



# Australia - United States Free Trade Agreement Fact Sheet 14

## TELECOMMUNICATIONS

- Pro-competitive regulatory frameworks for Australian and US companies
- High standards of transparency and WTO-plus rules on major suppliers
- New avenue for consultations with the US on market access issues
- Embraces market-based regulatory approach where markets function effectively

### Summary

The chapter builds on WTO rules in relation to major suppliers of telecommunications that control essential facilities or have a dominant position in a market. The Parties must prevent anti-competitive conduct and ensure that major suppliers provide interconnection, resale of services, leased circuit services and co-location of equipment on reasonable, non-discriminatory terms and conditions.

There are strong provisions on transparency and review for regulatory decisions. Regulators must be independent and impartial and properly explain decisions, such as determining which services are subject to regulation and licensing decisions. Australia and the US have also embraced a hands-off regulatory approach where markets are functioning competitively.

There will be two side letters. The first letter establishes regular consultation on issues and developments in the communications and IT sectors. This will give government and industry greater understanding of these dynamic sectors. The second letter outlines the Government's policy in relation to government ownership of Telstra.

### Who to contact

For further information, please contact DFAT's AUSFTA Taskforce:

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