

Submission

Telecommunications Legislation Amendment (Competition & Consumer Safeguards) Bill

I am a Telstra 'NextG' generation CDMA mobile customer on a monthly plan.

Early in 2008 and only a couple of weeks prior to the mandated change from the Generation One CDMA to the current NextG format, I was a pre-paid CDMA Telstra customer.

By preference I would have remained a pre-paid mobile customer. I feel no customer loyalty whatsoever but as a rural resident, a CDMA service best suits my mobile phone requirement. I was and I remain aggrieved that Telstra delayed its roll-out of pre-paid NextG 'rural long-distance ticked' phone models specifically to force customers of my ilk to sign up to plans.

For my fixed line phone services, currently Telstra provide the handset and service my local call needs whilst AAPT service all my non local call business. I am aggrieved that Telstra continue more-aggressively than other other phone providers, to:

1. Introduce charges associated with bill settlement.
2. Demand bill settlement within approximately 16 days of each bill issue.

The NextG generation upgrade was ostensibly made by Telstra to cater for a high data-rate transmission demand, from particularly its internet clients (and no doubt also to facilitate users who potentially wish to use the service for purposes such as video surveillance.) Whereas my need and the continuing need of many other NextG clients is merely for the level of service that the first generation CDMA most adequately supported. Yet Telstra manipulated the Government regulation process to convert this second-generation CDMA service to a Telstra monopoly. And as I have earlier pointed out; have used their new/now monopoly position unscrupulously.

- This history motivates me to urge the Senate to support a structural separation of the Telstra business enterprise.
- Furthermore, I urge the Senate to force Telstra to open up the NextG network to the same level of competitive provider access as prevailed when the generation-one CDMA was in operation. (As this becomes a reality, I would anticipate my current AAPT provider will give serious consideration to also offering a NextG retail service. And similarly, those satellite phone service providers who were rudely excluded from incorporating the NextG service as a low-cost default to the costly satellite option; will again be enabled to properly and competitively service a likely expanded customer base.

My wife and I are not direct shareholders in either Telstra or AAPT. However we both have superannuation policies that are likely to have investments in both businesses. My wife works as a Teacher Librarian in a local Catholic School and I work for the West Australian Department of Agriculture and Food. (We have four children and none of these work in the telecom area.)

Thank you for this chance to air my personal views on the topic.

John Stretch