

The Government has previously provided an extension 3 times, 18 December 2013 the Minister for Communications extended the cessation date of the instrument until 31 December 2015, and on 23 December 2015 it was extended again until 1 July 2018.

On 31 May 2018, the instrument was amended to expire on the Designated Day, which is 1 July 2020.

Now Telstra are requesting a fourth extension, claiming this is the final time that will require an extension.

It has been eight (8) years and Telstra have made no effort to comply with the law before the end of the previous extensions.

Telstra have not progressed any changes or upgrades to the network as Telstra continues to have no incentive to improve speeds or pricing.

Pricing in neighbouring suburbs that have competition via NBN, providers are offering 1000/50 Mbps plans on NBN FTTP and HFC and plans as low as \$30/month for low income households. The minimum in the South Brisbane Velocity is \$75/month.

NBN has no commercial or political will to overbuild or acquire the network and in all my dealings with the NBN they have made it clear that they have no forward plans to deal with this issue.

The government's position in 2018 on the matter was this:

'The Government is disappointed by continued weak competition in South Brisbane and comparatively poor outcomes for end-users to those in NBN-serviced areas. Maintenance of the status quo is not a long-term viable option. The Government continues to view the exemptions as temporary. Over the long-term, the South Brisbane network, if owned and operated by a carrier other than NBN Co, should be operated in compliance with Part 8 of the Act.

The Government would prefer to see NBN, or NBN-equivalent, services delivered to South Brisbane and a marked improvement in competition and subsequent end-user outcomes.

If services are not able to be provided by Telstra in South Brisbane in compliance with the Act, or Telstra is unable to sell the network to a provider that can, the Government would expect NBN Co to overbuild or acquire existing networks. Considering protracted unsuccessful negotiations between NBN Co and Telstra for the sale of the South Brisbane Network to NBN Co, overbuild in the area is a real possibility.'

Source:

<https://www.communications.gov.au/policy/policy-listing/telecommunications-act-parts-7-and-8-requirements-and-exemptions>

https://www.communications.gov.au/file/38051/download?token=seeEdZ_V (PDF)

The Australian Communications Consumer Action Network (ACCAN) have published a paper outlining the impacts to consumers caused by the continuation of the exemptions provided to Telstra to operate their South Brisbane Telstra Velocity

<https://accan.org.au/our-work/1575-telstra-s-south-brisbane-velocity-network-time-for-change>