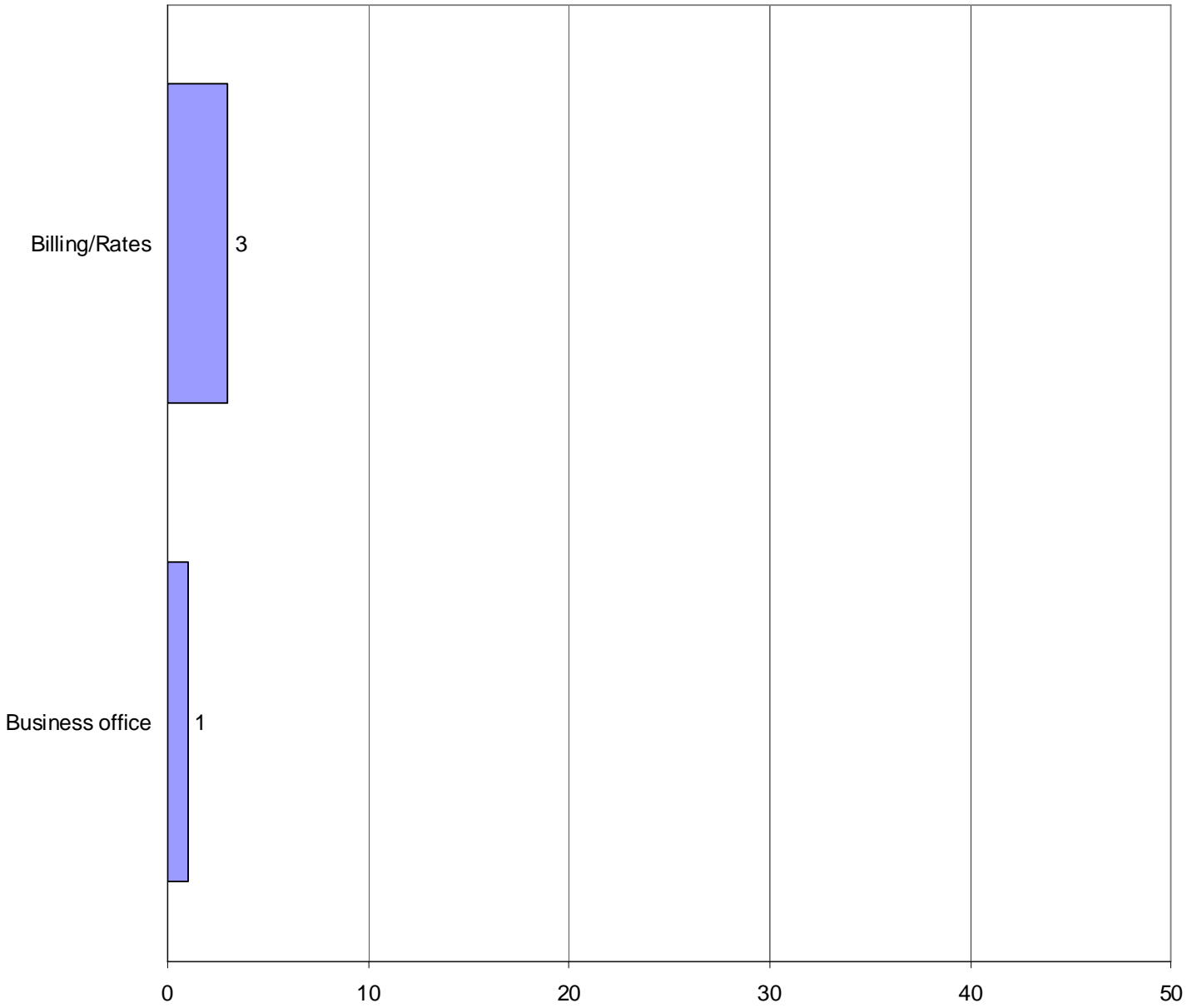
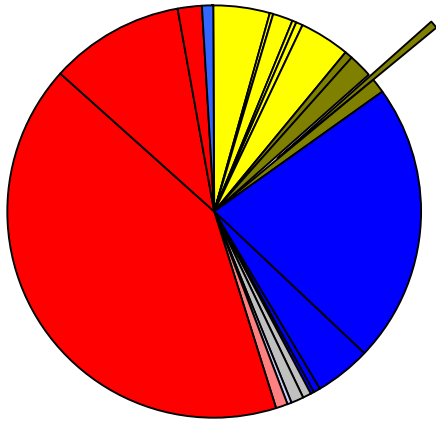


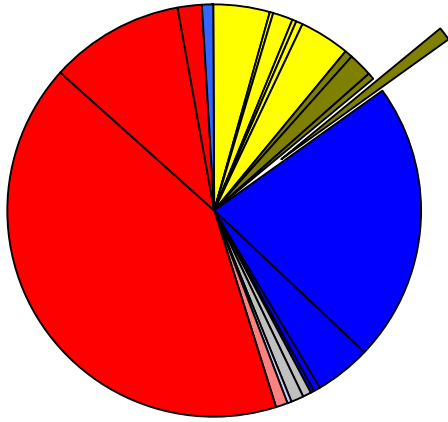


**Bresnan
2007 Complaints
17 Total**

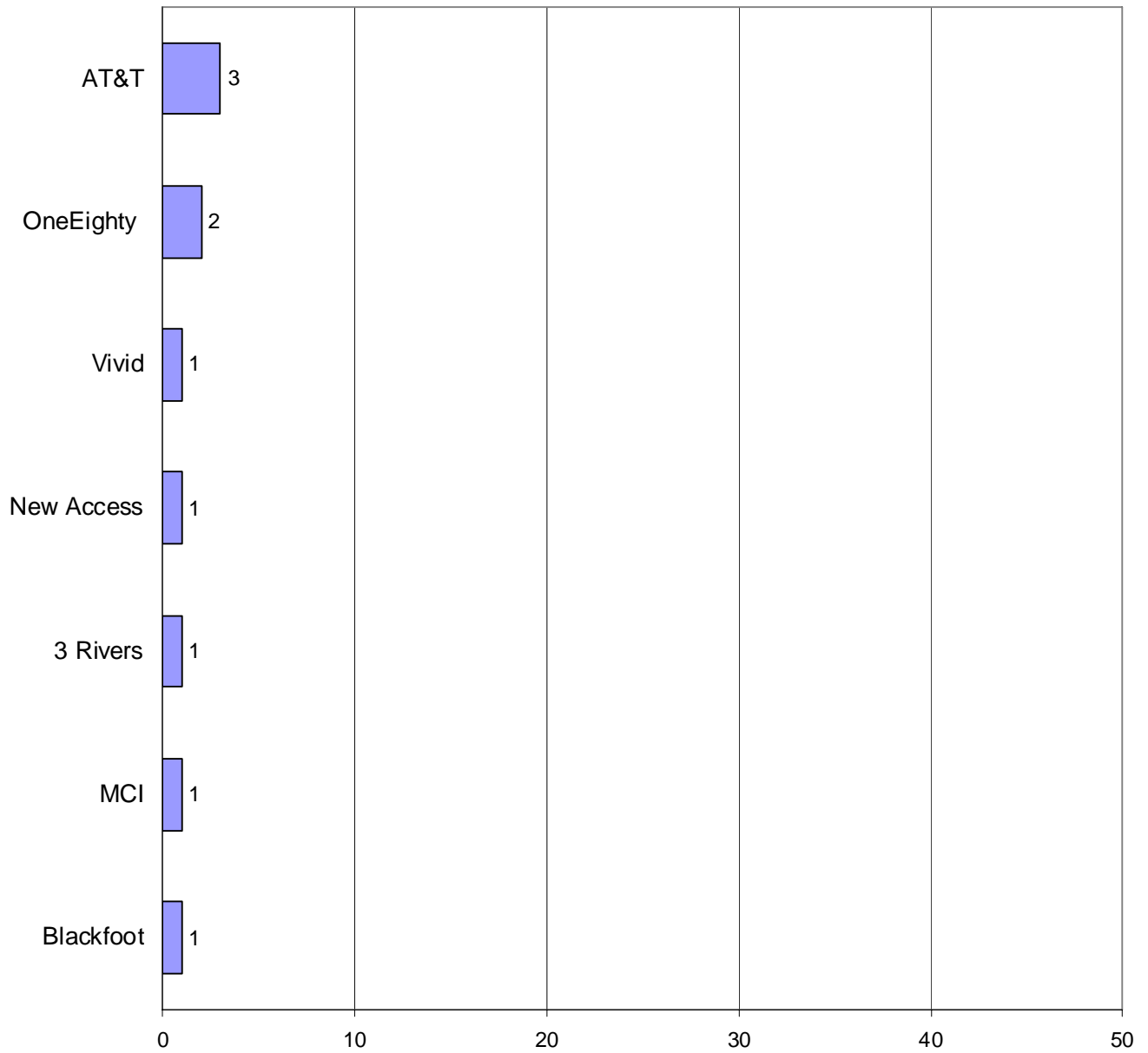


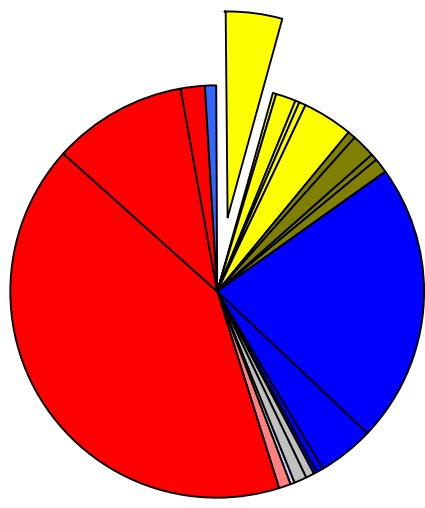
**First Communications
2007 Complaints
4 Total**



