

Hon Trevor Mallard

Labour spokesperson

Clare Curran

Communications and IT spokesperson



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Media Statement

Telecom rethink needed or customers will suffer

For the good of customers and its shareholders Telecom must re-examine its proposed maintenance contracting arrangement with Australian based company Visionstream, say Opposition Labour spokesperson Trevor Mallard and Communications and IT spokesperson Clare Curran.

“Telecom’s decision to contract out the work done by its telecommunications engineers to Visionstream has created unrest and uncertainty amongst the 900 workers affected,” Trevor Mallard said.

“Very few workers have signed on as independent contractors leaving a serious shortfall of workers to tend to Telecom’s repair and maintenance work.

“There is a risk that faults and maintenance work could suffer as a result of this situation dragging on.”

Clare Curran and Trevor Mallard have written to Wayne Boyd, Chairman of the Telecom Board, asking that it reconsider the terms of its contract with Visionstream.

“New Zealanders trust Telecom, but if fixing faults and regular maintenance become a problem for them, that trust risks being eroded,” Clare Curran said.

“We are asking Telecom to rethink its plans for the workers affected, who face massive costs to set up as self employed under its proposal, and customers who will not stand faulty phone lines and internet outages.

“Visionstream has operated a similar employment arrangement in Australia and evidence suggests that has caused major problems in the industry.

“New Zealanders don’t need to learn the lesson the hard way, and only Telecom can prevent that happening.

A protracted stand-off between Telecom and its maintenance workers is not in New Zealand’s interests.

“New Zealand needs to get on with rolling out ultra-fast broadband to maximise growth opportunities,” Clare Curran said.

“To achieve that Telecom must enter into practical and fair employment arrangements. Telecom’s reputation is at stake here, it must re-examine its position.” Trevor Mallard said.

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