

# CommsWire

Essential daily reading for the communications industry executive

An iWire publication

[www.itwire.com](http://www.itwire.com)

Editor: Stan Beer

Tuesday 18 December 2018

## TELSTRA STEALS MARCH WITH 5G IN MELB & SYD



---

*CommsWire* (ISSN 2202-4549) is published by iWire Pty Ltd. 18 Lansdown St, Hampton, Vic, 3188

CommsWire/Telecommunications Editor: Stan Beer

Staff writers: Peter Dinham, Alex Zaharov-Reutt, Sam Varghese. Columnist: John de Ridder

Advertising: CEO and Editor in Chief, Andrew Matler: [andrew.matler@itwire.com](mailto:andrew.matler@itwire.com) • Tel: 0412 390 000

## TELSTRA MOVES TO LAUNCH FIRST MELBOURNE, SYDNEY 5G SITES

**Telstra has moved quickly to launch its first 5G Melbourne and Sydney sites after being given early access to the 3.6 GHz spectrum it won at auction last week.**

---

Telstra CEO Andrew Penn said enabling 5G sites in both Melbourne and Sydney meant Telstra now had 5G-enabled sites in all major cities across the country – “the first provider in Australia to do so”.

“This is a crucial component of our plans to bring 5G services to as many of our customers as possible once 5G compatible devices are commercially available next year, and another significant milestone in expanding its 5G coverage to capital cities, regional centres and other high demand areas,” Penn said.

Telstra, Australia’s largest telco, says the upgrades at its Customer Insight Centre in Sydney, a mobile base station near Sydney Airport, Telstra Labs in Melbourne – along with another mobile base station near Melbourne Airport coming online later this week – completed its 187 5G upgrades across the country.

In August, Telstra announced it had started switching on 5G technology, claiming Australia’s largest and fastest mobile network as “the first in the country to be 5G ready”.

Since then Telstra has enabled 5G sites in Melbourne, Sydney, Canberra, Brisbane, Adelaide, Perth, Hobart, Launceston, Toowoomba and the Gold Coast.

And last week Telstra successfully secured between 30-80 MHz nationwide in the 3.6 GHz spectrum auction held by the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA). Combined with existing holdings, Telstra now has 60 MHz of contiguous 5G spectrum in all major capital cities and between 50-80 MHz of contiguous 5G spectrum in regional areas.

“5G is expected to completely transform the mobile landscape and Telstra will continue to lead and bring this technology to Australians first,” Penn said.

“Today’s announcement means there are now 187 sites around Australia that have been 5G-enabled with another 13 to be upgraded before the end of this calendar year.

“This series of network upgrades is not only making Telstra’s mobile network 5G ready but is also expected to help deliver world leading 4G speeds.

“Over the coming months Telstra will continue expanding its 5G coverage with plans to roll out the technology and grow coverage to more cities, regional centres and high traffic areas.”

Tuesday’s announcement follows Telstra’s first customer connection with a commercial 5G device on its 5G service. Toowoomba-based FKG Group will use the first iteration of the HTC 5G Hub mobile broadband device.

**Peter Dinham**

## ACMA PURSUES TELCOS FOR COMPLAINTS-HANDLING BREACHES

**The Australian Communications and Media Authority is taking a heavy-handed approach to non-compliance with complaints-handling processes by telcos, with only 7 out of 41 telcos investigated found not to be in breach of the rules.**

---

Telcos who fail to carry out remediation directions face fines of up to \$10 million.

As a result of the ACMA investigation 31 telcos now face enforcement action for not having appropriately documented complaints-handling processes available for their customers in compliance with new requirements in place since 1 July 2018.

The [\*full telecoms investigations report\*](#) by ACMA shows Australia's dominant telcos – Telstra, Optus and VHA have all breached the complaint-handling processes.

The investigations also found that:

- Three telcos undertook comprehensive remediation to move into full compliance during the investigation process
- 27 telcos took positive steps to remediate
- Four telcos took inadequate steps to remediate.

As a result, the ACMA has issued formal warnings to 27 telcos and remedial directions to the four other telcos:

- Australian Broadband Pty Ltd
- Flip TV Pty Limited
- Oztalk Communications Pty Ltd, and
- Simply NBN Pty Ltd (trading as Hello Broadband)

The ACMA says these four telcos have been directed to fix deficiencies by 19 December 2018 or face serious financial penalties.

“Having a documented complaints-handling process available for customers should be standard practice for every telco’, said ACMA Chair Nerida O’Loughlin.

“Consumers should know how their telco will deal with their complaint. They should also have confidence that their complaint will be dealt with effectively, without ‘buck-passing’ across the service supply chain.

“Effective complaints-handling is even more critical as the migration of customers to services delivered over the NBN reaches its peak.

“The ACMA has put in place a comprehensive set of rules to ensure the telco industry lifts its game in complaints-handling. We are now moving to enforce those rules.”

**Peter Dinham**



John de Ridder

Telecommunications Economist

strategic management • wholesale and retail pricing • regulatory issues

[click here to go to www.deridder.com.au](http://www.deridder.com.au)

# PARLIAMENT PANEL BEGINS ANOTHER REVIEW OF ENCRYPTION LAW

**Just 12 days after the government's encryption law was passed by Parliament, the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security has announced it would begin a review of the law.**

---

The new review has asked for submissions on the law that was passed on 6 December and will submit a report by 3 April 2019.