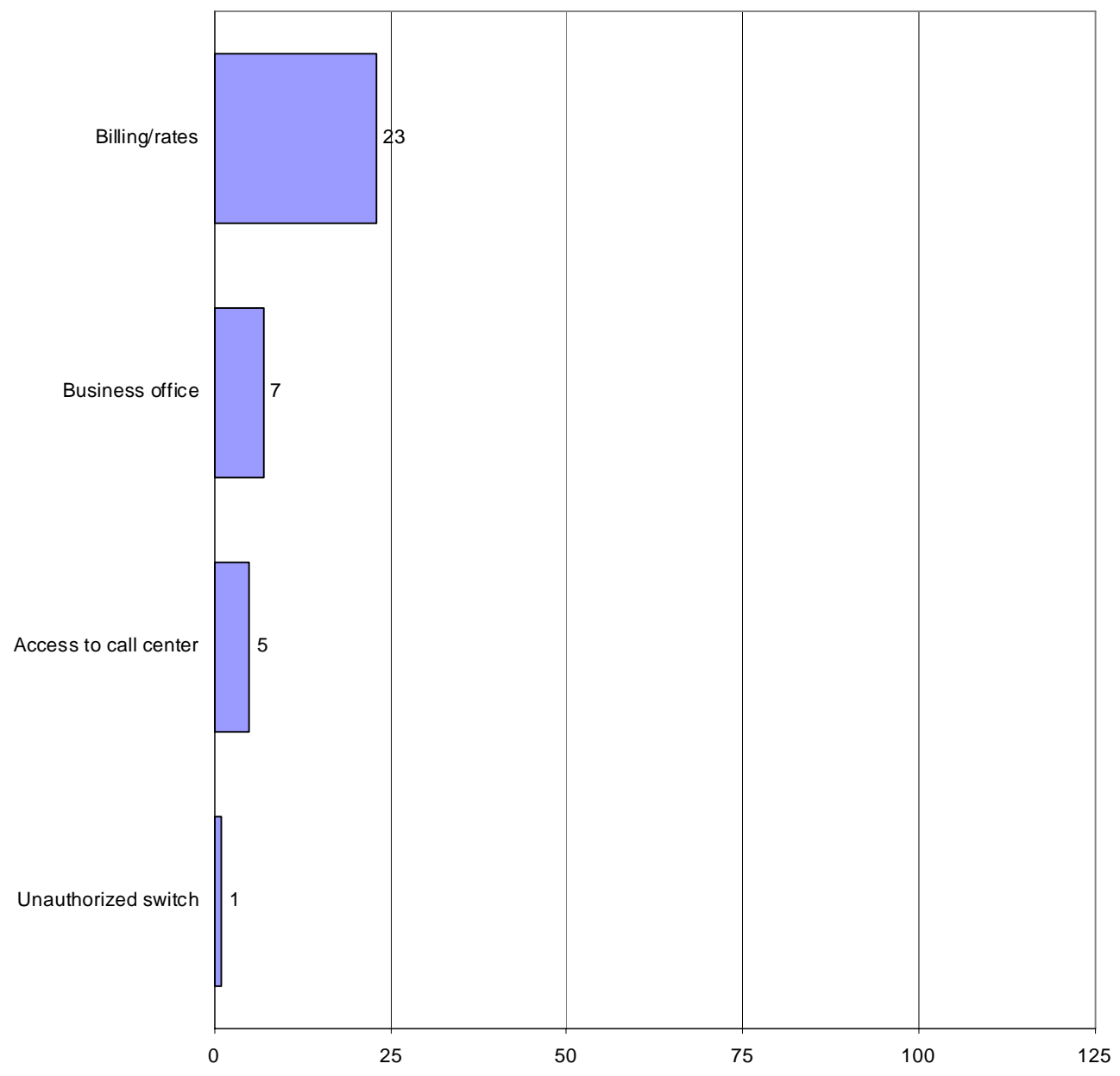


**Other Competitive
Local Exchange
Carriers (CLECs)
2007 Complaints
10 Total**

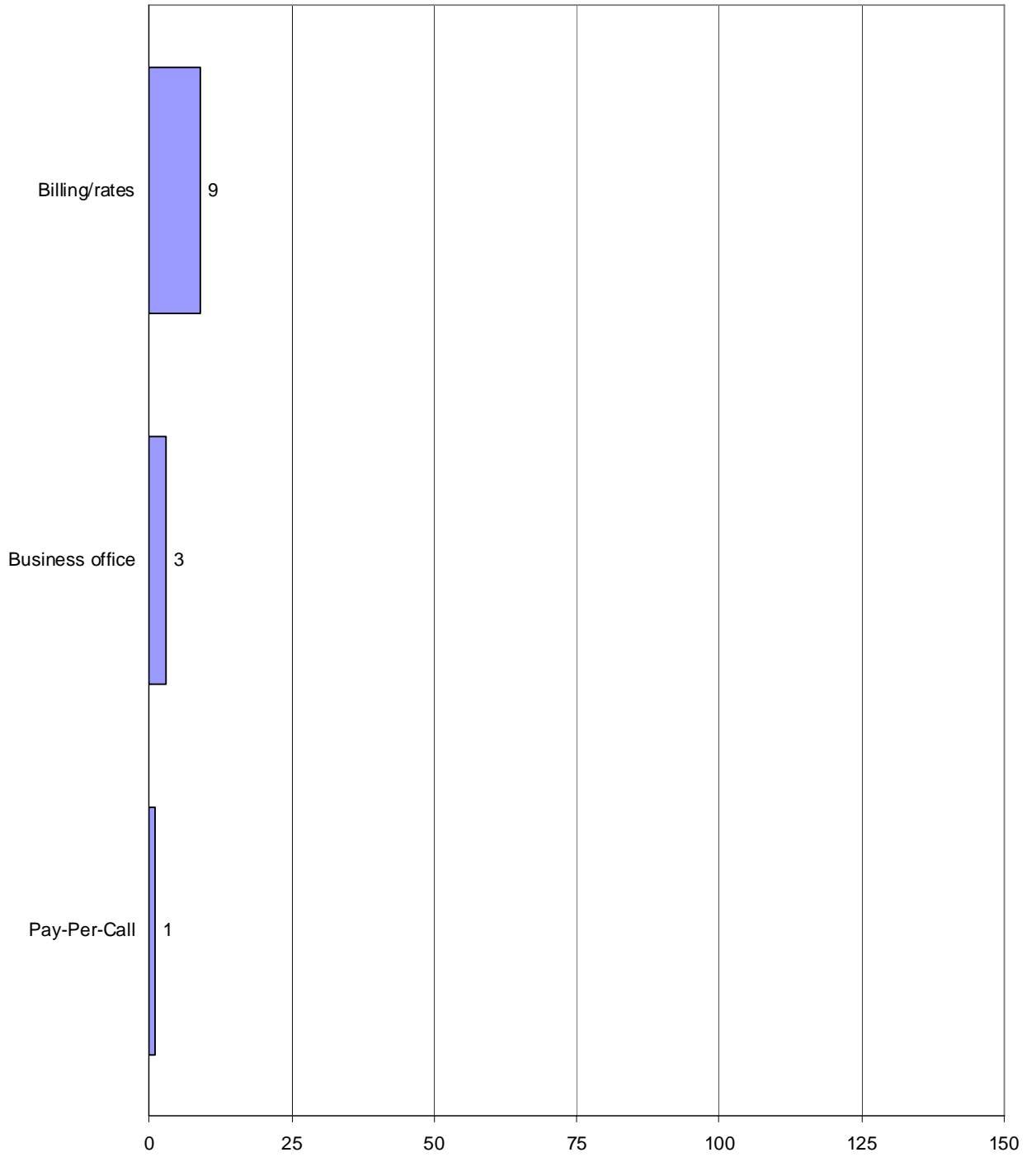
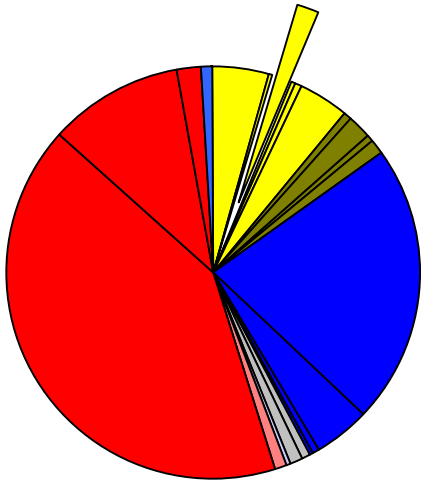


