



Case volumes reach new all-time highs as OBSI becomes Canada's sole banking ombudsman

In Q1, OBSI began its new expanded mandate as Canada's single external complaint body. This led to significant increases in inquiries and cases, both of which reached new record high levels. Inquiries increased by 49% from the previous quarter and by 55% from the previous year. Total cases opened rose 71% quarter over quarter and 45% year over year. Case volume increases were largely driven by banking. Investment cases declined 6% in Q1 and 14% year over year.

In the first quarter, increasing banking case volumes led to increases in nearly all product and issue categories. The most common complaints related to credit card and e-transfer fraud and service issues. Mortgage disputes also continued to climb.

Investment complaints nearly all related to common shares and mutual funds, with service and suitability being the most common issues. Mutual fund complaints rose over the previous quarter, while common share complaints trended down over the past two quarters. Crypto asset complaints and scholarship trust plans both declined from the previous quarter, and issues related to GICs and cash equivalents remained low but showed an upward trend.

Last eight-quarter statistics

In this report, we present preliminary data from Q1 2025 (November 1, 2024 to January 31, 2025) alongside data over the last eight quarters for historical context. All figures are preliminary and subject to change.

This report includes:

- Inquiries received by industry
- Inquiries received by investment sector
- Total cases opened
- Cases opened by investment sector
- Cases opened by region
- Top 5 banking products
- Top 5 banking issues
- Top 5 investment products
- Top 5 investment issues

About OBSI inquiries

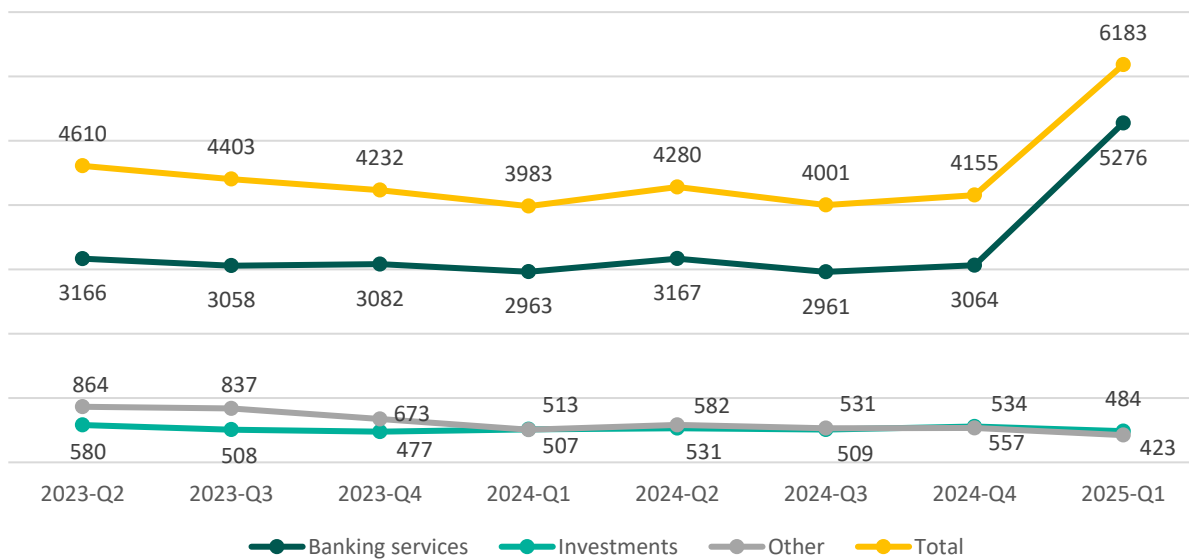
When consumers contact OBSI with a complaint or question about a financial services problem they are having, we record these interactions as inquiries. Assisting consumers with complaint inquiries is an important part of OBSI's work. In addition to helping people file a complaint with OBSI when it falls within our mandate, our intake staff are trained to provide information and assistance to consumers when we are not the appropriate place to help them. This often includes informing them of regulations which apply to their complaint, explaining what steps need to be taken to resolve their issue and

directing them to the right contact within their firm or to the appropriate regulator. Inquiry volumes are a leading indicator of future case volumes.

