
From: Kevin Castrique [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, 1 July 2022 5:08 PM
To: Merger Authorisations
Subject: FW: concern re TPG Telstra merger

1st July 2022

To whom it may concern,

My name is Kevin Castrique and I wish to make a submission re the proposed TPG/Telstra network merger.

I am the franchisee/manager of Yes Optus Albany in Western Australia. I have been in the telecommunications business for 30 years plus, first as a technician with Telstra, moving to sales and then acquiring what was then Commander Centre South West which then transitioned to Optus Business Centre South West at which time I also opened two Yes Optus retail shops. My complete career in telecommunications has been serving regional WA so I have a strong understanding of networks, competition and marketing in regional WA.

Currently I own Yes Optus Albany with a customer data base that spans approx 500 square kilometres across regional WA. Upon opening of the Albany store in 2011, there were four Optus towers in the Albany region. Since then, Optus has hugely invested and there are now nine towers. This has given customers a wider range of choice not only for network but has made the market more competitive. We also employ local people and use local marketing while also investing heavily in our local community sport and recreation activities.

We are the only non Telstra store in our SA3 region and when we opened the store 11 years ago, it gave business and consumer customers a real alternative choice for their communication needs. I am concerned that should the TPG/Telstra network proposal proceed, Optus will not continue to invest in the region as the merger will give Telstra an added advantage with coverage which is always our main concern. It will create a massive imbalance of spectrum ownership and may result in a Telstra's domination of the region once again. I also believe there will be no incentive for Telstra to maintain their network or improve their network which could result in more bad customer experience within the region and inevitable increase of costs to businesses and household consumers.

I am deeply concerned for the future of my business and future employment prospects of my staff if this merger was to proceed. To preserve competition and choice for regional Australia, I urge you to reject this proposal.

Kind regards

*Kevin Castrique
Franchisee/Manager
CCSW PTY LTD
T/A Yes Optus Albany*
[REDACTED]