

List of Questions

Chapter 1

- Q 1.1 Should the USO continue to operate as an obligation on service providers to serve all customers, or should it be recast as a consumer right or guarantee (in tandem with commercial service delivery)?
- Q 1.2 Is it still appropriate to have a single provider solely responsible for providing all Australians with a safety net voice service?

Chapter 2

- Q 2.1 Should the defined legislated service linked to the USO, the STS, continue to be the benchmark service for the universal service providers?
- Q 2.2 Which features of the current STS should be provided as part of universal access to basic phone services, and which features could be optional?
- Q 2.3 What types of network technologies are suitable for the delivery of basic phone services? For example, could universal service be delivered by mobile networks or over a broadband data network using VoIP?
- Q 2.4 In what ways does the existing regulatory framework constrain technologically feasible options for the delivery of basic phone services?
- Q 2.5 What service standards should apply to basic phone services delivered by a universal service provider?
- Q 2.6 What interim or alternative arrangements, or associated compensation, should be available to consumers when a universal service provider does not connect or repair their basic phone service on time?
- Q 2.7 What aspects of the current universal service arrangements for basic phone services work well and should be maintained?
- Q 2.8 What aspects should be changed?
- Q 2.9 What would be the ideal approach to providing universal service for basic phone services?
- Q 2.10 Is the level of service standards that applies to Telstra USO services (as set out in the Standard Marketing Plan) reasonable? Is it too flexible and lenient on Telstra? Or is it overly prescriptive in an environment where consumers are choosing other features and functionality as more valuable to them in the new telecommunications environment?
- Q 2.11 Does the concept of a Standard Marketing Plan provide an effective regulatory mechanism? What alternatives exist?
- Q 2.12 What if any obligations should apply to all providers?
- Q 2.13 Does the very high take up of mobile services mean that service standards can be altered?

Chapter 3

- Q 3.1 With the widespread uptake of mobile phones, in what circumstances should there be a requirement to provide a public payphone?
- Q 3.2 What aspects of the current payphone arrangements work well and should be maintained?
- Q 3.3 From a community perspective, what should be changed?
- Q 3.4 From an industry perspective, what should be changed?
- Q 3.5 What would be the best approach to providing universal access to payphones?

Chapter 4

- Q 4.1 What parts of the current universal service arrangements work well for remote Indigenous communities and should be maintained?
- Q 4.2 From a community perspective, what should be changed?
- Q 4.3 From an industry perspective, what should be changed?
- Q 4.4 What would be the best approach to providing universal service in remote Indigenous communities? Should universal service providers offer customised payphone services in requesting Indigenous communities, along the lines of the community phone model?
- Q 4.5 What is the best way to ensure the ongoing maintenance of community phones in remote Indigenous communities?

Chapter 5

- Q 5.1 How should universal service be provided in areas with several competing telecommunications networks?
- Q 5.2 How should universal service be provided in new housing estates?
- Q 5.3 What obligations, if any, should apply to a provider who rolls out telecommunications infrastructure in a new housing estate?
- Q 5.4 What should be the role of a universal service regime in a competitive environment?
- Q 5.5 What would be the best approach to providing universal access to basic phone services?
- Q 5.6 What would be the best approach to providing universal access to payphones?

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- Q 5.7 What should be the role of a universal service provider? For example, should a universal service provider be required to deliver a service to any customer who requests a phone connection, or should this requirement only come into effect if the customer cannot otherwise get a connection on a commercial basis?
- Q 5.8 What would make competitive delivery of the universal service regime attractive to service providers?
- Q 5.9 What information would need to be available to interested providers to make competitive delivery of universal service feasible?
- Q 5.10 Is there a rural deficit?
- Q 5.11 How can there be an assurance that services will be provided to metropolitan, rural and remote customers on an equitable basis?
- Q 5.12 What approaches to costing the USO could be adopted to overcome the inherent problems of costing models?
- Q 5.13 When considering the cost of providing universal services, what elements should be factored in?
- Q 5.14 What arguments are there for subsidising the cost of delivering the USO through a cross subsidy?
- Q 5.15 What would be the best approach to funding universal service subsidies?
- Q 5.16 How could the existing arrangements for the assessment, levying, collection and distribution of universal service contributions be improved?
- Q 5.17 For the purposes of the USO, what threshold level, if any, should be applied to eligible revenue? What impact would this have on administrative costs for ACMA and small carriers? What financial impact would this have on the remaining eligible carriers?
- Q 5.18 On what basis should carriage service providers be required to directly contribute to USO subsidies?
- Q 5.19 What is the most efficient and effective way to monitor and ensure compliance with the universal service regime?
- Q 5.20 How could the administrative burden associated with the universal service regime be streamlined or reduced, while still maintaining adequate oversight and compliance?
- Q 5.21 How can consumers be made more aware of the respective roles of organisations involved in oversight and compliance of the universal service regime?
- Q 5.22 In what ways could the respective functions of regulatory organisations be improved and/or clarified?