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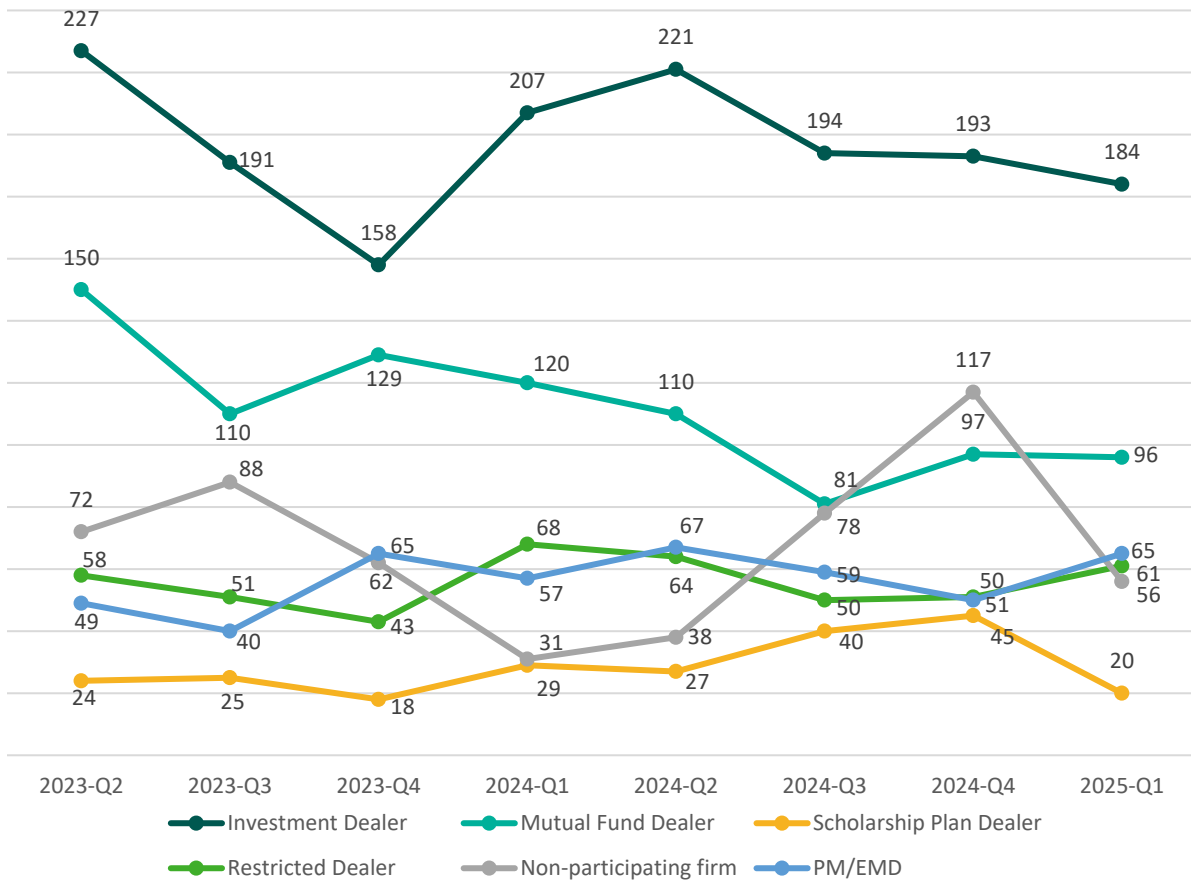
Inquiries Received by Industry: Last 8 Quarters



In Q1, **total consumer inquiries** rose sharply, driven predominantly by **banking-related** inquiries, which accounted for 85% of all inquiries.

- **Total inquiries** reached an all-time high of 6,183, up 49% from the previous quarter and up 55% from the previous year.
- **Banking-related** inquiries increased 72% quarter over quarter, reaching a new all-time high, and were up 78% year over year.
- **Investment-related** inquiries were down 13% quarter over quarter and 6% year over year.
- **Other** inquiries reached an eight-quarter low. The **Other** category includes inquiries from the consumers of non-participating firms.

