



Committee Secretary
Senate Standing Committee on Environment,
Communications and the Arts
PO Box 6100
PARLIAMENT HOUSE CANBERRA ACT 2600

By email: eca.sen@aph.gov.au

22 January 2010

Dear Committee Secretary

**AUSTAR United Communications Pty Limited ('AUSTAR') – submission on the
*Do Not Call Register Amendment Bill 2009***

AUSTAR welcomes the opportunity to respond to the Standing Committee on Environment, Communications and the Arts (**Committee**) draft Do Not Call Register Amendment Bill 2009 (**Bill**).

AUSTAR is a member of the Australian Direct Marketing Association (**ADMA**) and fully supports its submission and the supporting Access Economics report provided to the Committee.

AUSTAR is particularly concerned that the Bill's proposal to extend the Do Not Call Register to include business and government numbers may have a serious negative impact to business activities in regional Australia. AUSTAR is one of Australia's leading subscription television providers, supplying digital television services to customers in regional and rural NSW, Victoria, Queensland, and South Australia and to all areas of the Northern Territory and Tasmania.

Due to the large geographic area that our market covers, telemarketing is one of the most effective means of promoting our services to small businesses operating in those areas – especially as we have no retail or regular 'on-the-ground' presence in these regional and rural communities.

Further, AUSTAR believes the extension of the Do Not Call Register to include business and government numbers will not only have a detrimental effect to our business, but to the communities in which we operate. The scope of calls covered by the definition of 'telemarketing' under the existing Do Not Call Register Act, unavoidably includes selling activities that we do not consider as 'telemarketing' calls, e.g. a sales manager prior to a 'road-trip' may contact a number of remote businesses in a particular geographic location to set up appointments to discuss our services face-to-face.



These types of activities not only support our productivity, but are an efficient and critical means of providing regional businesses with information about our products and services. AUSTAR is concerned that the extension of the Register could mean that businesses who place their number on the Register, would miss out on these types of calls, and ultimately the ability to receive information about new products and services that, in turn, could have a beneficial impact on their business and their entire community.

If you require further information or have any queries relating to the comments we have made, please do not hesitate to contact myself or Alison Shilkin of this office on 02 9295 0126.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Deanne Weir". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping tail.

Deanne Weir
Group Director Corporate Development