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9 March 2012



Committee Secretary
Senate Standing Committees on Environment and Communications
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Committee Secretary

INQUIRY INTO THE TELECOMMUNICATIONS AMENDMENT (MOBILE PHONE TOWERS) BILL 2011

I refer to the above inquiry and advise that the Council is dissatisfied with the Telecommunications Act 1997 and the Telecommunications (Low Impact Facilities) Determination 1997 in their current form. The Council is of the view that they do allow it to address the concerns of its residents, particularly in respect to the possible health risks associated with the installed telecommunications facilities in residential areas that emit radiation.

The Hobart City Council has reviewed the *Telecommunications Amendment (Mobile Phone Towers) Bill 2011* and is supportive of the proposed amendments to the Telecommunications Act 1997. In particular the following changes would be a positive outcome for local communities and include:

- 1) A new definition of "tower" to introduce clarity and allow proper planning: A "tower" in the Act would universally become the entire structure including the panels, pole, header mount (ie from the bottom to the actual physical top of the structure). This will allow Council to make planning decisions based on the real development, not part of it.
- 2) The requirement for low impact towers to have planning permission (ie - like high impact towers)



- 3) Require telecommunication proponents to consult more widely with the community within 500m of the site;
- 4) Improve the timeframes allowed for both the community and local government to reply during consultation
- 5) Prevent the issuing of "Land Activity Access Notices"
- 6) Forward planning for towers over a 5 year period would be required to be submitted to planning authorities. This would improve planning objectives for a municipality by allowing local government planning authorities to see all planned towers/expansions and is representative of a more transparent process. It also has the potential to reduce the incidence of community conflicts.
- 7) Automatic 5 year reviews of the Federal electromagnetic radiation (EMR) exposure standard: ARPANSA to allow consideration of new evidence and findings on this issue.

The Council strongly urges the Standing Committee on Environment and Communications to assist in this matter by supporting this Bill.

Yours faithfully

(N.D Heath)
GENERAL MANAGER