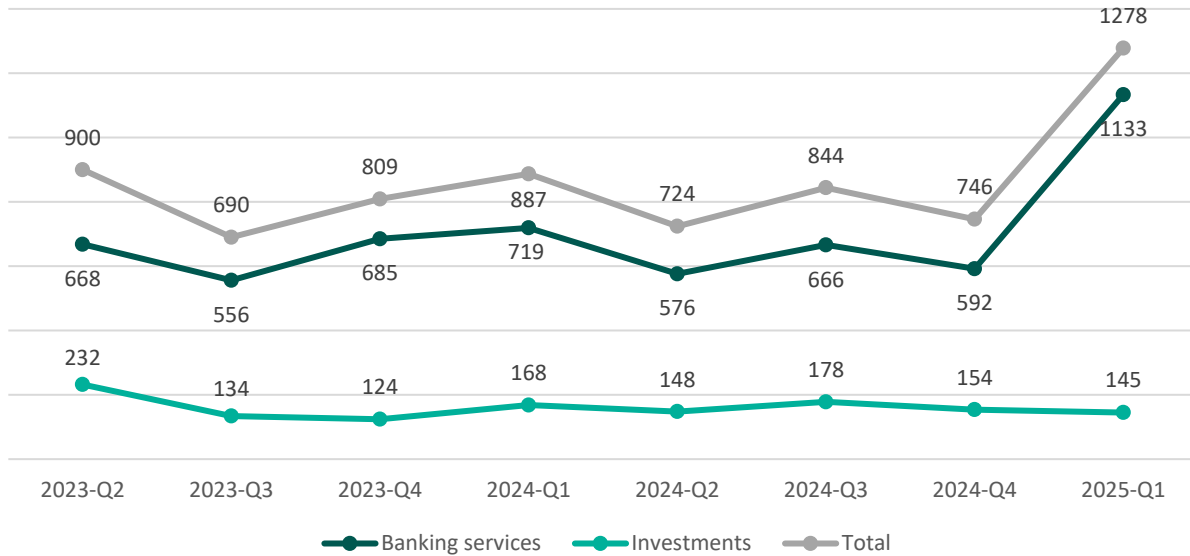
Inquiries Received by Investment Sector: Last 8 Quarters



In the first quarter, **investment-related** inquiries were down quarter over quarter and year over year, with notable fluctuations among various investment sectors.

- **Investment dealer** inquiries dropped by 5% compared to the previous quarter and fell 11% compared to the previous year.
- **Mutual fund dealer** inquiries saw a 1% decrease from the last quarter and dropped 20% year over year.
- **Restricted dealer** inquiries increased 20% quarter over quarter and declined 10% year over year.
- **Scholarship plan dealer** inquiries decreased by 55% from last quarter and 31% from last year.
- **Portfolio manager/exempt market dealer** cases were up 30% quarter over quarter and 14% year over year.
- Inquiries from **non-participating firms (NPFs)** dropped 52% quarter over quarter and increased 81% compared to the previous year. NPF inquiries are related to investment firms not subject to provincial securities regulations requiring them to provide access to OBSI services.

