

**Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications**  
**Answers to Senate Estimates Questions on Notice**  
**Additional Estimates Hearings February 2014**  
**Communications Portfolio**  
**Australian Communications and Media Authority**

**Question No: 11**

**Program No. Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA)**

**Hansard Ref: In Writing**

**Topic: Fibre-to-the-node (FTTN)/Very high bit-rate digital subscriber line (VDSL)**

**Senator URQUHART asked:**

On Mr Turnbull's personal website on a post of FAQ's on Coalition policy (<http://www.malcolmturnbull.com.au/policy-faqs/coalition-broadband-policy-frequently-asked-questions>) it states "In areas where the NBN was deployed using FTTN/VDSL, the most error-prone parts of the copper (the large bundles running between nodes and exchanges) will be replaced by fibre.

We have been advised by several operators of large telco networks, that it is also important to remember that the on the "D-side" (ie between the node and the customer's premise) the most common maintenance issue is "shovel strike" – the accidental severing of a cable."

- a. Is the contention that the large bundles between the exchange and the pillars are the most error prone part of Telstra's copper network correct?
- b. Is the contention that the "most common maintenance issue" for cable between the exchange and a customer's premise is "shovel strike" correct?

**Answer:**

- a. The ACMA does not have any information that would allow it to express an opinion on this issue.
- b. The ACMA does not have any information that would allow it to express an opinion on this issue.