

Senate Economics Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Treasury Portfolio

Budget Estimates

2017 - 2018

Division/Agency: Australian Competition and Consumer Commission

Question No: 51

Topic: NBN

Reference: Hansard page 122 (30 May 2017)

Senator: O'Neill, Deborah

Question:

Senator O'NEILL: With regard to consumers being informed about premises-specific impediments to their infrastructure, have there been any meetings or discussions about that recently?

Mr Sims: I am sorry—premises-specific impediments to getting the NBN?

Senator O'NEILL: Yes, I think Mr Cosgrove received the letter from Mr Jones.

Mr Cosgrove: Yes, I did. I am going to have to take that on notice because I do not have the response to the correspondence with me. I think what you are referring to is a general proposition around information being available to consumers around impediments to the build. If I recall, the response was in relatively general terms and was not suggestive of any specific action on the part of the ACCC that followed from that. But I would like to check the correspondence. I will come back to you on that.

Senator O'NEILL: Wonderful—if you could just indicate who you have met with, when the meetings happened and the time frame for action, it would be helpful.

Mr Cosgrove: Indeed.

Answer:

The ACCC has met with a range of stakeholders to discuss the issue of consumers being informed about premises-specific limitations to NBN speeds.

On 15 March 2017 the ACCC provided a request for information to a number of interested parties concerning matters likely to arise in the implementation of the ACCC's broadband marketing principles of February 2017. The request for information outlined more detailed propositions for industry consideration, and then sought input on specific questions of detail. These propositions included that:

The Retail Service Provider should provide consumers with specific information about performance limitations at the point of sale . . . if the advertised typical speed will not be attainable by the consumer, where services in the end-user locality are currently congested, or line length or other factors specific to the end-user connection will or will likely result in service limitations.

In April 2017 the ACCC received 11 responses to the information request, one of which addressed the issue of premises-specific limitations to NBN speeds in the context of services supplied over a FTTN access network.

On 21 April 2017 the ACCC met with Telstra regarding how this issue was affecting some of its NBN customers. The ACCC had an ongoing dialogue with Telstra regarding this issue over the following weeks.

On 28 April 2017, and during the first week of May 2017, the ACCC discussed the issue with NBN Co.

During May 2017 the ACCC has discussed the issue generally within government with the Department of Communications and the Arts, and the Australian Communications and Media Authority.

From 8 June 2017 to 15 June 2017, the ACCC met individually with nine Retail Service Providers, as well as with the Australian Communications Action Network and Communications Alliance regarding specific ways in which this issue could be appropriately addressed when marketing NBN services to consumers.