



INDUSTRY PROFILE: TELECOMMUNICATIONS INDUSTRY

History of Telstra

- * The Postmaster General's Department ("PMG") was established in 1901 by the *Postal and Telegraph Act 1901*, initially performing postal and telecommunications functions and from 1905 radio communications functions 7000 public servants joined the PMG on 1 March 1901.
- * The Act was made in the first sitting of Parliament.
- * In 1946, the Overseas Telecommunications Commission ("OTC") was established and given responsibility for Overseas Telecommunications.
- * Australian domestic telecommunications continued to be performed by PMG.
- * In 1975, PMG was divided into the Australian Telecommunications Commission ("ATC") and the Australian Postal Commission.
- * OTC was reconstituted as OTC Limited, a Government business enterprise by the OTC (*Conversion into Public Company*) Act 1988.
- * In 1988, ATC changed its name to Telecom
- * In 1989, the Commonwealth Government enacted the *Telecommunications Act 1989 (Clth)* which commenced the process of providing competition in the telecommunications industry and saw the entry of Optus in the industry in 1991.
- * The *Australian and Overseas Telecommunications Act 1991 (Cth)* was the Act which created the corporation now known as Telstra. It provided for, amongst other things, the merger of Telecom and OTC to form the Australian and Overseas Telecommunications Corporation Limited ("AOTC") which came into being on 1 February 1991.
- * The AOTC continued to trade as Telecom Australia internationally, until April 1993, and domestically until July 1995 when it became known as "Telstra".

Vital Statistics

The Australian telecommunications industry is important in many ways:

It is the eighth largest in the world with a turnover of almost \$10 billion;
There are about 60 000 people employed in the industry;
Large value added from communications services – around \$19 billion in 1999-2000, being around 3% of Australia's GDP, and rising;
Large capital expenditure – investment in new infrastructure of more than \$9 billion during 2000-2001; and
Strategically important for the rest of the economy-telecommunications services are an input to all other industries.

Award Coverage

In 2002, an award was made covering the employment conditions of staff employed in the Telecommunications Industry. The award covers all the major players such as Vodafone, AAPT, Hutchison, Primus and New Tel. The award is called *Telecommunications Services Industry Award 2002*.

The types of people employed in the industry are administrators, IT specialists, technicians, managers, and call centre operators.

The award means that employees now have minimum wages and conditions of employment. The award also provides for a structured and portable career path, so that people can move through the industry and have their skills and experience recognised and rewarded.