



Minister for Emergency Services

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Mr. Jonathan Coppel
Commissioner
Public Safety Mobile Broadband
Productivity Commission
Locked Bag 2
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Dear Commissioner,

VICTORIAN SUBMISSION TO PUBLIC SAFETY MOBILE BROADBAND (PSMB) INQUIRY

Thank you for the invitation to provide a submission to the Productivity Commission's study into the best way to secure a mobile broadband capability to meet the long term needs of Australia's public safety agencies (PSAs).

Victoria faces significant challenges in relation to the management of emergency incidents. The Victorian Government is committed to supporting its PSAs with the tools they require to provide the best possible service to the Victorian community. Key to this is the provision of modern, flexible communications systems.

Mobile broadband offers significant additional capabilities for public safety. With greater availability of mobile broadband networks, content-rich information can be shared, including real-time video, enhanced location tracking, interactive maps and two-way messaging. Faster networks and improved end user devices provide PSAs with additional capabilities that enhance their service delivery and enable more informed decision making.

Victoria notes that on 29 October 2012, the Commonwealth Government formally announced that 10 Megahertz (MHz) of dedicated radiofrequency spectrum in the 800 MHz band would be made available to PSAs for a proposed PSMB capability. We believe this allocation is inadequate, and that

20MHz is required to meet the current and future needs of the sector. We are aware that this view is shared by other jurisdictions in Australia, and is aligned to the allocations being provided in many jurisdictions overseas.

We note that your study is considering three high level approaches for delivering a PSMB capability: deploying a dedicated network for PSAs; relying fully on commercial networks; or some combination of the two (hybrid model). Victoria considers the flexibility of a hybrid model will provide the best opportunity to maximise benefits to our emergency services sector and the community, at the lowest possible cost. This is aligned with the key recommendation in Victoria's emergency management long term communications plan, to establish a statewide, sector-wide broadband capability leveraging existing and commercial network infrastructure.

Securing sufficient dedicated spectrum, and price certainty, for PSMB is vital to achieve the vision outlined in the State's long term communications plan, which will transform Victoria's emergency management sector's operational communications capability utilising the latest mobile radio and data technologies.

Please find the Victorian Government's submission to your study attached for your consideration.

Yours sincerely

Jane Garrett MP
Minister for Emergency Services