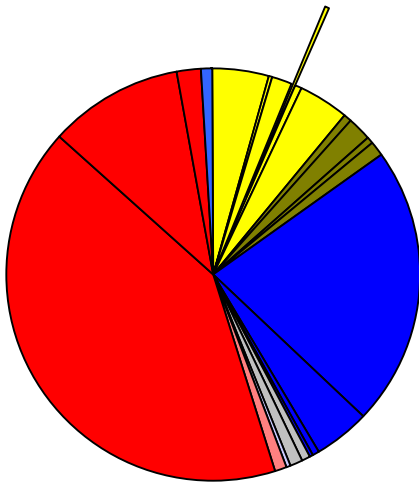


**AT&T
2007 Complaints
36 Total**

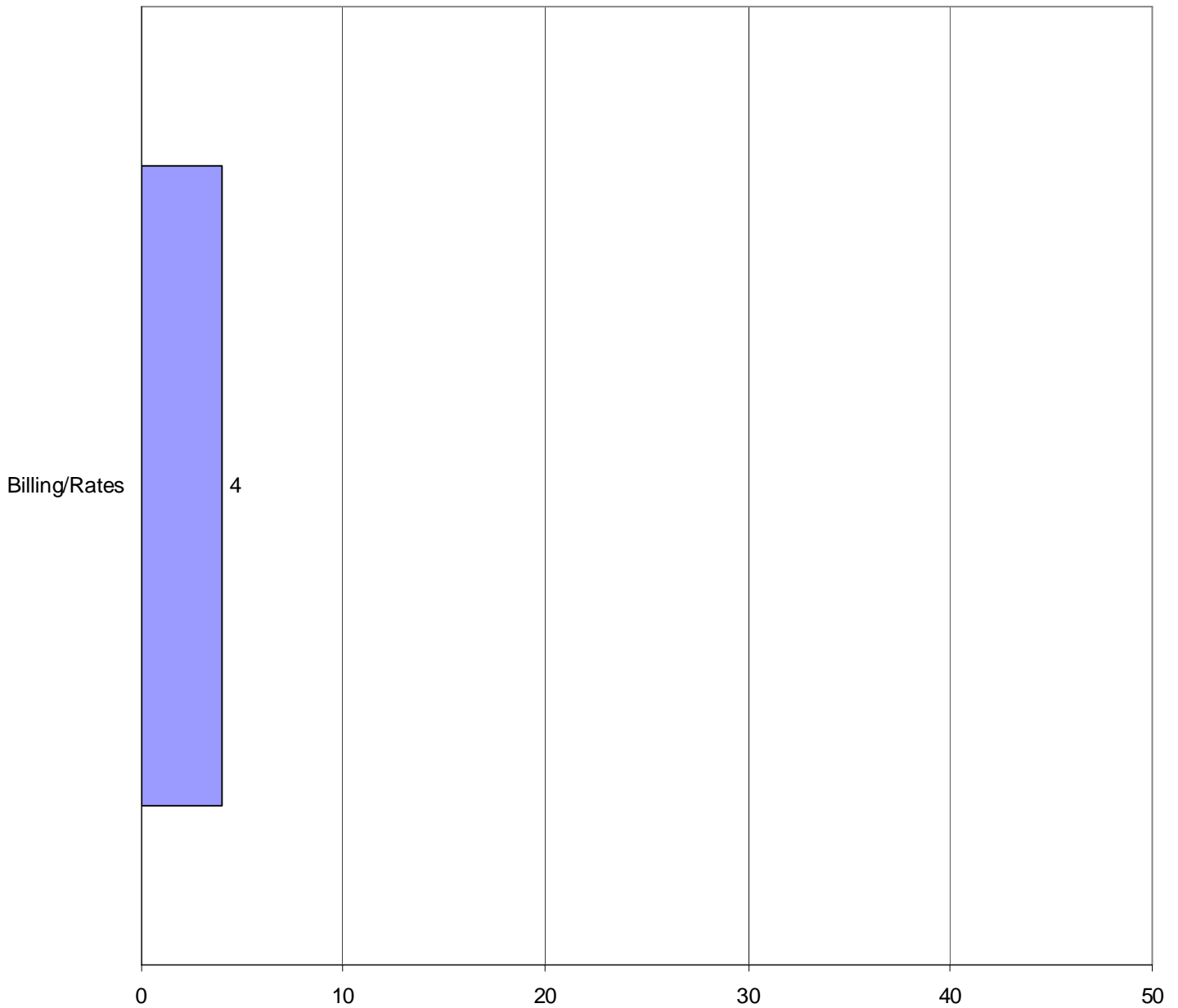


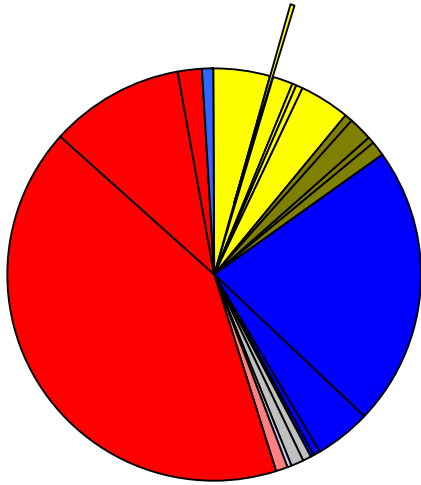
**MCI
2007 Complaints
13 Total**



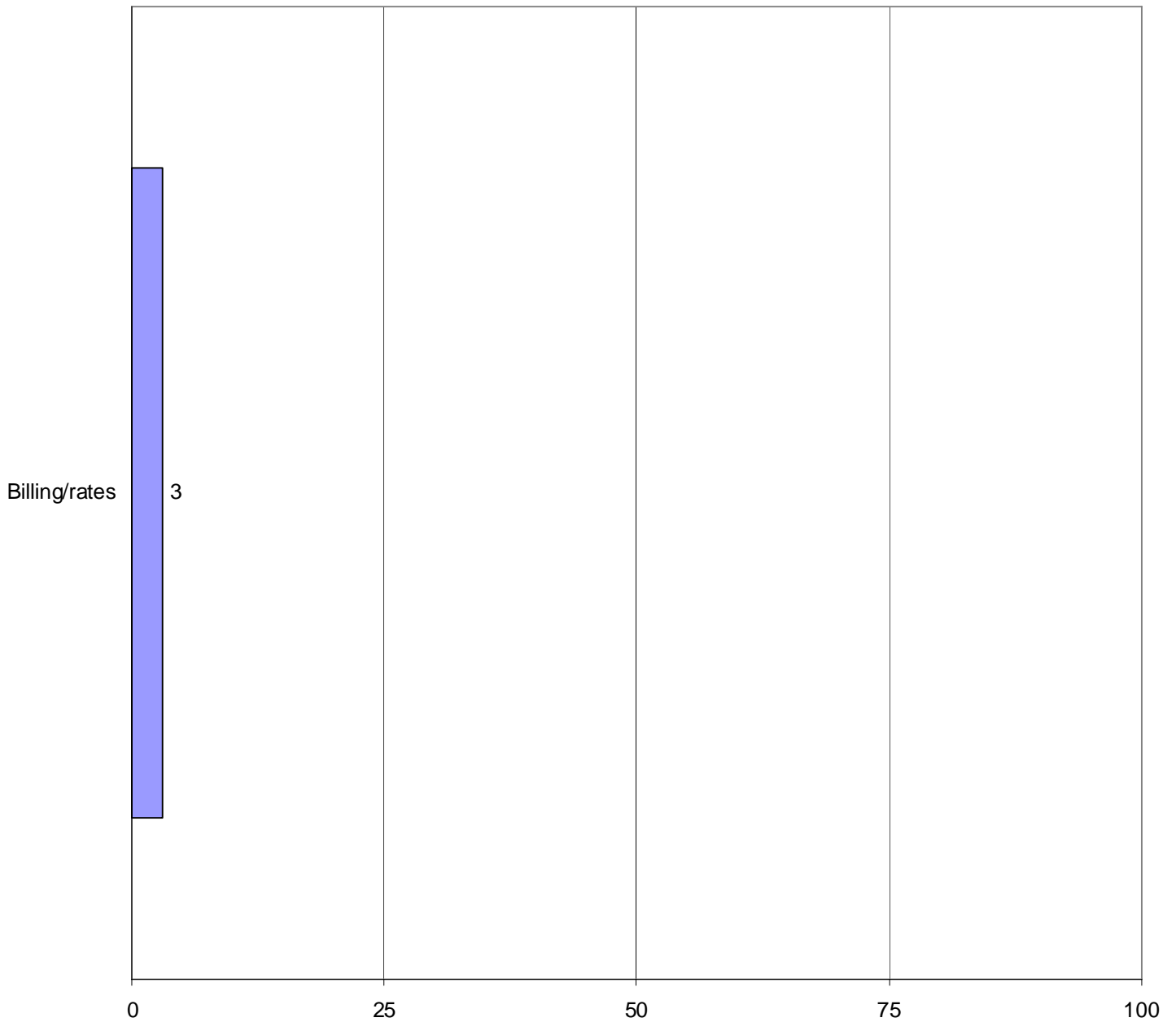


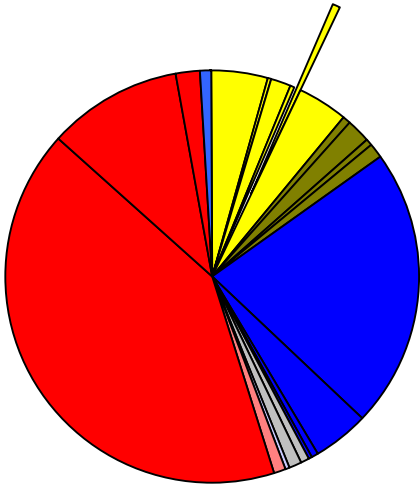
**Sprint
2007 Complaints
4 Total**



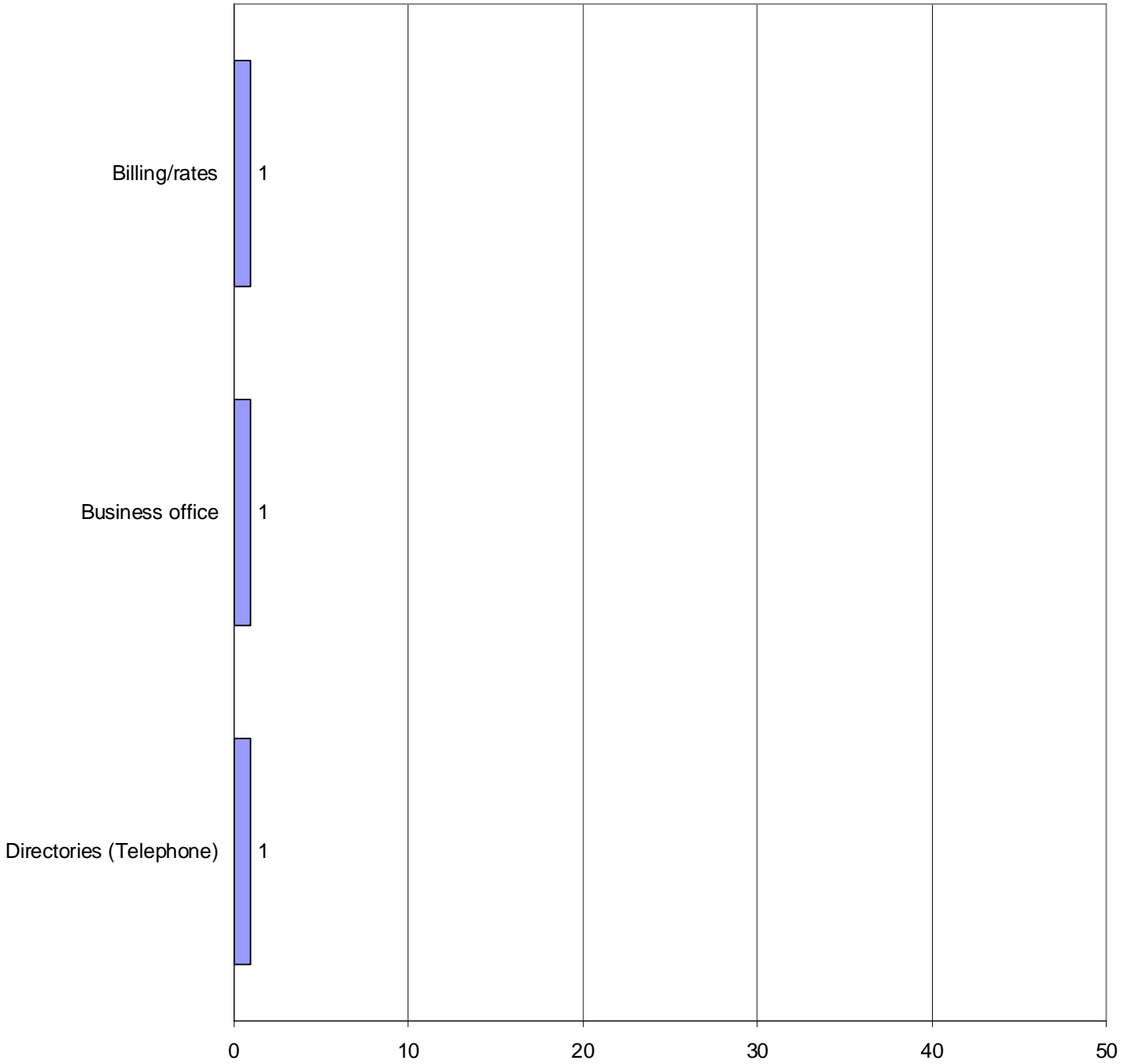


