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Editorial -- Consumer Protection

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Abstract

Papers in the March 2018 issue of the Journal cover advances in telecommunications technologies and regulation, historical events, and book reviews. Looking more widely, the Australian Government has responded to the increase in complaints about telecommunications services by ordering yet another review. Telecommunications consumers are rightly concerned that access to reliable and modern telecommunications is a key aspect of life today.

Telecommunications consumer protections are vital and there needs to be a timely response to the rapid rise in complaints that was accurately predicted four years ago by industry experts. The Journal would welcome contributions on this and other topics.

In This Issue

In this issue, the *Journal* includes topical articles that cover international telecommunications, the National Broadband Network, historical events and two reviews of recent books about Charles Todd, a pioneer in Australian telecommunications.

The National Broadband Network: What Difference will it make to Broadband Availability in Australia? provides a bottom-up analysis of broadband availability in Australia without the NBN and with the NBN.

Handover with Buffering for Distributed Mobility Management (DMM) in Software Defined Mobile Networks propose a DMM solution with handover operations for SDN-enabled mobile networks.

A Trust-based Defence Scheme for Mitigating Blackhole and Selective Forwarding Attacks in the RPL Routing Protocol is a follow-up research work to validate the authors' simulation study, which addressed Blackhole attacks in the RPL routing protocol. In addition, Selective Forwarding attacks are also addressed.

Vale Roger Banks: A Tribute is an obituary that outlines his life from the early days in Victoria, through his career with the PMG and Telecom, to his post-retirement contributions as a board member and supporter of engineering education.

Introduction of Crossbar Switching Equipment to the Australian Telephone Network is a historic paper by Roger Banks from the *Journal* in 1961 summarising the investigation and selection of Crossbar Switching Equipment for the Australian Telephone Network.

'And Now the Biography': 150 Years of 'Telegraph' Todd discusses the genesis of the recent Todd biography entitled *Behind the Legend: The Many Worlds of Charles Todd*, examining the changing historical perspectives on Todd and his achievements.

Behind the Legend: A New and Comprehensive Biography of Charles Todd is a review of the recent Todd biography *Behind the Legend - The Many Worlds of Charles Todd*

The Weatherman from Greenwich: A new book 'about' Charles Todd is a review of the recently released book titled *The Weatherman from Greenwich: Charles Todd ? 1826 to 1910*

A Historical Perspective on WRESAT, the First Satellite Launched from Australian Soil is a personal account of the project, involving the satellite's telemetry system and a temporary extension to Oodnadatta of Woomera's flight safety system. The paper goes on to describe events following the successful launch, and the celebration of the 50th anniversary in 2017. Finally, there is a discussion of the politics and technologies behind WRESAT.

Australian Broadband Regulation Reviewed establishes the relationship between the condition of Australian broadband competition and Australia's history of broadband regulation.

Telecommunications Consumer Protections Are Vital

The Australian Government response (Fifield, 2018 ^[5]) to the release of the Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman's (TIO) six month update is welcomed, but should have occurred four years ago when industry experts warned the government that the multi-technology mix National Broadband Network (NBN) would lead to an increase in complaints of varying types and introduce complexity for the TIO in being able to identify rectification responsibility, particularly in relation to NBN Co.

There is a need for the government to rapidly respond to the problems faced by telecommunications consumers. The number and type of telecommunications related complaints identified by the TIO is unacceptable. Government equivocation about the effects that the NBN is having on the number, types and responsibility for complaints presented to the TIO is not helping to solve the underlying problems and to put in place a regime that will permit the TIO to adequately deal with the complaints in a timely manner.

The Minister for Communications and the Arts, Senator Mitch Fifield, has announced 'a review of the telecommunications consumer protections framework for a post-2020 environment' (Fifield, 2018 [5]). The review is necessary, but what is to happen prior to the 'post-2020 environment'?

There is an urgent need for the government to provide the TIO with additional interim powers to address the existing and future complaints (prior to the 'post-2020 environment'), identify responsibility for rectification works and to resolve matters related to the payment of compensation.

The *Journal* would welcome papers on what the telecommunications consumer protections framework for a post-2020 environment should look like.

The *Journal*, Looking Forward

Australian telecommunications is moving forward at a rapid rate, and the introduction of 5G next year will speed up the reach and utilisation of telecommunication services. The *Journal* is calling for papers on how 5G will affect Australian telecommunications consumers.

The topics of *International Telecommunications Legislation and Regulations* and *International Mobile Cellular Regulation and Competition* are set to continue for some time as the opportunity to attract papers from around the globe continues. We encourage papers that reflect on where the telecommunications market is now, how it got to where it is, and what is going to happen next.

Papers are invited for upcoming issues. With your contributions, the *Journal* will continue to provide readers with exciting and informative papers covering a range of local and international topics. The Editorial Advisory Board also values input from our readership, so please let us know what themes you would like to see in the coming year.

All papers related to telecommunications and the digital economy are welcome and will be considered for publication after the double-blind peer-review process.

Mark A Gregory

Reference

Fifield, M. 2018. 'Statement in Response to TIO Half-Yearly Complaints Report', 17 April 2018. Retrieved from http://www.minister.communications.gov.au/mitch_fifield/news/statement?_in_response_to_tio_half-yearly_complaints_report [6].

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