

26 February 2026

By email to: Mobile Stakeholder Group
 Broadband Stakeholder Group
 Consumer Stakeholder Group

Tēnā koutou

Telecommunications – 2026 Work Plan

This letter sets out our work plan for 2026.

Our focus this year is on:¹

- *Fibre*: Progressing the Fibre Input Methodologies review and related work on the evolution of the regulatory regime;
- *Retail Service Quality*: Progressing work on improving retail service quality for consumers;
- *Deregulation*: Completing work on the potential deregulation of certain fibre and legacy services; and
- *Monitoring*: Streamlining the Annual Monitoring Report and reviewing the future shape of the Measuring Broadband New Zealand programme.

An outline of our work programme, including indicative timing, is set out in more detail below.

As in previous years, this remains subject to change as the programme moves forward, including the need to address any urgent issues that may arise in the market.

Fibre Services

Last year, we completed our review of information disclosure (**ID**) regulation, making targeted changes to streamline and improve disclosure requirements.²

This year, we will progress our review of the Fibre Input Methodologies (**IM**), which needs to be completed by 2028.

¹ This reflects both our statutory responsibilities and the direction provided in the Minister's letter of expectations. See Hon Scott Simpson, [Annual letter of expectations 2025/26](#) (9 July 2025).

² [Fibre Information Disclosure Amendments 2025](#) (26 November 2025).

Our aim is to streamline and improve regulation to ensure it keeps pace with change and remains fit-for-purpose.

We are phasing our work as follows:³

- Requirements directly related to the preparation of Chorus' proposal for the next regulatory period are being progressed first (*Tranche 1*). We expect to issue our draft decision on Tranche 1 issues in March 2026;
- Cost of capital issues are being reviewed on a cross-sector basis with a draft decision expected in March 2026; and
- All other requirements, including fibre-specific cost of capital issues, will be progressed in the next phase of our work (*Tranche 2*). We expect to issue our draft decision on Tranche 2 issues in early 2027.

Retail Service Quality

Our retail service quality work will focus on:

- *Switching* – where consumers continue to experience issues that are problematic from both a competition and retail service quality perspective; and
- *Debt and affordability* – where concerns have emerged around practices relating to interest-free phones and debt management in the industry.

We consider that these issues, which relate to industry processes and procedures, should be improved as far as possible by the industry itself, through the Telecommunications Forum (TCF), as the relevant industry self-regulatory body.

Accordingly, we propose to play a facilitative role in this area, working with industry to identify specific opportunities for improvement, but leaving delivery to the industry as far as possible, under an agreed action plan.

We expect a plan to improve the switching process will be agreed with us in the first half of the year,⁴ and a similar plan will be agreed on debt and affordability issues in the second half of the year.⁵

To the extent that time allows, we will also review our work on improving customer service,⁶ and

³ [Fibre IM DRAFT decision-making framework paper](#) (10 July 2025); [Fibre IM Review 2027 – Issues paper \(Tranche 1\)](#) (10 July 2025).

⁴ This may include changes to the Local and Mobile Number Portability (LMNP) determination which is due to be issued by the end of 2026.

⁵ In the meanwhile, we encourage industry to continue engaging with organisations like FinCap and Thriving Aotearoa to improve the ability for financial mentors to access support on behalf of their clients.

⁶ We introduced a competitive dashboard to encourage improvement in customer service in 2023 and now need to assess whether this has improved outcomes for consumers. See [Improving Retail Service Quality: Customer Service – Confirmation of Dashboards for Publication](#) (11 July 2024).

initiate work on contract issues, including concerns raised by consumers about pricing changes and transparency in contract terms.

Deregulation

Last year, we decided to retain number portability regulation,⁷ given its ongoing importance to competition, but will this year consider whether other legacy services should be deregulated:

- We expect to issue our final decision on whether to deregulate the Mobile Termination Access Service (**MTAS**) in March 2026;⁸
- We expect to issue our final decision on whether there are reasonable grounds to consider deregulating the Public Switched Telephone Network (**PSTN**) in May 2026 and, should the process move forward, we expect to issue a final decision on whether to deregulate in early 2027;⁹ and
- We expect to issue our final decision on whether to deregulate the Mobile Co-location Service in early 2027.¹⁰

This year we will also progress our work on the potential deregulation of four ancillary fibre services:¹¹

- We expect to issue our final decision on whether to deregulate the Voice Service in March 2026,¹²
- We expect to issue our final decision on whether to deregulate the Point-to-Point Service in September 2026;
- We expect to issue our final decision on whether to deregulate the Transport Service in October 2026; and
- We expect to issue our final decision on whether to deregulate the Co-location and Interconnection Service in December 2026.

Our final decisions on deregulation take the form of recommendations to the Minister for Media and Communications who must decide whether to accept or reject the recommendation to deregulate.

This is a significant deregulatory agenda, driven by the review requirements built into the regulatory framework, and your input will be important to ensure all stakeholder perspectives are taken into consideration.

⁷ [Local and Cellular Telephone Number Portability Services Review – Final decision paper](#) (9 October 2025).

⁸ [Mobile Termination Access Service Investigation – Draft Recommendations Paper](#) (5 November 2025).

⁹ [Review of Fixed PSTN Interconnection – Reasonable Grounds Assessment Draft Decision](#) (10 February 2026).

¹⁰ We recently issued our final decision that there are reasonable grounds to investigate the deregulation of mobile co-location. See [Co-location on Cellular Mobile Transmission Sites Review](#) (24 February 2026).

¹¹ [Fibre fixed line access service deregulation final decision](#) (19 December 2024).

¹² [Fibre Deregulation Review – Voice Services – Draft Recommendations Paper](#) (30 October 2025).

Market Monitoring

Our monitoring and reporting work is critical to our ability to safeguard competition and give consumers the information they need to participate confidently in the market.

This year we will focus on two key areas:

- *Annual Monitoring Report (AMR)*: We aim to streamline our annual report on the industry and competitive landscape, which has grown in size following our move to monitor the market on a more granular level.
- *Measuring Broadband New Zealand (MBNZ)*: We aim to consult on the future shape of the programme and, in particular, where the focus needs to be given the stability exhibited by fibre services and the variability exhibited by different wireless technologies.

We will focus primarily on the AMR in the first half of the year – with initial streamlining appearing in this year’s report – and the MBNZ programme in the second half of the year.

Conclusion

We trust that this letter provides a useful update on our work plan for 2026.

We will keep you updated as we move forward and look forward to your continued engagement in our work.

If you have any questions on this letter, please contact Dane Gunnell (telecommunications@comcom.govt.nz) on telecommunications matters or Kirsty Bennett (infrastructure.regulation@comcom.govt.nz) on fibre matters.

Ngā mihi nui



Tristan Gilbertson
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