

16 September 2016

The Chair
Commerce Commission Select Committee



By email: Edward.Siebert@parliament.govt.nz

TCF Submission on Northpower's Proposal regarding the Telecommunications (Property Access and Other Matters) Amendment Bill

The New Zealand Telecommunications Forum (TCF) is submitting on Northpower's proposal to the Commerce Committee in relation to its consideration of the Telecommunications (Property Access and Other Matters) Amendment Bill, to install fibre for telecommunication purposes on existing network poles situated on private land without the need to acquire easements.

The TCF's position regarding this proposal remains consistent with its submission to the Ministry for Building, Innovation and Environment (MBIE) in July 2015 on their Land Access for Telecommunications Discussion Document. In summary the TCF supports the proposal that existing infrastructure should be able to be used to deploy telecommunications networks.

The TCF accepts that, for land access reasons, the ownership of the fibre deployed will remain the property of the utility asset owner, but any fibre deployed under this provision would be available on non-discriminatory, open access terms, consistent with the current UFB regime. This will ensure that access terms are consistent with the current regulatory framework, and the policy encourages innovation in a way which provides the maximum competitive benefits to end users by allowing service providers to purchase connectivity to improve their own network capability and coverage.

The TCF welcomes the proposal to allow the use of existing utility infrastructure to deploy fibre for telecommunications purposes, and agrees with Northpower that such legislative change may bring benefits to telecommunications connectivity in rural New Zealand by extending the reach of UFB services.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'G. Thorn', followed by a horizontal line.

Geoff Thorn
Chief Executive Officer
New Zealand Telecommunications Forum (TCF)