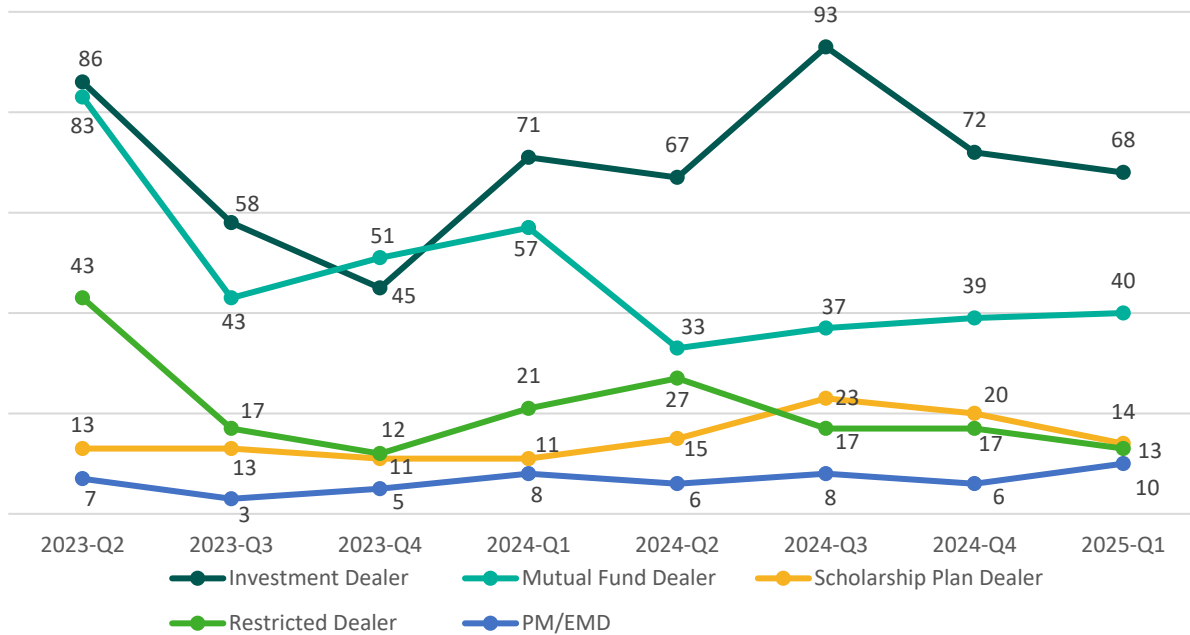
Total Cases Opened: Last 8 Quarters



In Q1, the **total number of cases** opened reached an all-time high of 1,278, due to the significant increase in banking cases.

- **Total cases** opened increased by 71% from the previous quarter and 44% from the previous year.
- **Banking cases** opened increased 91% quarter over quarter and 58% year over year.
- **Investment cases** opened remained relatively stable, with a slight decrease of 6% quarter over quarter and a 14% decline year over year.

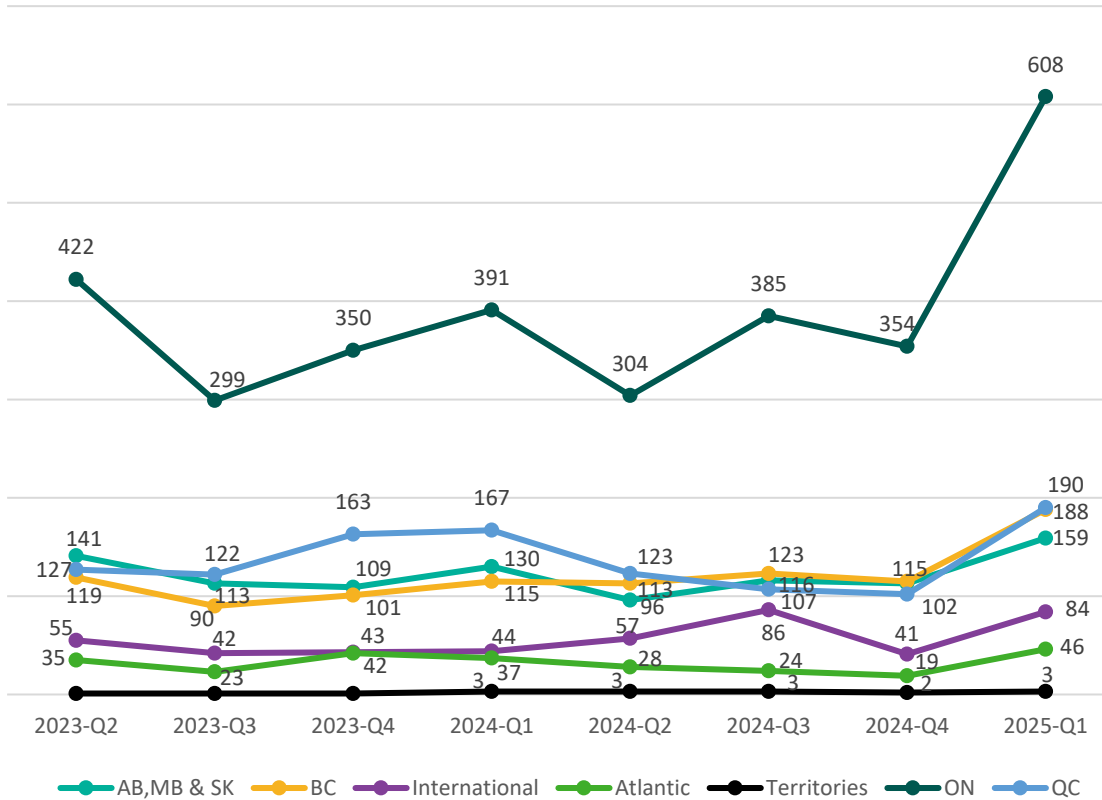
Cases Opened by Investment Sector: Last 8 Quarters



In the first quarter, total **investment** cases opened were down slightly.

- **Investment dealer** cases saw a 6% decline compared to the previous quarter and 4% decline from the previous year.
- **Mutual fund dealer** cases were flat from the last quarter but down 30% year over year.
- **Restricted dealer** cases dropped by 24% quarter over quarter and down 38% year over year.
- **Scholarship plan dealer** cases fell 30% quarter over quarter but increased 27% when compared to last year.
- **Portfolio manager/exempt market dealer** cases were up quarter over quarter and year over year.

