



# TelSoc

## Telecommunications & the Digital Economy

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## Iñaki Berroeta awarded the 2018 Charles Todd Medal

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The prestigious **Charles Todd Medal** is awarded each year by TelSoc (the Australian Telecommunications Society) to the individual who has made the most outstanding contribution to telecommunications in recent years.

This year the Charles Todd Medal has been awarded to Iñaki Berroeta, Chief Executive of Vodafone Hutchison Australia since 2014. The award recognizes Mr Berroeta's achievements in radically improving the performance of this company, especially in its product offerings and its customer service, and for his active collaboration across the industry to deliver reforms of benefit to all telecommunications consumers.

The medal was presented to Mr Berroeta at TelSoc's annual Charles Todd Oration in Sydney on 8 November by Professor Peter Gerrand, chair of the Selection Panel, on behalf of the TelSoc Board.

**Mr Berroeta is a 20-year veteran of the telecommunications industry**, and has previously served as CEO of both Vodafone Romania and Vodafone Malta, as well as holding operational roles in a range of Spanish and US companies. Born in Portugalete near Bilbao in northern Spain, he holds a Master of Science in Telecommunications from the Bilbao Higher School of Telecommunications Engineering in Spain, and a Master of Business Administration from the Henley Management College in the UK.

#### Mr Berroeta's achievements

During his time at the helm at Vodafone Australia , Iñaki launched 'Vodafone nbn' with Australia's first dual 4G modem, which provides ongoing backup to the NBN connection via Vodafone's 4G network. He extended \$5-a-day roaming to over 60 countries, launched Vodafone's unlimited mobile data plans, and introduced "no lock-in" postpaid plans, amongst other marketing initiatives. It is also notable that Vodafone is the only major telco operating in Australia with an Australian based call centre to serve all its customers.

It is noted that he actively cares for both his employees and the communities in which Vodafone operates. In 2015 he launched a flexible working environment for his staff with progressive parental leave benefits and domestic violence leave. He has also introduced programs to encourage girls and young women to pursue careers in technology.

ACCAN (the Australian Communications Consumer Action Network) has commended Iñaki for his prioritisation of consumer consultation, his support to community groups working on improving access to communications services in the regions, and his positive contributions to policy on the future of Universal Service. ACCAN has also highlighted Vodafone's contribution to the Mobile Black Spots program, its co-investment with government agencies to roll out new facilities in rural areas, and Iñaki's active collaboration with ACCAN to develop a community kit for rural areas.

Communications Alliance reports that under Mr Berroeta's leadership, Vodafone has been at the forefront of industry efforts to reduce the incidence of fraud through identity theft and the improper porting of mobile numbers. Under his leadership, Vodafone was very actively involved in the development of the just-published Communications Alliance Guideline that is designed to help service providers assist customers who are the victims of domestic or family violence. In addition, Vodafone has been instrumental in the development of new tools that will enable victims to retain control of their mobile number when that service is under a contract controlled by the perpetrator.

## The promising future

Finally, TelSoc notes that from next year Mr Berroeta will become the CEO of TPG Telecom, a new publicly listed company. We trust that Iñaki will bring his culture of active support for both customers and employees to the newly merged company, and make it a very powerful competitive force in Australian telecommunications.

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