

Australia's USO arrangements



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USO



Ensures that standard telephone services (STS) and payphones are reasonably accessible to all people in Australia on an equitable basis, wherever they reside or carry on business.

Overview



- USO formally set out in the Telecommunications (Consumer Protection and Service Standards) Act 1999 and subsequent amendments
- Fulfilled by the Primary Universal Service Provider
- Through contracts/grants rather than regulation
- Funding through Telecommunications Industry Levy and Government funding
- Contract administered by TUSMA (now part of DoC)



Funding – total c\$330m

STS 2013-2014 - \$253m, Payphones - \$44m,
ECS - c\$20m, NRS - c\$19m

- Contract timeframe – July 2012- 30 June 2032
- Performance assessment uses CSG benchmarks

Funding – 2014-2015 estimates



- Government funding - \$100m
- Telecommunications Industry Levy - \$221m
- Proportion based on share of overall industry eligible revenue
- Carriers \$25m+ in an eligible revenue period

Obligations



- **Standard Telephone Service – all providers**
 - Provision of a voice telephone service
 - Access to emergency services
 - Option of untimed local calls
 - Operator assist
 - Directory assist
 - Itemised billing
 - Pre-selection (legacy networks)
 - CLI
 - Number portability
 - Access to NRS
 - Membership of TIO

STS – USO specific

- ✦ Offer option of purchase or hire of equipment
- ✦ CSG cannot be waived
- ✦ Option of untimed local calls (incl mobile)

STS - Telstra specific



- Telstra specific regulations/licence conditions
- Retail price controls (under review)
- Priority assistance
- Low Income Measures Advisory Committee
- Network Reliability Framework
- STS charges with/without handsets

Policy futuring



- Market developments
- Technology
- Policy trends – risk management; de-regulation
agenda; contracts
- Funding