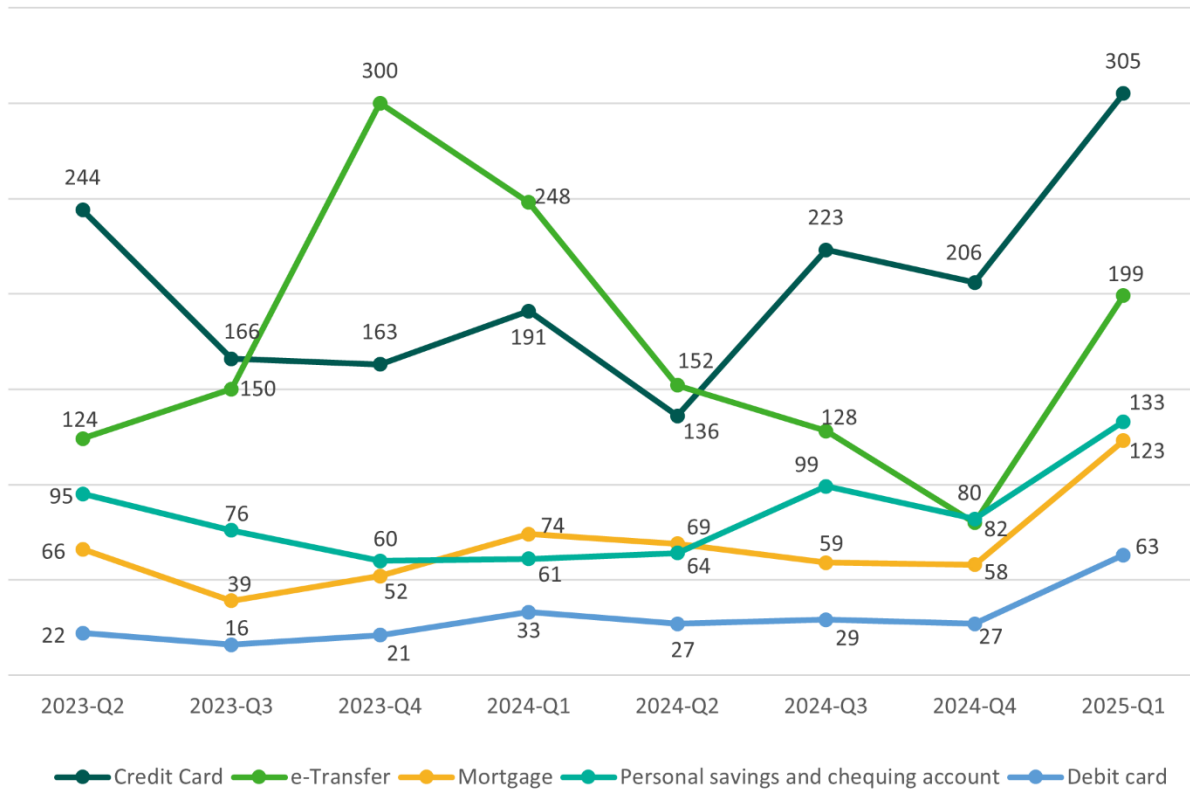
Cases Opened by Region: Last 8 Quarters



During the first quarter, the **total number of cases** opened reached an all-time high, resulting in significant increases in case volumes across all regions.

- **Ontario** cases increased 72% quarter over quarter and rose 56% year over year.
- **Quebec** cases increased 86% quarter over quarter and 14% year over year.
- Cases in the **Prairie provinces** saw a 41% quarter-over-quarter increase and were up 22% year over year.
- **British Columbia** cases rose by 64% quarter over quarter and were also up 64% year-over-year.
- **International** cases more than doubled quarter over quarter and nearly doubled year over year.
- In the **Atlantic provinces**, cases rose by 142% from the previous quarter and 27% from the previous year.
- Meanwhile, cases in the **Territories** remained at low levels.