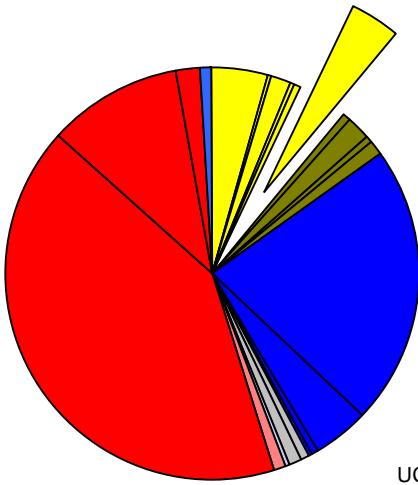
**Qwest Long Distance
2007 Complaints
3 Total**



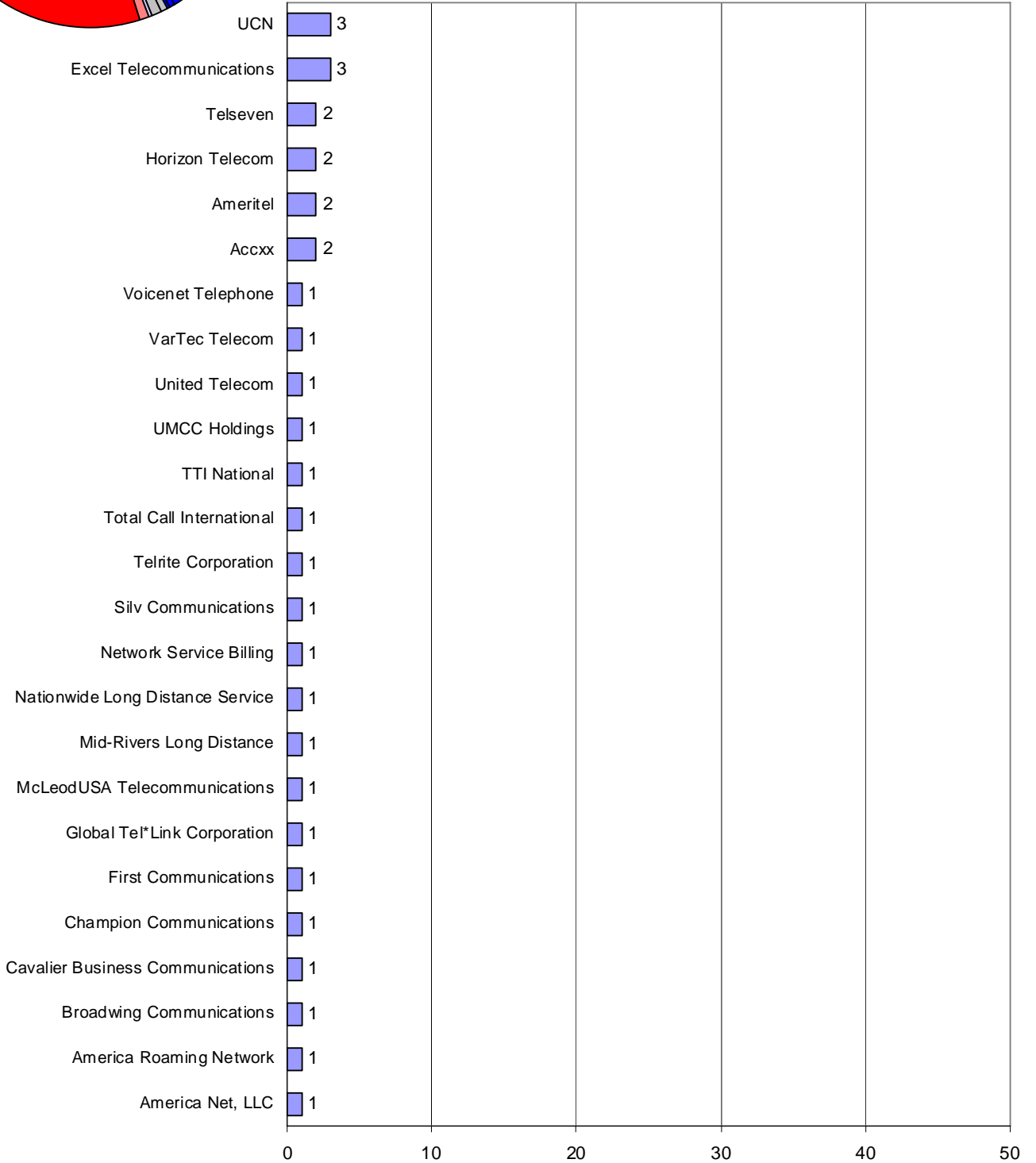


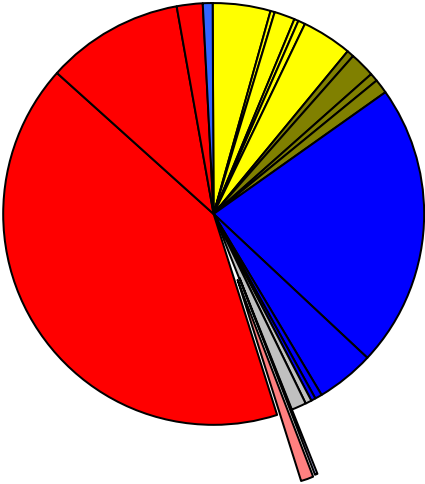
**CenturyTel
Long Distance
2007 Complaints
3 Total**



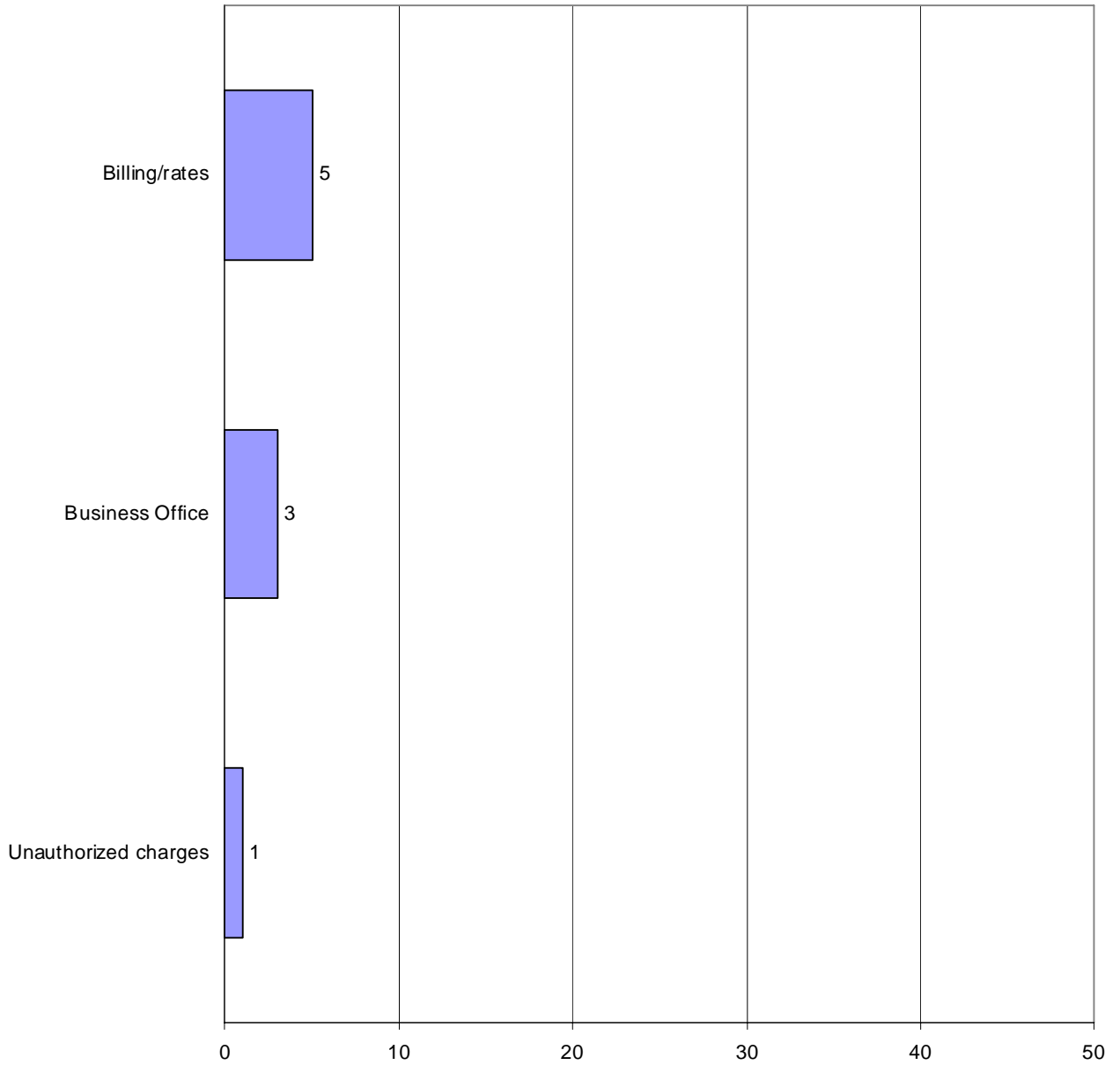


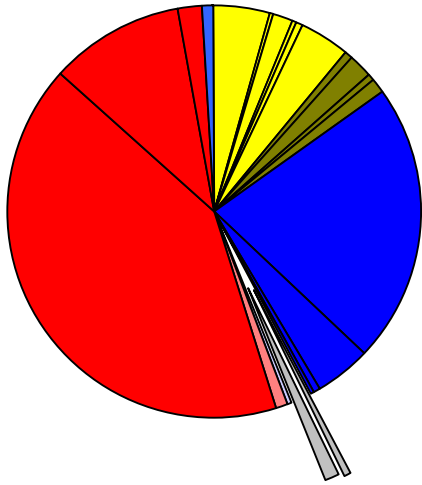
**Other Interexchange Carriers (IXCs)
2007 Complaints
33 Total**



