
From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, 14 October 2022 10:03 AM
To: Merger Authorisations
Subject: TPG/Telstra proposed spectrum sharing

Dear ACCC,

As a telecom user who lives, works and has previously owned a technology based business in Regional Australia I would like to make the following submission on the proposed spectrum sharing deal between Telstra and TPG.

Regional areas in Australia are plagued with poor mobile network coverage. Prior to the advent of the NBN the same could be said of fixed broadband services. In fact, fixed broadband services in the Rockhampton region, where my aerial surveying business Atlass was based, were so bad that I had plans drawn up to relocate the business to Southeast QLD where we would have better access to high speed reliable broadband services required for our operations. I subsequently sold the business in 2016 and it was relocated to the Sunshine Coast where it still operates. The NBN rollout has almost completely solved this issue and had it occurred 10 years earlier, I would probably still own Atlass and it would still be operating profitably in Rockhampton. The NBN is now has a monopoly on the fixed broadband infrastructure and yet services and choice in Regional Australia has never been better.

I have been a (long suffering) Telstra customer since their privatisation in 1997. I have remained with Telstra due to the quality of their network and despite a near endless list of issues and complaints that I have made in dealing with this appalling company. Two month ago I finally made the decision to move my mobile plan to iiNet after an issue with my local Telstra Store, which I found was actually just a contractor to Telstra with no ability or desire to help solve my problems. The iiNet, which operates as part of the TPG network, is almost unusable in my area. I live 2km from the centre of Yeppoon but the mobile download speeds are typically less than 1Mbps and upload speeds barely register on Speedtest. Even when sitting in the town centre they are woefully slow. My only other choice is to change to Optus who have some serious security issues. If I lived in Brisbane I would have the choice of dozens of providers all with fast broadband and fantastic coverage. Regional Australia deserves to have better choice with good quality services. Having common infrastructure to cover the vast areas we operate may prevent access to ultracheap services, but these are of little use if they do not provide the quality required to perform even basic tasks. I fully support the spectrum sharing proposal between TPG and Telstra and believe that it will give choice of providers with high quality services at a reasonable cost.

Regards,
Matthew McCauley

[REDACTED]