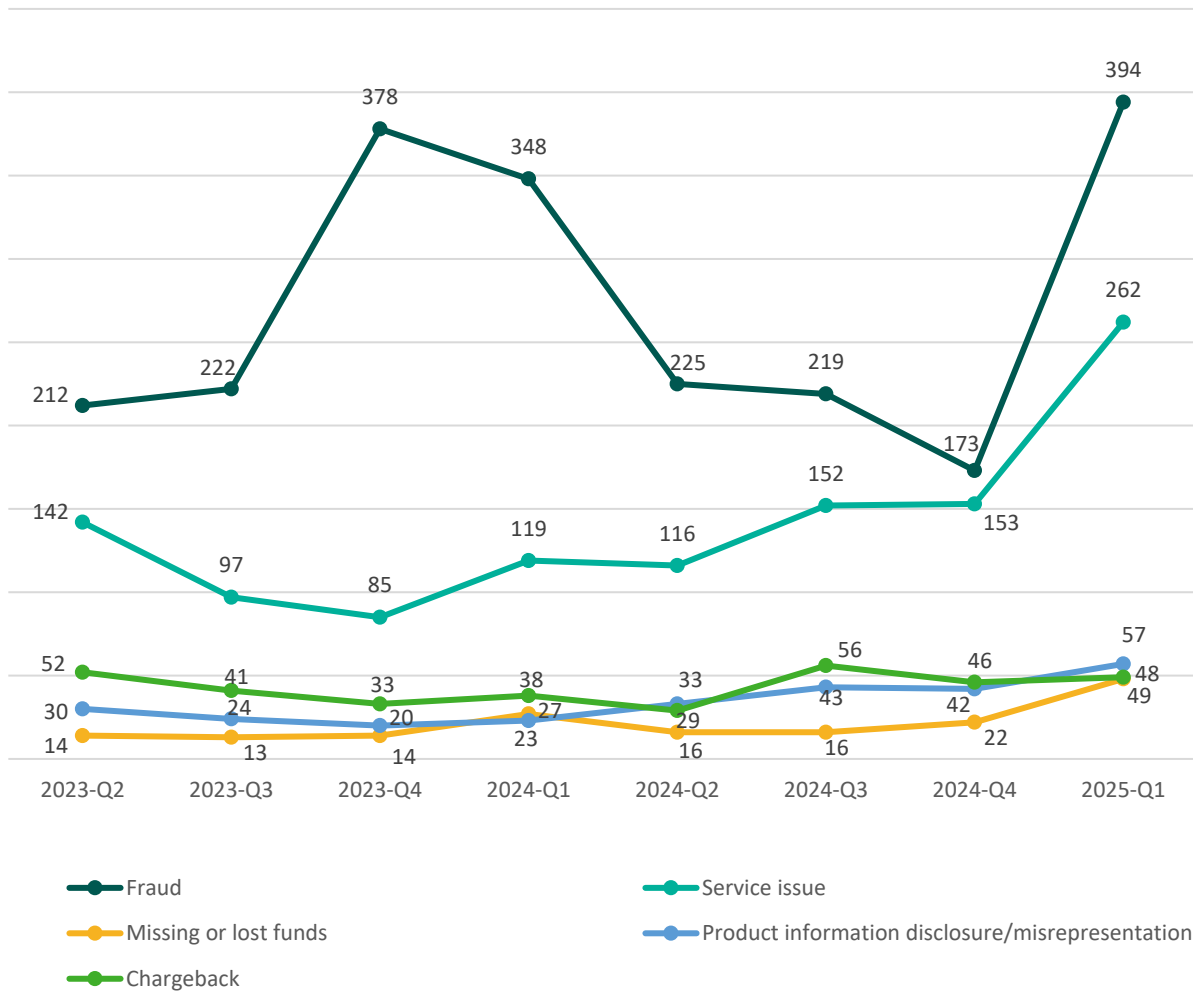
Top 5 Banking Products: Last 8 Quarters



In the first quarter, credit card disputes continued to be the leading concern among consumers. Amid record high overall banking complaints, all **banking product** complaints reached their highest level in the past eight quarters with the exception of e-transfers, which reached unusually high levels in late 2023.

- **Credit card** complaints rose by 51% from the previous quarter, reaching an eight-quarter high and up 63% from the previous year.
- **E-transfer** complaints increased 149% from the eight-quarter low seen last quarter but fell 20% year over year.
- **Mortgage** complaints more than doubled quarter over quarter, reaching an eight-quarter high, and increased 66% year over year.
- Complaints related to **personal savings and chequing accounts** saw a quarter-over-quarter increase of 62% while more than doubling the case volumes seen last year.
- **Debit card** complaints more than doubled from last quarter and nearly doubled year over year.