PJCIS chairperson Andrew Hastie said in a statement on Monday: The committee reached bipartisan agreement in its report on the Assistance and Access Bill.

This review will focus on the final act as passed by the Parliament on 6 December 2018, with specific reference to government amendments — including those made to effect the committee's bipartisan recommendations — made on that date.

"This further inquiry implements recommendation 16 of the committee's report on the Assistance and Access Bill, for the committee to complete a review of the new laws by 3 April 2019."

The statement said the PJCIS would accept submissions on any new matters arising with the passage of the Act, and would consider the need for further hearings as the inquiry progressed.

Apart from this review, the statement said the panel would again be required to review the new law alongside its review of the data retention regime.

That statutory review must be commenced by April 2019 and completed by April 2020.

**Sam Varghese**

# GERMAN IT WATCHDOG: NO EVIDENCE FOR HUAWEI SPYING CLAIMS

Germany's federal tech security watchdog says it has seen no evidence to back up claims being flung around that Chinese telecommunications equipment firm Huawei Technologies could use its products to spy for China.

---

The head of the Federal Office for Information Security, Arne Schoenbohm, told the news weekly *Spiegel*: ""For such serious decisions like a ban, you need proof."

[According to](#) the website Phys.org, Schoenbohm said experts from his agency had inspected Huawei products used in other countries.



They had also spent time at the company's newly open laboratory in Bonn where German companies can inspect the cyber security measures adopted and the software used in the equipment.

In 2015, *The Guardian* [reported](#) that the top American spy agency, the NSA, had been spying on German Chancellor Angela Merkel and her closest advisers for years.

The US has banned the use of Huawei equipment in its 5G networks, claiming that the company can be a conduit for spying by Beijing. Huawei has repeatedly denied that it can be forced to indulge in espionage.

[Australia](#) and [New Zealand](#) have both followed the US lead and banned Huawei from roles in their respective 5G rollouts.

Last month there were reports that the US was [stepping up the pressure](#) on its allies to give the cold shoulder to the Chinese firm which is the world's biggest supplier of telecommunications equipment.

Last Thursday, the Japanese news agency Nikkei reported that the SoftBank Group planned to replace 4G network equipment from Huawei with equipment from Nokia and Ericsson.

Huawei has been thrown into the centre of the ongoing US-China trade row after its chief financial officer, Meng Wanzhou, was [arrested](#) by Canada on 1 December, due to her alleged involvement in sanctions busting through the sales of US products to Iran.

US President Donald Trump [has said](#) he may use Meng as a bargaining chip to obtain a better deal with China.

*CommsWire* has contacted Huawei for comment.

**Sam Varghese**

## FIFIELD HITS BACK AT LABOR, SAYS IT IS HUNG UP ON GESTURES

**Communications Minister Mitch Fifield has reacted to Labor's claim that the Government has no communications policy roadmap in place after more than two years, claiming that the ALP is hung up on documents and gestures, rather than delivery in communications.**

---

Fifield told *CommsWire* that while the Opposition had been "small-minded and petty, we have been getting on with delivery and doing the things Labor failed to do in office".

Labor Shadow Communications Minister Michelle Rowland had [taken a potshot](#) at Fifield on Friday, questioning why the communication policy roadmap touted by the government in 2016 is still under development.

Rowland said a year prior, Labor had warned that communications policy was on a road to nowhere under the Government because a policy roadmap, announced in 2016, had not been consulted on, or released, by late 2017.

And, she added, "In late 2018, there's still no sign of it."

Fifield pointed to the fact that the government had actually delivered the national broadband network and at \$30 billion less cost and six to eight years sooner than Labor's plan.

He said the Government was rolling out a mobile black spot program that would address more than 5000 black spots and reforming Australia's media laws to better support local media against global online giants.

"[We are] reforming copyright law to assist people with disabilities and educational institutions and better protecting Australia's creative industries," Fifield said.

"[We are also] establishing the world's first eSafety Commissioner and legislating take-down regimes and penalties for kids' cyber-bullying and image-based abuse [and] delivering real consumer benefits through the ACCC NBN speed monitoring regime and greater transparency in handling complaints through ACMA and a remorseless focus on improving NBN customer experience with retailers.

Additionally, he added, the Government was laying the foundations for the rollout of 5G through early spectrum auction, reformed carrier powers and immunities and a cross-government/industry 5G working group.

**Sam Varghese**

**Not your copy of CommsWire? If so please join up!**

**All material on CommsWire is copyright and must not be reproduced or forwarded to others.**

**If you have a trial subscription that you are finding valuable please subscribe formally via [subscriptions@itwire.com](mailto:subscriptions@itwire.com)  
Subscriptions are very affordable for individuals, corporate and small teams/SMB. Special deals and discounts for PR firms**

**For editorial, contact, Stan Beer, CommsWire Editor: 0418 516 720 | [stan.beer@itwire.com](mailto:stan.beer@itwire.com)**

**To subscribe or advertise contact, Andrew Matler, CEO: 0412 390 000 | [andrew.matler@itwire.com](mailto:andrew.matler@itwire.com)**