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## FEDERAL POLICY: COMMUNICATIONS and I.T.

### POLICY STATEMENT

Communications play an important role in today's world. The Australian Broadcasting Authority has not been effective in its role. This is evident by the control of the media by a few who provide only a biased one-sided view in the reporting of news and political comment. Australia has an excellent Analog TV broadcasting system. This should not be replaced by digital until such time that it is proven to be technologically superior, more economical and provide a better service to all Australians. One Nation was, and is, the only political party that opposed the sale of Telstra. However Australians were either unaware of this, or just plain apathetic, not realising the ramifications.

### COMMUNICATIONS and I.T.

- One Nation opposes the Digital and Data-casting Act 2000 on the following grounds: Proposed dropping of the analog TV signal by 2008. Costs are beyond the reach of normal Australians. Data-casting restrictions would impede Australian industry. Digital policy is pandering to commercial broadcasters. We assert analogue NOT be turned off until such time as it is fully available. Instead of dropping out more times than not and repeating the same thing over and over as it does.
- One Nation opposed the privatisation and sale of Telstra. As covered in the Constitution, Government is compelled to put it before the people in a referendum. No such referendum has been undertaken. Far too much of the communications industry is already foreign controlled. Telstra's profits should be invested into improving services and reducing pricing with the phasing-out of zone charges.
- One Nation opposes the transferring of Telstra and Tele-marketing services offshore in the pursuit of Globalism and at the expense of Australian Jobs.
- One Nation believes in freedom of the press and we will work to take it out of the control of UN treaties and the few with fixed agendas.

### BACKGROUND BRIEFING: COMMUNICATIONS and I.T.

This covers the following departments: Broadcasting, Information Technology and Telecommunications.

### BROADCASTING REGULATION

The Australian Broadcasting Authority (ABA) was established by the Broadcasting Services Act 1992 and began operations on 5 October 1992. The Act defines the role of the regulatory authority, gives the ABA a range of powers and functions and sets out explicit policy objectives. The objectives include the desirability of program diversity, limits on concentration of ownership and foreign control of the mass media and the need for media to help foster an Australian cultural identity, report news fairly and respect community standards.

The ABA consists of a Chairman, Professor David Flint, and five members, Mr Michael Gordon-Smith, Mr Robert Le Tet, Mr Malcolm Long, Mr John Rimmer and Mr Ian Robertson. There are also two associate members, Dr Robert Horton and Ross Jones. The ABA has offices in Sydney and Canberra. As at 30 June 2000, it had 156 staff, 105 in Sydney and 51 in Canberra.

## ABA POLICIES

The ABA aims to promote high standards that accord with public service policy and legislative framework in relation to financial management, administration and employment.

## ABA RECORDS MANAGEMENT

The ABA has control over 1,100 linear metres of archived records in Australian Archives repositories: about 900 metres in the Villawood repository in Sydney, 200 metres in Melbourne and a small quantity in Queensland for handling public requests for access to archived records controlled by the ABA.

## RECENT LEGISLATION

The Broadcasting Services Amendment (Digital Television and Data-casting) Act 2000 made substantial amendments to the Broadcasting Services Act 1992 to refine arrangements for the introduction of digital television. The most significant of these were:

- The requirement for broadcasters to transmit a standard definition digital television signal (ADTV) at all times and at least 20 hours per week of high definition digital broadcasts (HDTV)
- Provision to enable the ABC and SBS to multi-channel certain kinds of programs; and
- Provision to permit digital program enhancement content and electronic program guides. All mainland capital city stations were required to transmit full-time digital services from the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2001 although the analog signals will be simulcast until at least 2008. The requirement for 20 hours of HDTV took effect from the end of 2002.

## TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Section 9 of the Telecommunications (Consumer Protection and Service Standards) Act 1999 states that the object of the Universal Service Obligation (USO) is to ensure that:

- A standard telephone service;
- pay phones;
- prescribed carriage services;
- digital data services,

Are reasonably accessible to all Australians on an equitable basis wherever they reside or carry on business. The section also states that the USO should be fulfilled as economically as possible and that any losses involved in its provision should be shared among carriers.

