



AMTA

Australian Mobile
Telecommunications
Association

**AMTA is the peak body representing
Australia's mobile telecommunications sector**

AMTA urges Government action to strengthen Australia's mobile future

The Australian Mobile Telecommunications Association (AMTA) calls on all political parties and the crossbench to prioritise policies that support the mobile industry's role as a key enabler of the digital economy. AMTA has outlined its key policy recommendations to ensure mobile technology continues to deliver benefits for all Australians.

AMTA advocates for efficient spectrum allocation and renewal, streamlined and harmonised infrastructure deployment, and greater investment in mobile networks to strengthen resilience. These policy initiatives should be framed by an overarching digital economy strategy which recognises the role of the mobile sector as a key enabler of the digital economy.

AMTA encourages the incoming government to recognise the role of mobile telecommunications and digital infrastructure, together with the industries it enables, as a key driver of productivity for Australia.



Challenge 1 Digital economy strategy

Digital technology is indispensable to the daily lives of Australians and serves as a cornerstone for Australia's future socio-economic prosperity. The mobile sector provides the platform that enables the delivery of digital applications and technologies that drive transformation and productivity across the Australian economy. It is therefore vital we have a competitive and sustainable mobile sector to support the growth of Australia's digital economy.

Opportunity 1

AMTA calls for Government to adopt:

- **A refreshed digital economy strategy.** A whole of government plan that recognises the interdependencies of mobile networks, digital infrastructure, technology, innovation, energy, skills and cyber that will harness the transformative power of digital technology and its contribution to the broader economy.
- **A whole of government National Mobile Tech Strategy** involving coordination and collaboration across different jurisdictions to maximise the benefits of 5G as well as planning for 6G to ensure the productivity benefits of digital applications and technologies are leveraged across the economy.

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Challenge 2 Strategic spectrum access and allocation policy

Spectrum is the unseen but critical enabler of mobile connectivity and a key determinant of the financial sustainability of the sector. Spectrum costs, and pricing, impact future investment and industry sustainability. The mobile sector has experienced long term declines in returns on invested capital and this is indicative of a reduced capacity to invest in, and fund, infrastructure to meet the growing demand for mobile connectivity.

Opportunity 2

AMTA calls for Government to:

- **Implement a strategic spectrum policy plan** including access, pricing and allocation of spectrum to provide the mobile sector with certainty for long-term, capital intensive, investment.
- **Appropriately price spectrum** to assist industry sustainability and the long-term investment required in digital infrastructure. Appropriately set spectrum renewal pricing with regard to industry sustainability. This will maximise the long-term productivity benefits from its use and enable greater network investment for coverage and capacity.
- **Adopt spectrum planning that makes available large contiguous bandwidth to aid efficient deployment of mobile technology to meet mobile data demand.** This should align to global standards so that industry can leverage global economies of scale in the procurement of network infrastructure and devices.



Challenge 3 Harmonising Planning and Infrastructure Deployment

Current planning regulations create roadblocks for deployment and hinder the ability of mobile networks to meet the growing connectivity and data demands of our population. Inconsistent development approvals across 8 States and Territories and 537 councils are costly and inefficient.

Federal legislation needs modernising as several parts are no longer fit for purpose. Amendments to the *Telecommunications Act 1997* (including Schedule 3) are required to focus on expediting deployment of national telecommunications networks, balancing this with protection of areas of environmental significance. There is widespread consensus that this is a priority, with four national inquiries recommending reforms to improve deployment of national telecommunications network infrastructure.

Opportunity 3

AMTA calls for Government to:

- **Adopt a streamlined and nationally consistent planning regime for mobile deployment** through whole of government policy settings that promote, not stifle, investment.
- **Modernise the *Telecommunications Act 1997*** to allow for exemptions from planning approval for new mobile towers in rural and remote areas of Australia, so that improved service can be delivered sooner and cost effectively.
- **Accelerate planning approval for federally-funded mobile blackspot towers**, and towers in peri-urban and growth areas where these need council approval under State and Territory planning systems.
- **Adopt the AMTA blueprint for infrastructure deployment** - the [AMTA Model Framework for State and Territory reform](#). The Model Framework identifies best practice for streamlined and consistent planning across the various jurisdictions.



Challenge 4 Strengthening Telecommunications Resilience and preparedness for Natural Disasters

Mobile networks play a critical role in disaster preparedness and emergency response, and as recently shown by Cyclone Alfred, additional engagement and investment from government is needed to improve network resilience and greater access to services.

Opportunity 4

AMTA calls for Government to:

- **Increase engagement with energy providers to prioritise power resilience for telecommunications networks during natural disasters** and recognise the critical link between network resilience and power resilience.
- **Work with relevant emergency services organisations on consumer education** for individuals and communities on disaster preparedness and emergency communications measures.
- **Engage further with industry on the Universal Outdoor Mobile Obligation (UOMO) obligations**, including requirements for the specified capability and likely timeframes.