

For immediate release
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Aussies still getting stung by global roaming charges

- ➔ Almost half a million Australians have been burned by global roaming fees in the last 2 years
- ➔ Mobile data is the main culprit; bill blowouts 6 times monthly plan cost
- ➔ How to beat bill shock and minimise data usage

8 May, 2017, Sydney, Australia -- Australians are still being caught out by global roaming charges, according to new research by Australia's most visited comparison site, finder.com.au¹

The research found in the last two years, almost half a million Australians (400,000) have returned from overseas holidays to be shocked by a big mobile bill, thanks to global roaming fees.

The survey of 2,004 respondents showed on average, these Aussies opened at least one unexpected bill of \$278 which represented 5.8 times their monthly plan cost. That's a cumulative total of \$92 million in global roaming charges.

Using mobile data, through social media and apps, was the main culprit for unforeseen expenses.

Alex Kidman, telco expert at finder.com.au, says there really shouldn't be an element of surprise when Australians take their phone overseas.

"Phone providers are obliged to tell consumers when global roaming charges kick in -- this is usually in the form of a text when you land at your destination."

"While Australians are more conscious about texts and calls, data usage can so easily creep up on us with apps running in the background," he says.

"To make sure you don't get stung, it's a good idea to plan ahead and do some research.

¹ Experian Hitwise since 2015

Either [pick up a local SIM](#) at your destination or find a roaming package at home.”

“If you do take your phone with you, the key is keeping your mobile data off,” advises Mr Kidman.

“Be aware of apps on automatic updates and video streaming: they chew up the most data .”

The research found women have bigger bill blowouts than men: on average, women accidentally spent \$317, while men spent \$233.

How to beat bill shock and minimise data usage overseas:

- 1. Tap into free Wi-Fi** -- Either via free hotspots or waiting till you get back to your hotel. Just make sure you never do any sensitive tasks like online banking from a public hotspot.
- 2. Download rather than stream** -- If you need to load up your iPad with some entertainment for a train trip, make use of the [offline viewing function on Netflix](#), Stan and Amazon Prime. This allows you to download shows and movies when you're connected to Wi-Fi, and watch them later without an Internet connection.
- 3. Disable auto-play** -- The moment you open Facebook, videos start playing and they are incredibly demanding data-wise. Disable Facebook's autoplating of video streams, and set its image quality to low. That way you're only playing you really want to watch, and really want to pay for.
- 4. Switch off updates and background data** -- Basically, turn off any setting that automatically uses data. The last thing you want is for your phone to begin downloading the latest Angry Birds update while you're occupied bird watching in the Panama Canal.