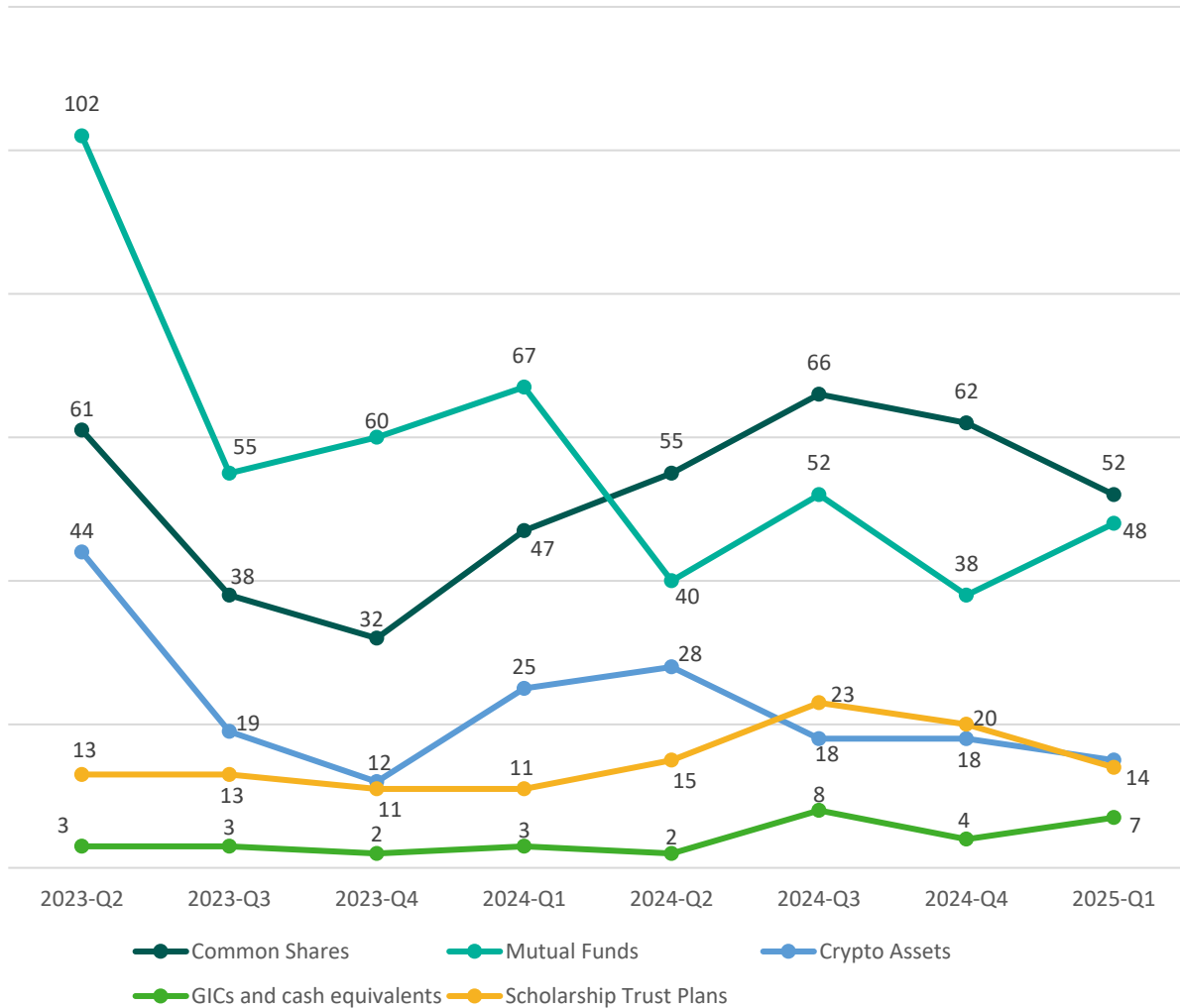
Top 5 Banking Issues: Last 8 Quarters



During the first quarter, **fraud** remained the most common concern for banking consumers. Amid record high overall banking complaints, all **banking issues** reached their highest level in the past eight quarters with the exception of chargebacks, which remained moderate.

- **Fraud** complaints more than doubled quarter over quarter and rose by 13% year over year.
- **Service issue** complaints rose significantly by 71% compared to the previous quarter, while more than doubling volumes in the previous year.
- Complaints related to **missing or lost funds** more than doubled quarter over quarter and increased 78% year over year.
- **Product disclosure** complaints were up 36% from the previous quarter while more than doubling from the previous year.
- **Chargeback** complaints were up slightly quarter over quarter and rose by 29% year over year.

