



Update

Media & Communications

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Fibre in New Developments

As part of the Government's rollout of the National Broadband Network, fibre-to-the-premises (FTTP) infrastructure is set to be installed in new developments that receive approval from 1 July 2010.

FTTP networks (also sometimes referred to as fibre-to-the-home) are those which connect customers' premises to a point of interconnection in the wider telecommunications network using optical fibre.

On 18 March 2010, the Government introduced the *Telecommunications Legislation Amendment (Fibre Deployment) Bill 2010 (the Bill)* into the Parliament to establish the legislative guidelines surrounding this policy.

The Bill will insert a new Part 20A into the *Telecommunications Act 1997*. Under the legislation the Minister will be able to specify types of real estate development projects in which:

- the fixed lines which are installed will need to be optical fibre; and
- the passive infrastructure which is installed, like conduits and pits, will need to be fibre-ready.

On 16 April 2010, the Minister released a position paper for public comment on the subordinate legislation that will give operational effect to the Bill.

The subordinate legislation is expected to outline a number of details, including the practical date of effect and geographical coverage, as well as which estates will be forced to deploy fibre and which can apply for an exemption to deploy only fibre-ready trenches, pits and pipes.

The paper has been provided to the Senate Environment, Communications and the Arts Committee, which is conducting an enquiry into the Bill, and is open for public comment.

The Government's consultation process closed on 12 June this year.

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