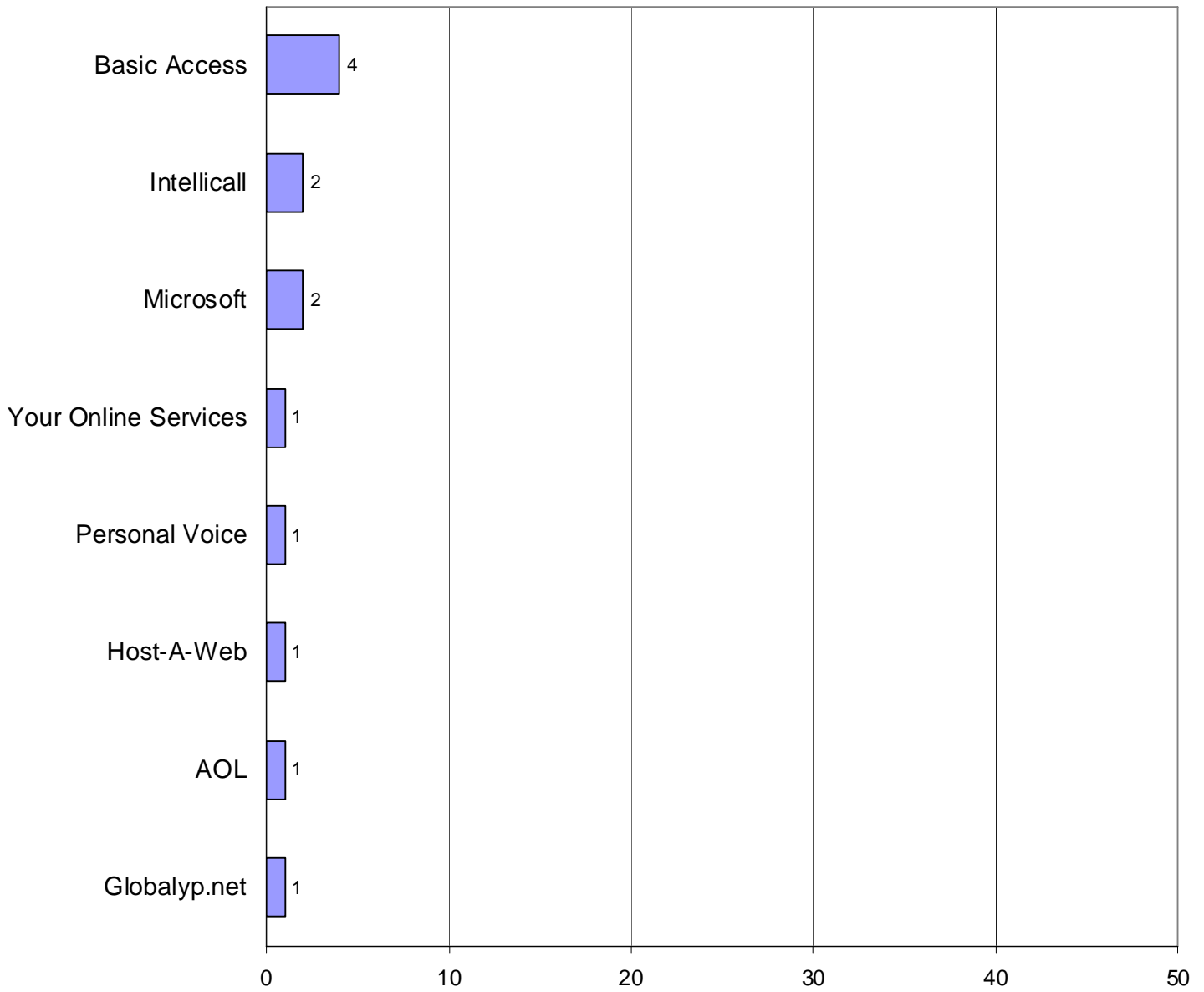


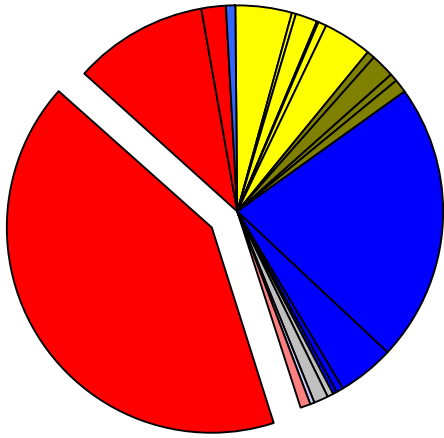
**Operator Services
Providers & Inmate
Calling Providers
2007 Complaints
9 Total**



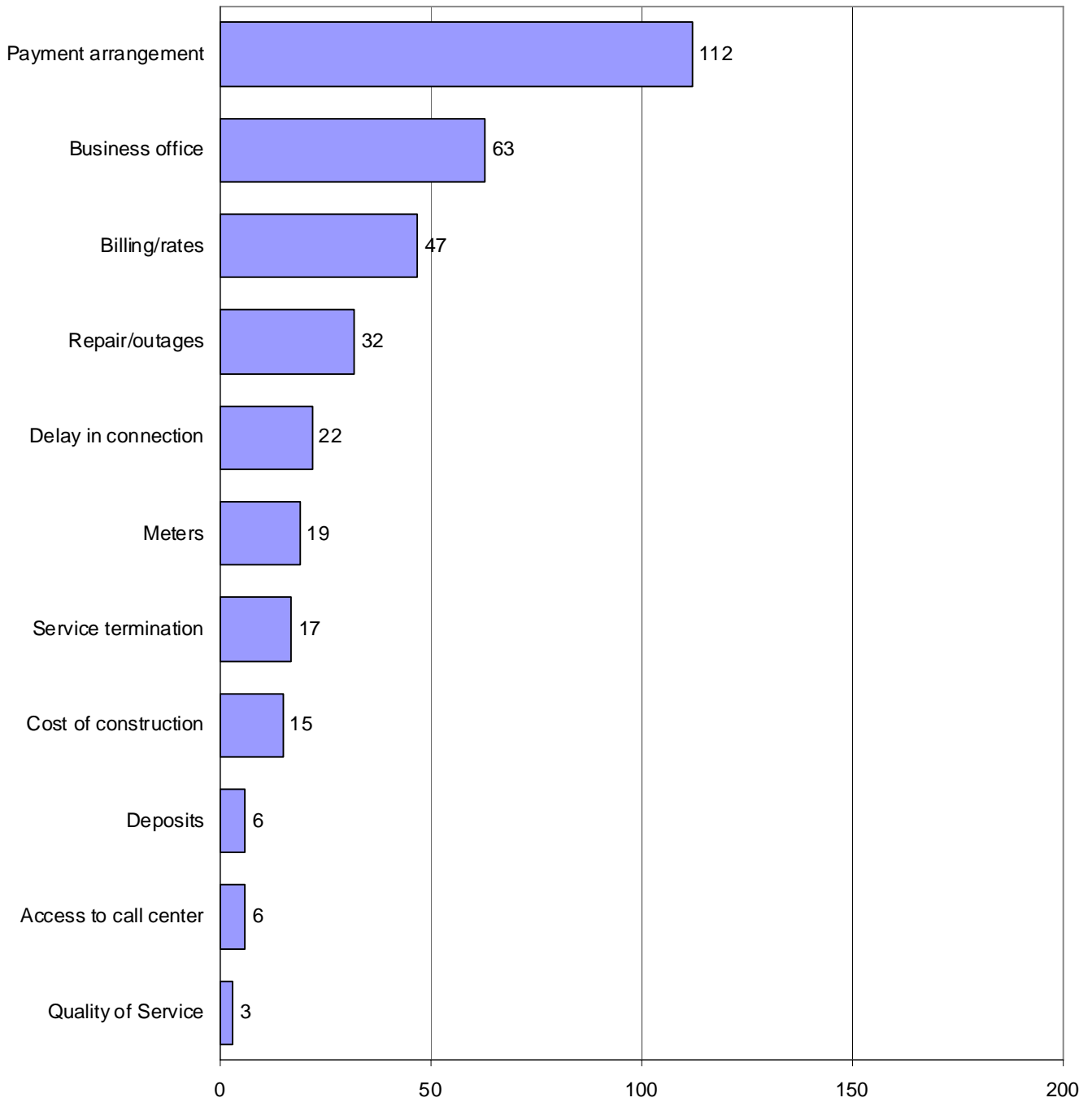


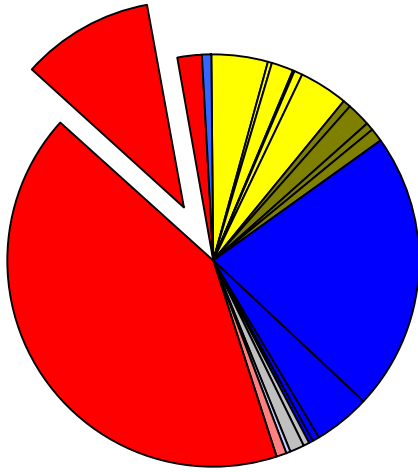
**Non-Telco
Telco-Billed
2007 Complaints
13 Total**