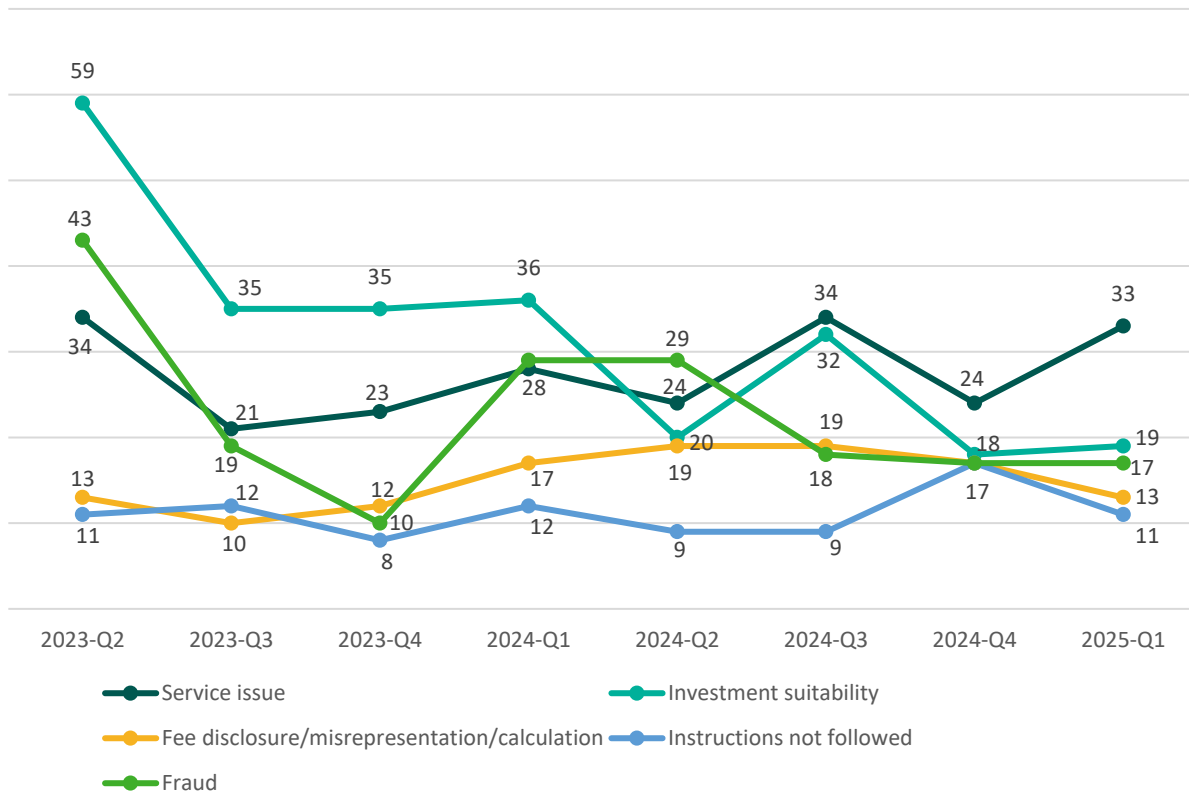
Top 5 Investment Products: Last 8 Quarters



In Q1, **common shares** led investor concerns about investment products.

- **Common share** complaints fell 16% from the previous quarter but rose 11% year over year.
- **Mutual fund** complaints were up 26% quarter over quarter but down 28% from the previous year.
- **Crypto asset** complaints decreased slightly quarter over quarter and 40% year over year.
- **Scholarship trust plan** complaints were down 30% compared to last quarter but up 27% year over year.
- Complaints related to **GICs and cash equivalents** remained at low levels, but increased quarter over quarter and year over year.

Top 5 Investment Issues: Last 8 Quarters



In the first quarter, **service** was the most complained-about issue for investors.

- **Service issue** cases rose 38% compared to the previous quarter and 18% compared to the previous year.
- **Investment suitability** cases reached an eight-quarter low for the second consecutive quarter and were down 47% year over year.
- Cases related to **fee disclosure** dropped 24% from the prior quarter and prior year.
- Cases related to **instructions not followed** remained at relatively low levels, up 35% quarter over quarter but flat year over year.
- **Fraud** cases decreased from the highs seen in early 2024 but were flat quarter over quarter.