



Senator Barnaby Joyce
The Nationals' Senator for Queensland

The CoT Cases
c/- Mrs Ann Garma
CoT Coordinator
3 Edward Street
Brisbane
QLD 4000

3 March 2006

Dear Ann,

RE: Independent Assessment-The CoT Cases

I met with Senator Coonan yesterday morning to discuss the matter of the agreed Independent Assessment of your claims.

In my discussions with the Minister I strongly objected to the Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts conducting the assessment because the Department cannot be considered independent. The Minister advised that the Department does not have an axe to grind with the CoTs.

From my understanding of the CoTs evidence, the Department and the Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman have not acted in the best interests of the CoTs. It could be said they have not investigated valid submissions concerning the misconduct of Telstra and the evidence the dispute resolution processes you have all been subjected to over the last decade were flawed.

The Minister is aware it was because of the failed dispute resolution processes that I initiated the Independent Assessment of your claims, as one of the Nationals initiatives on 14 September 2005, in exchange for my vote for the Telstra privatisation legislation.

At the meeting yesterday I argued your cases strongly and informed the Minister that justice delayed is justice denied,

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Please be assured I am as committed as ever to seeing justice prevail. I will continue to represent the interests of The CoTs in having the Commonwealth's commitment for an Independent Assessment honoured.

I would urge you to submit an outline of your claims, paying special attention to the damage caused by delays and the failed dispute resolution processes.

I will write to the Minister and reiterate my extreme concern that she has not honoured her commitment; the Department is not independent. I have honoured my commitment, and will be monitoring progress very closely on your behalf. Please keep me informed and, rest assured, I will continue to be proactive on your behalf.

Kind regards



Senator Barnaby Joyce
The Nationals Senator for Queensland