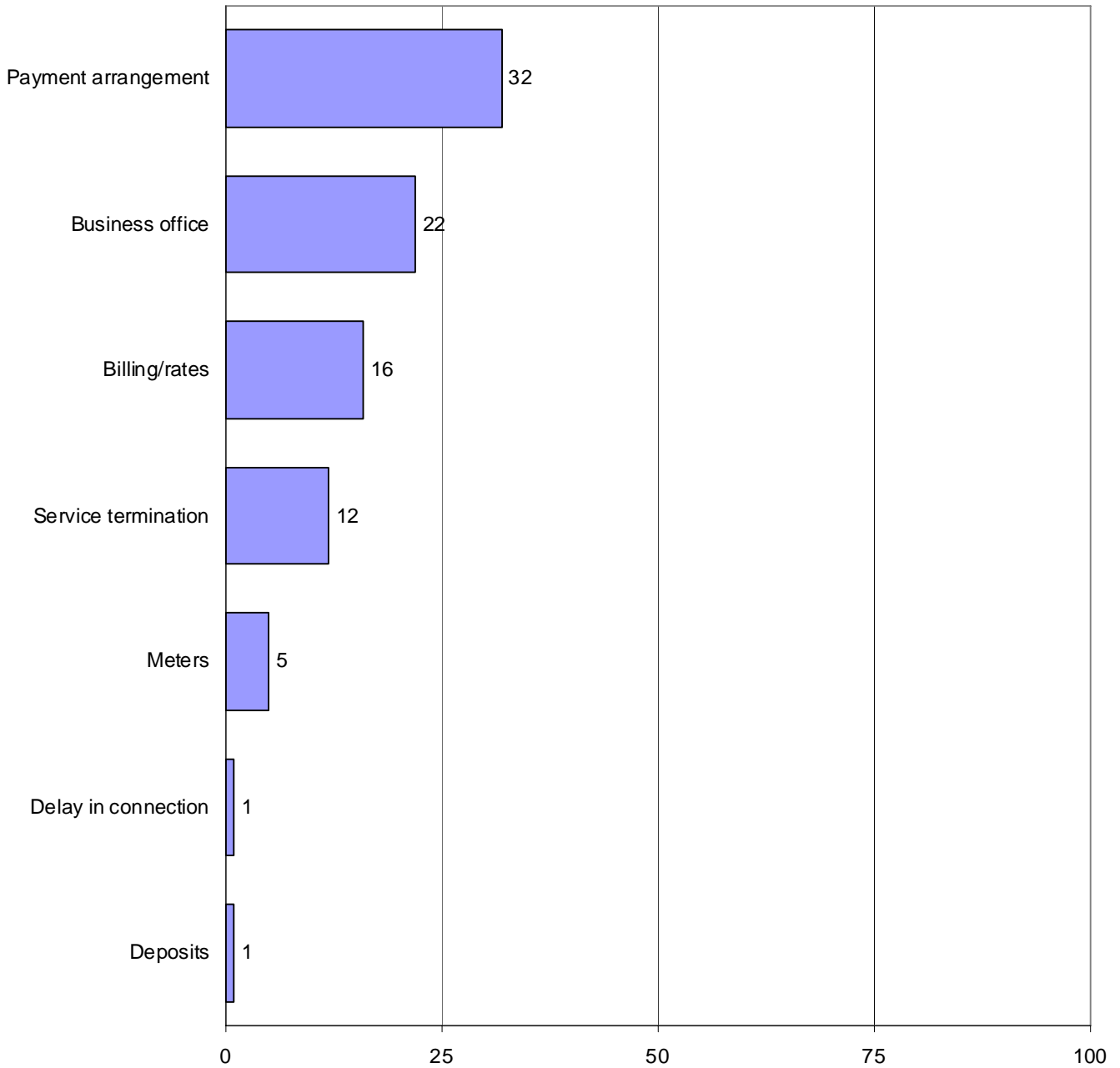


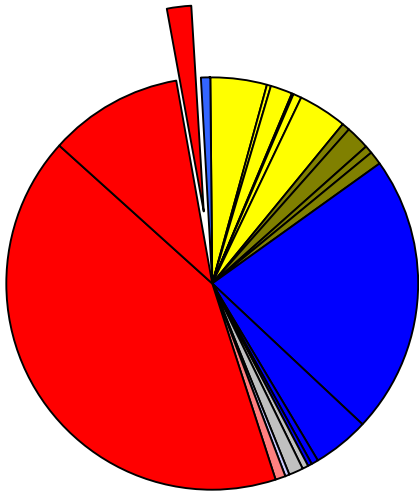
**North Western Energy
2007 Complaints
342 Total**



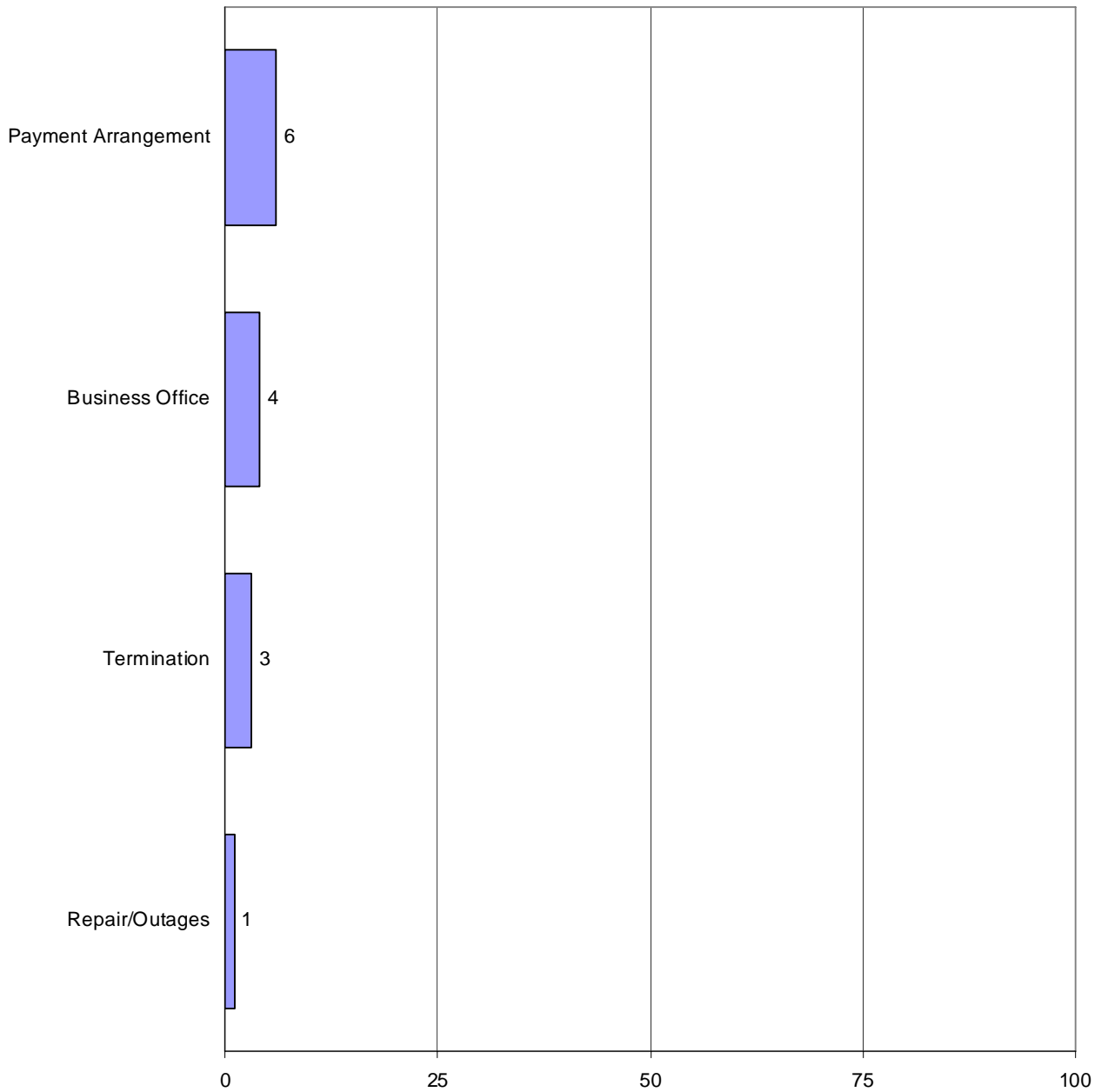


**Montana-Dakota
Utilities
2007 Complaints
89 Total**

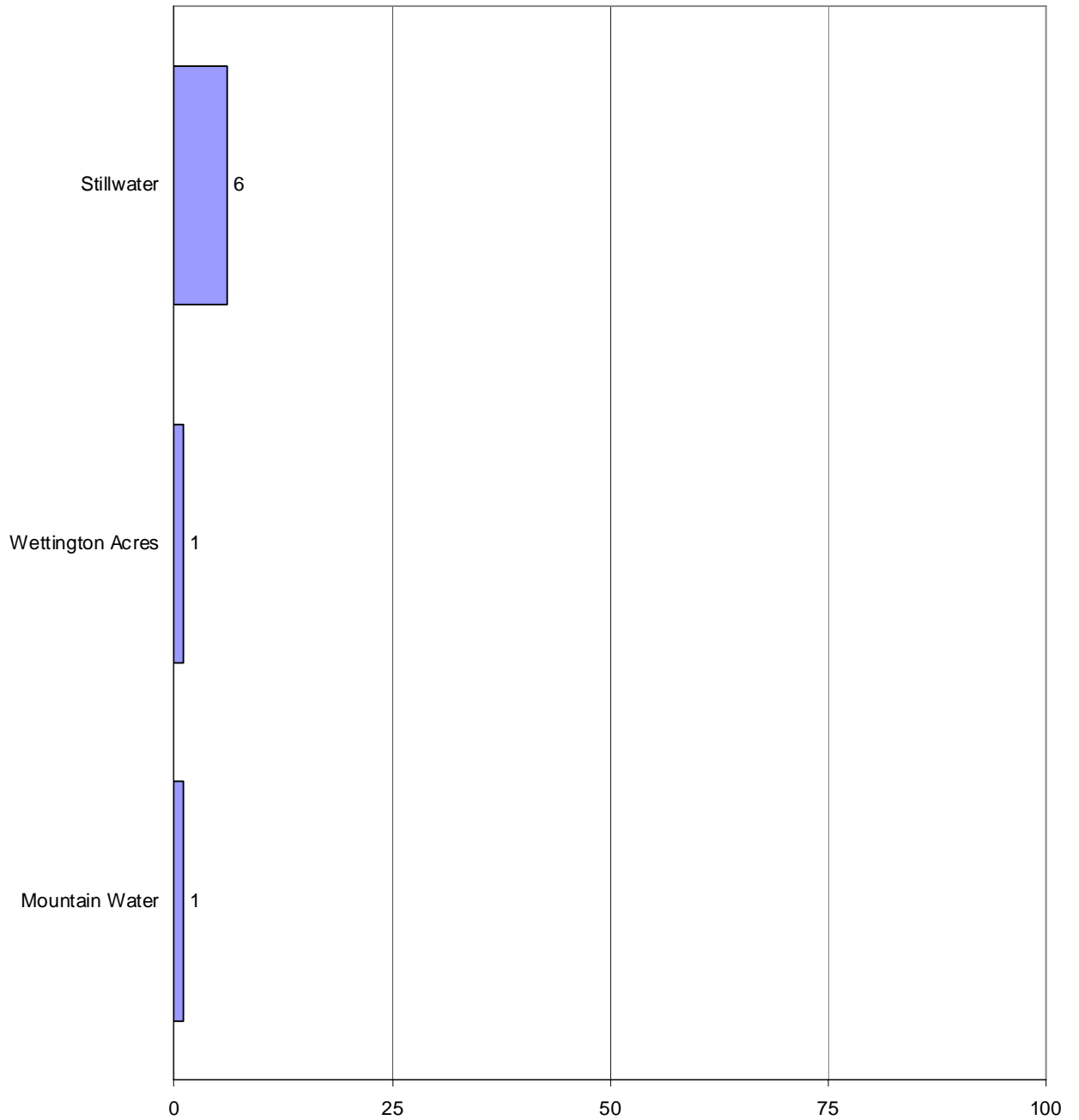
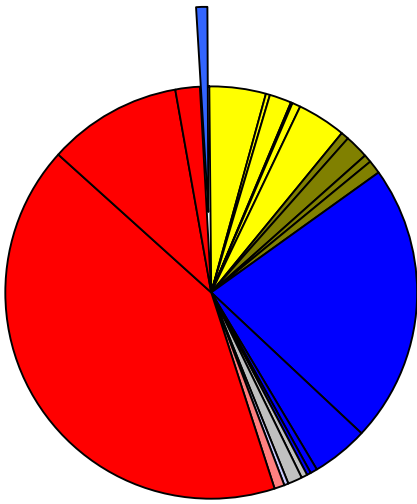




