



The Hon Philip Dalidakis MP

Minister for Small Business, Innovation and Trade

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Ms Jane Melanie
Assistant Commissioner
Productivity Commission
Telecommunications Universal Service Obligation Inquiry
GPO Box 1428
CANBERRA CITY ACT 2601

Dear Ms Melanie

**VICTORIAN SUBMISSION TO THE PRODUCTIVITY COMMISSION'S TELECOMMUNICATIONS
UNIVERSAL SERVICE OBLIGATION INQUIRY**

I am writing to present the enclosed Victorian Government submission (the submission) to the Productivity Commission's *Telecommunications Universal Service Obligation Inquiry* (the Inquiry).

As you are aware, telecommunications plays a critical role in economic development, social inclusion and the delivery of essential public services, especially in regional communities. The submission is of strategic value to the Victorian Government and is consistent with the findings of the 2015 Regional Economic Development and Services Review and previous advocacy for better telecommunications outcomes for all Victorians.

The submission highlights the importance of adequate telecommunications to all Victorians, especially those in regional areas. It also notes that Commonwealth Government intervention is required in some circumstances to ensure all residents and businesses have affordable access to basic telecommunications services and appropriate consumer safeguards no matter where they are located.

The submission is informed by findings of the 2015 Regional Telecommunications Review that current telecommunications USO arrangements are no longer efficiently provided given the rapid evolution of technologies and the telecommunications market. As a result, the telecommunications universal service policy should be updated to more effectively and efficiently meet consumer expectations and demands, including data and mobility.

The submission is consistent with Victorian Government submissions provided to the Productivity Commission's *Public Safety Mobile Broadband Inquiry* in July and November 2015. That is, national telecommunications policies and programs (e.g. the USO, Emergency Alert, the nbn™ network and the Mobile Black Spot Programme) should be better coordinated to improve telecommunications outcomes. Greater effort also needs to be taken to align them with State activities and priorities such as the provision of emergency services communications.

If you have any queries in relation to this submission please do not hesitate to contact Mr Matthew Dummett, Sector Strategy Manager, Telecommunications of the Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources

We wish you well in your work on this vital area of national telecommunications policy and resource management.

Yours sincerely

Hon Philip Dalidakis MP

Minister for Small Business, Innovation and Trade

Date: 28 / 11 / 2016