

# Office of Hon Kris Faafoi

MP for Mana

Minister of Civil Defence

Associate Minister of Immigration

Minister of Commerce and Consumer Affairs

BCDM1819-009



**19 SEP 2018**

Clare Swinney

Email: [Clare.Swinney@yahoo.com](mailto:Clare.Swinney@yahoo.com)

Dear Clare,

Thank you for your email of 21 May 2018 to Hon Clare Curran regarding the telecommunications industry. Your correspondence has been forwarded to me as the new Minister of Broadcasting, Communications and Digital Media. I apologise for the delayed response.

Access to telecommunications services is an important matter. I am pleased to report that the Telecommunications (New Regulatory Framework) Amendment Bill includes provisions that enable the Commerce Commission to closely monitor retail service quality codes, or create new ones if necessary, to ensure that telecommunications services meet a quality that reflects end-user demands. I am currently taking this Bill through Parliament.

As you may be aware, the Bill was drafted in response to the changing telecommunications environment and among other things, seeks to protect consumers if Chorus, proposes to withdraw copper services in areas where fibre networks are available. Certain pre-conditions must be met before Chorus can do this, which will ensure that consumers are not worse off, and do not face higher prices or lower quality services, due to copper withdrawal. Where fibre is not available – which is largely in rural and remote New Zealand – Chorus will not be able to withdraw its copper services. I believe that access to technology is essential, regardless of income or geography. It is this Government's goal to close all digital divides by 2020.

Throughout the policy development and legislative amendment processes, the Government has undertaken consultation with a range of stakeholders while also weighing up the public interest and the impact on consumers. For example, there was an extensive consultation process on a range of issues, including the withdrawal of copper networks.

I do not think it is fair to say there is a compliant relationship between Spark and the Government. There are features of the Bill that Spark has objected to, but they have been retained because I consider they will be good for consumers.

Thank you for writing about this issue.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Kris Faafoi', written over a white background.

Hon Kris Faafoi

**Minister of Broadcasting, Communications and Digital Media**