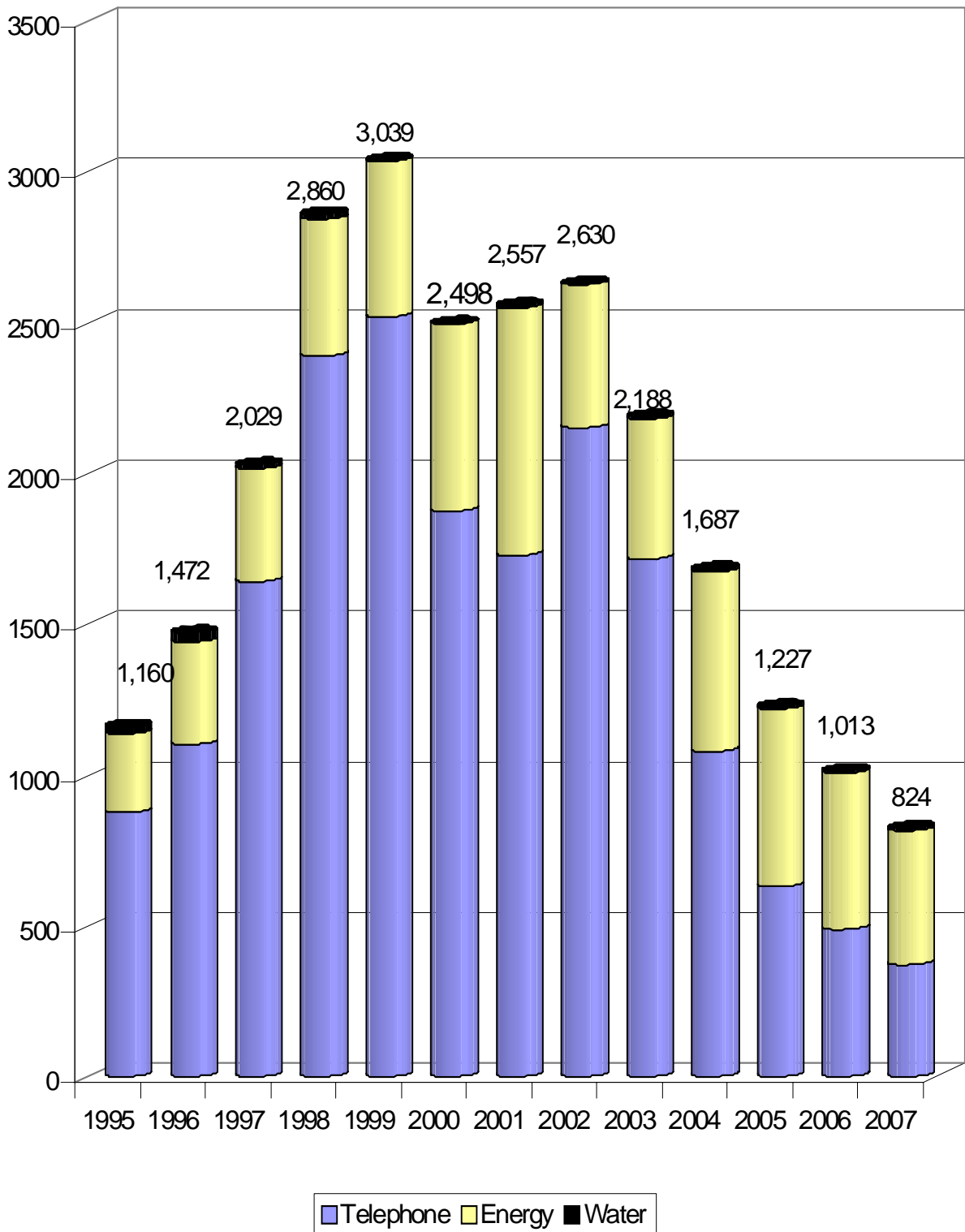
**Energy West
2007 Complaints
14 Total**