The Act gives the Minister the power to designate a universal service provider with primary responsibility for delivery of the USO. Telstra is the current universal service provider, although the legislation allows the Minister to declare two or more carriers as universal service providers, or regional service providers, with appropriately limited responsibilities.

## THE ACCC TELECOMMUNICATIONS GROUP

The Telecommunications group has prime responsibility for administering the Commission's functions for competition and economic regulation of telecommunications and forms part of both the ACCC's Regulatory Affairs Division (in terms of its regulatory pricing and access work) and its Compliance Division (in terms of its competition enforcement work).

#### Functions include:

- Administering the telecommunications-specific competition safeguards regime under Part X1B of the Trade Practices Act which enables the Commission to deal with anti-competitive conduct by carriers and carriage service providers as well as allowing it to issue tariff filing directions and record-keeping rules to assist with its telecommunications powers and functions.
- Administering the telecommunications-specific regime under Part X1C of the Trade Practices Act for facilitating access to the networks of carriers. This includes declaring services for access, approving access codes, approving access undertakings; arbitrating disputes for declared services and registering access agreements.
- Administering other legislative provisions in the Telecommunications Act and other related legislation including in relation to price control of Telstra's retail services. International conduct rules, number portability, electronic addressing, interconnection standards and arbitration of disputes about access to network information, access to facilities, operator services, directory assistance services, provision of number portability, preselection, emergency call services and carriage services for use by the defence forces.

## FREEDOM OF THE PRESS

Very few have suffered more than One Nation from the lack of freedom of the press in Australia. The following is a special report on this from Freedom Bell. The UN agency most involved in media regulation and guidelines has been the Paris-based United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, UNESCO which as far back as 1970, set out to control all the world media with a campaign called the New World Information Order. (NWIO). At that time, with the Cold War still the main focus of attention, the western press, were not about to entertain any notion for controlling the free flow of news and opinion, especially by a UN Committee of Soviet block interest groups. The push to codify and regulate continued to be advanced and rejected until the Nairobi General Conference of UNESCO in 1976 when a resolution was advanced that governments were "responsible for the activities in the international sphere of all mass media under their jurisdiction."

This move was defeated by "negotiation" but what was left in place was an agreement that governments who wanted to comply with the "guidelines" set out by the NWIO could do so. This small chink in the armour didn't seem important at the time, but it has vast importance for Australia now as for other western nations being swallowed up by the New World Order. 1978 adopted an UNESCO Declaration outlining standards for the international media by consensus. This was due to the pleading of third world nations that the "west", who controlled most press agencies, were presenting an image of poorer nations that was "unfair" and showed a biased and "sensationalist" view of those nations. Strong language like "cultural aggression" and "deforming the image of developing countries" was used to sway the conference towards adopting standards to accommodate those opinions. The road to ruin was definitely paved with good intentions.

Sean MacBride, a former Irish Foreign Minister and recipient of both the Nobel and Lenin Peace Prizes, was the head of a commission in 1980. They covered world print media as well. As usual, lip service was given to the free press at the same time as establishing the NWIO guidelines. The numbers of "like-minded" western countries which have "adopted" the NWIO principals have now become a flood. The next step of course is to control the newest and latest "media", the internet. This will not be as difficult as many would have you believe. By now the experts of "co-opting" will have regulations in place to effect a smooth "transfer" and no one will be the wiser.

**After all, if you don't read it in your newspaper, or hear it on your TV news, it didn't happen, right?**

To address this invasion on our freedoms, it is One Nation's policy to withdraw from all UN treaties that impose such restrictions.

### **Transfer of Telstra and Tele-marketing services offshore**

We have received many complaints of Telstra call services being answered from Bangalore in India. Tele-marketing jobs are also at risk as this work is also going offshore as a result of globalism, this situation will become worse when GATS is finally implemented.

Edited and formatted

By

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