



Internet Telephony Services Providers' Association

ITSPA response to Future Telecoms Infrastructure Review: Call for Evidence

Introduction

The Internet Telephony Services Providers' Association ("ITSPA") represents over 100 UK businesses involved with the supply of next generation communication services over data networks to industry and residential customers within the UK. Our traditional core members are VoIP providers. ITSPA pays close attention to both market and regulatory framework developments on a worldwide basis in order to ensure that the UK internet telephony industry is as competitive as it can be within both national and international markets.

Please note that certain aspects of the ITSPA response may not necessarily be supported by all ITSPA members. Individual members may respond separately to this consultation where a position differs. However, the ITSPA Council is confident that this response reflects the views of the overwhelming majority of ITSPA members.

A full list of ITSPA members can be found at <http://www.itspa.org.uk/>.

Response

ITSPA welcomes the opportunity to respond to the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport's Call for Evidence for the Future Telecoms Infrastructure Review.

ITSPA praises the ambition shown by the Government in this important area, and supports the aim of rolling out full fibre connections to at least 10 million premises over the next decade. Similarly, ITSPA supports the Government's desire to lead the world in the deployment of 5G. As the Government is well aware, Ofcom's International Communications Market Report 2017, showed that FTTP penetration in the UK was just 3% (ranking 18th out of the 19 countries assessed). It is essential that urgent action is taken to ensure that the UK does not fall further behind on the world stage.

We would also like to take the opportunity to urge the Government to ensure that any rollout of full fibre and 5G is carried out in an open manner which considers all telephony and data services. As a trade association that represents over 100 communications service providers from across the complex nature of the next generations communications landscape, we are well aware of the need to ensure that new technologies are deployed in a manner which enables innovation to continue to thrive.

There is also a clear need for the Government to learn from the difficulties encountered during the rollout of other technologies in recent years – 4G perhaps providing the best example. As detailed in the National Infrastructure Commission 'Connected Future' report of December 2016, the UK was (at the time of publication) only 54th in the world for 4G availability. ITSPA welcomes the Government's renewed focus on telecommunications infrastructure deployment which appears to be learning from previous mistakes.



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ITSPA would therefore conclude by encouraging the Government to adopt a creative policy approach which allows innovation to flourish whilst considering the full range of telephony and data services which will rely on this infrastructure.