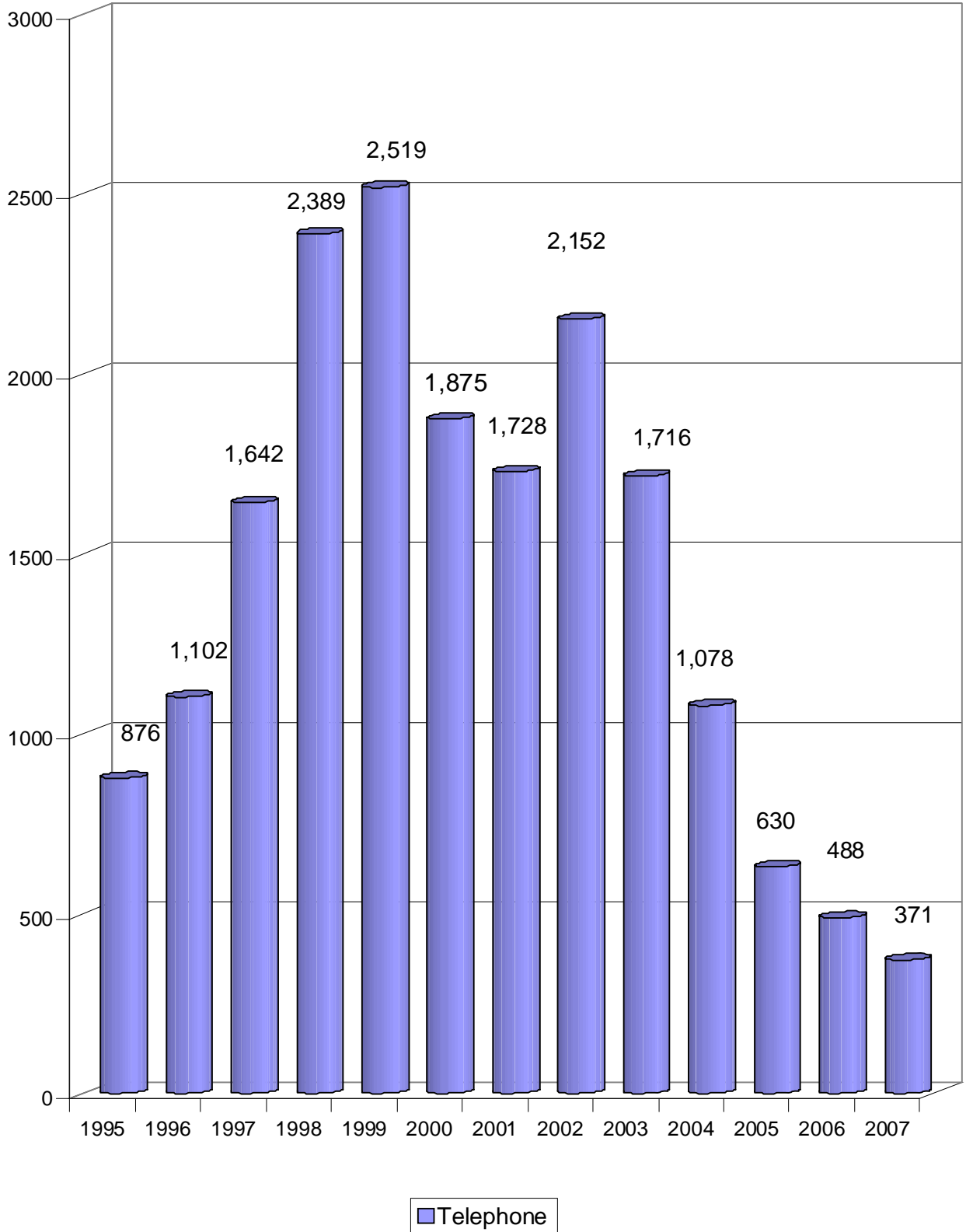
Water Utilities 2007 Complaints 8 Total



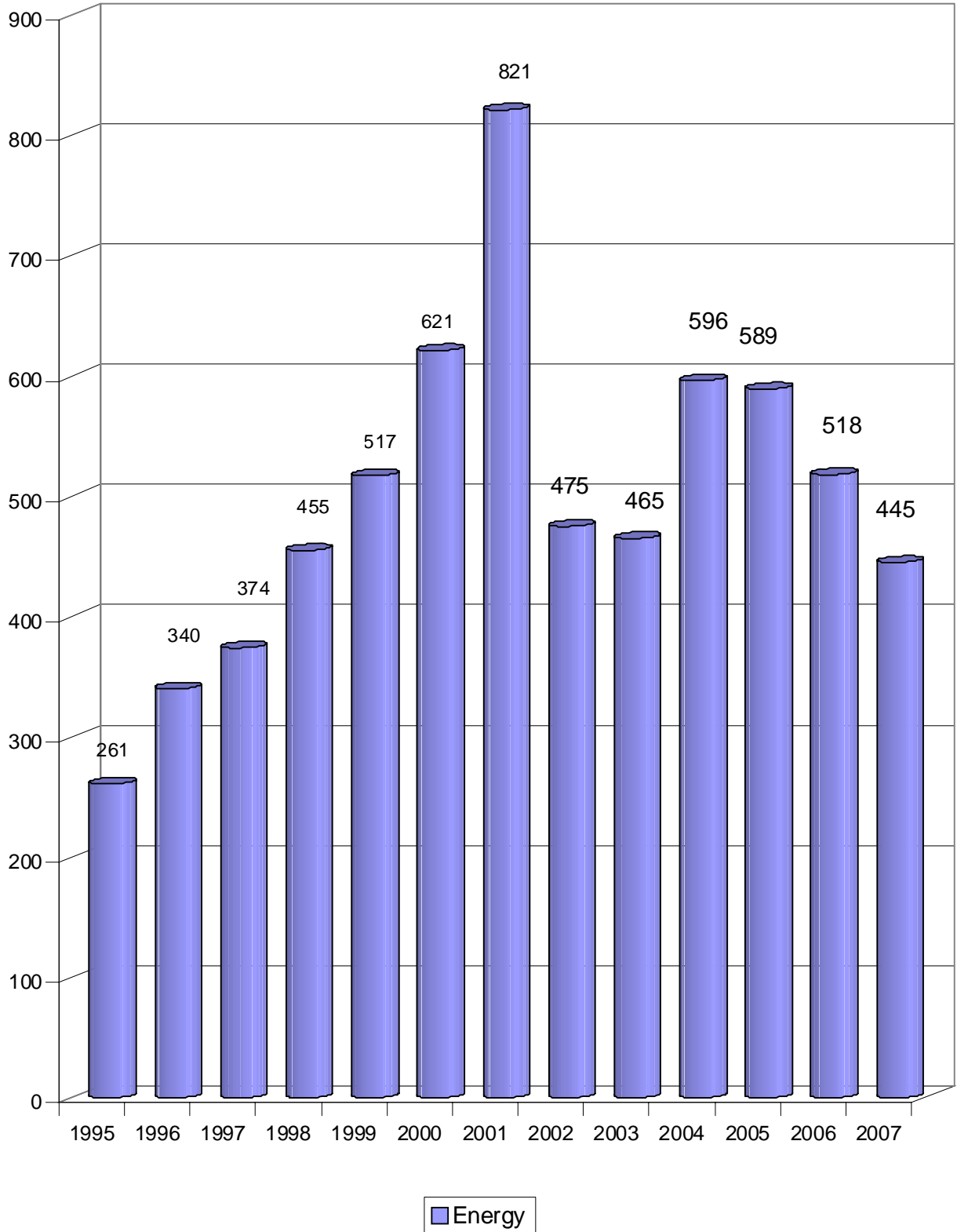
PSC complaints from 1995 through 2007 by service type



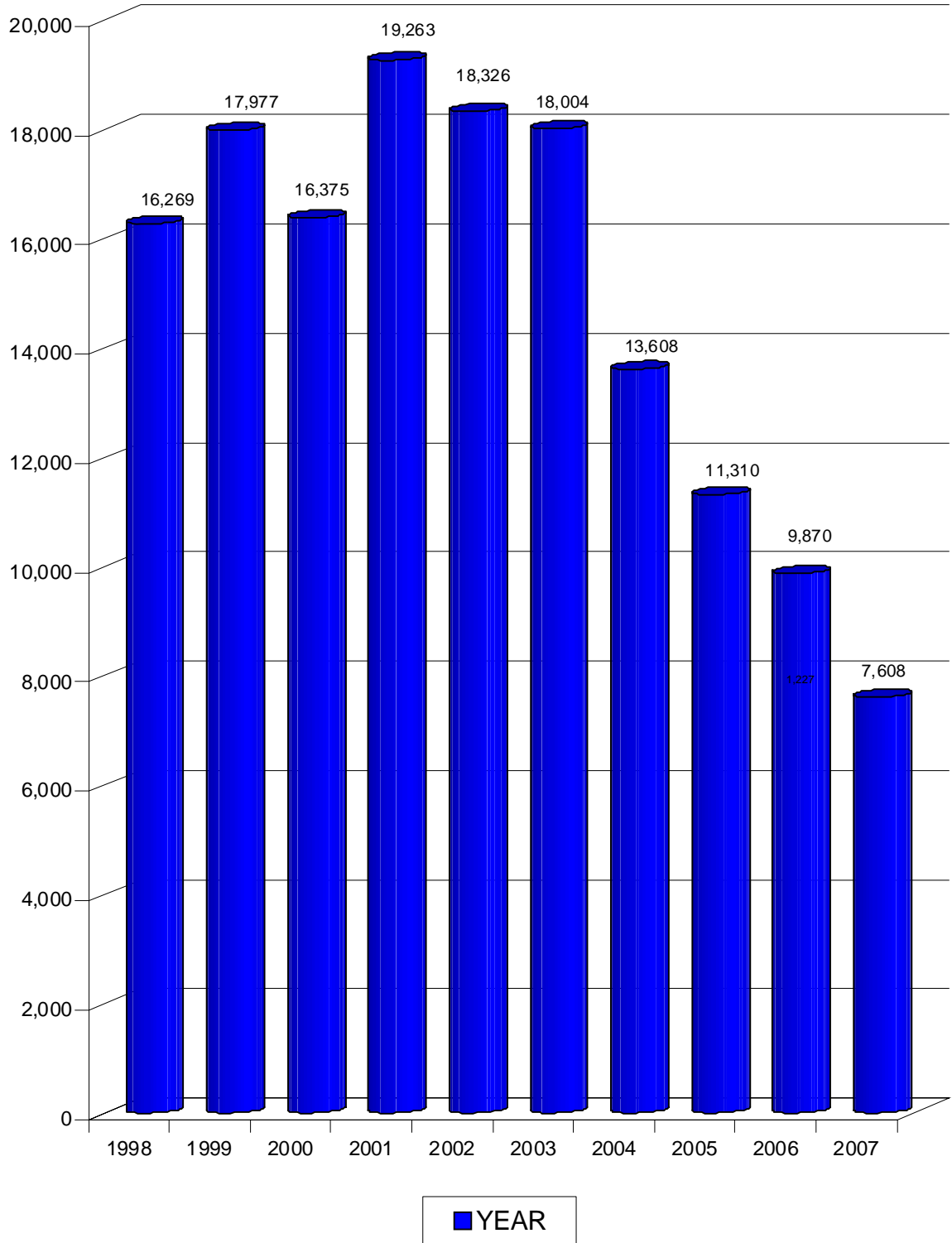
Telecommunications Complaints from 1995 through 2007



Energy Complaints from 1995 through 2007



Incoming 800 Calls 1998 - 2007



Notes of Interest
2007 Annual Report

There has been a continued trend in telecommunications complaint numbers dropping over time, specifically from 2003 – 2007. In looking at the various complaint categories, the reduction of complaint numbers can be attributed to two major areas—the Incumbent Local Exchange Carrier (ILECs) group and the Interexchange Carrier group (IXCs). Qwest makes up the majority of the ILEC group, and their complaint numbers have dropped significantly since 2003. In 2003 their complaint total was 581. In 2007 their complaint total was 178, a drop of over 69%. The main categories comprising the bulk of Qwest’s totals came from Business Office and Billing/Rates complaints. As far as the IXC category is concerned, the 2003 complaint total was 831, and the 2007 total was 92—a drop of approximately 89%. However, in 2003 there were more long distance companies involved in complaints than were in 2007. Either the companies got better in their customer relations, the companies went out of business, or were purchased by another company. Regardless, we are seeing fewer long distance companies involved in complaints as there were in 2003.

On March 13, 2007 the Commission issued Orders Dismissing Complaints involving a complaint from the Commission against Buzz Telecom, Inc. (Buzz Telecom), Billing Concepts, Inc., d/b/a Zero Plus Dialing (ZPDI) and USBI for violation of Montana laws pertaining to the initiation of (a) unauthorized charges on customers’ telecommunications bills (cramming), and (b) unauthorized switching of long distance telephone providers (slamming). The complaint also involved misrepresentation to customers of Nemont Telephone Cooperative, concerning products or services allegedly offered by Buzz Telecom on behalf of Nemont. We received 56 complaints back in 2006 against Buzz Telecom. As a result of this complaint Billing Concepts, Inc. severed its relationship with Buzz Telecom and subsequently credited all Buzz Telecom telecommunications charges back to Montana customers in the amount of \$34,986.00.

On May 3, 2007 the Commission issued an Order Closing Docket involving a complaint from the Commission against Yellow-Page.Net (YP.Net), OAN Services, Inc. and Enhanced Services Billing, Inc. (ESBI) for violations of Montana law pertaining to the initiation of unauthorized charges on customers’ telecommunications bills (cramming). These charges were placed on the customers’ bills without obtaining valid authorization in violation of Montana law and Commission rules. We received nine complaints back in 2006 that brought this matter to the Commission’s attention. Not only did the company issue refunds to these complainants, but they also issued refunds to all Montanans who

requested a refund. YP.Net agreed to pay for the mailing of the refund letter to all accounts set up in Montana, and all refund checks were sent through our office for mailing at YP.Net's cost. There were 3,079 Montanans who were mailed the refund application. Out of the ones responding, YP.Net issued checks totaling \$46,291.13. The company is not currently operating in Montana and will do so only after approval of its marketing script and/or its Letter of Agency with check format. YP.Net is currently under a probationary period up to August 18, 2008 wherein the PSC has continued oversight of the YP.Net matters in the settlement agreement. During this time, if YP.Net uses any marketing scripts and/or LOA with check not previously approved by the Commission or staff, a \$10,000 fine will be levied on the company to be paid to the PSC.