

Don't link telco sale with fibre

ACCC boss talks Telstra

By SANDRA O'MALLEY

THE sale of the Government's stake in Telstra should not be linked to the telco's proposed \$3 billion fibre network, Australia's competition watchdog says.

Telstra has been in talks with the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission over rules governing access by its competitors to the proposed network, known as fibre to the node (FTTN).

The system would deliver customers much faster broadband services.

Before committing to the investment, Telstra wants to ensure it is not disadvantaged by Government red tape and that it can recover its costs.

The ACCC indicated that it expected to receive a proposal from Telstra within the "next few weeks".

In a speech to the National Press Club in Canberra yesterday, ACCC chairman Graeme Samuel said talks with Telstra over the proposed roll-out had been constructive.

However, he warned that it did not mean the watchdog would necessarily endorse Telstra's eventual proposal.

"These discussions have certainly been constructive, but should not be seen as an indication that the ACCC will necessarily agree with, or endorse, any proposal put forward by Telstra," Mr Samuel said.

He backed Telstra's demand for regulatory certainty before committing to the roll-out, but said that could be achieved by submitting its proposal and having the ACCC adjudicate on it.

"At that point, Telstra should have sufficient certainty that it needs to decide whether to go ahead with an FTTN roll-out," Mr Samuel said.

Mr Samuel also warned against attempts to link the Government's sale of its stake in the telco with any network roll-out.

"Linking the FTTN discussions to this sale is inappropriate and only confuses the issue," he said.

"Just like many other large companies, Telstra is a dynamic business and constantly evolving to meet the changing environment in which it operates. Uncertainty doesn't cease during a sale process."

Mr Samuel said Telstra deserved to have a clear regulatory framework, which it did.

"However, the sale process itself, if and when it proceeds, will no doubt deal with all the factors which impact on Telstra's businesses and its future financial forecasts," he said.

He also flagged ongoing progress on how much Telstra charges its competitors for access to its copper network.

Telstra's competitors have taken issue over its plan to charge an average access price of \$30.

"We are in the process of clarifying with the parties our view of unconditioned local loop (ULL) pricing into the future," Mr Samuel said.



Good advice... Evelyn Lundstrom who runs a business that helps improve people's corporate look.

Picture: KATRINA TEPPER

When the medium is the message

By JOANNA TOVIA

IMAGE is everything when it comes to running a small business but too few entrepreneurs know how to dress for success.

First Impressions image consultant Evelyn Lundstrom says men and women make so many faux pas with their appearance, it's difficult for her not to offer her advice — solicited or not.

"I can look at the best dressed women... then I think, 'If only I could just talk to her about her hair colour'," she said.

Clients are restyled so their look matches the message they want to give the world, whether that be, "I know what I'm talking about", "I'm creative", or "You can trust me".

One way to check if you

are dressing for success is to look in the mirror so you can see your body, but not your face. A common problem is looking in the mirror and focusing just on the face.

"That's why they get a shock when they see a photo of themselves," Ms Lundstrom said.

One of the biggest mistakes is not keeping an eye on the clothes that work for them physically.

"If they have put on weight, they think they can still wear the same clothes," she said.

More rotund men should have clothes fitted at a good menswear store or tailor, or wear braces to keep their pants up.

Ms Lundstrom said older women should avoid heavy, matte foundations and "embrace their age".

Seven sells Telstra Dome

KERRY Stokes' Seven Network has closed the roof on its Telstra Dome asset, selling its interest in the Melbourne sports stadium for \$330 million.

Seven sold its stake to James Fielding Funds Management on behalf of a consortium of major superannuation funds and investors.

"Seven is focusing on building its core media businesses and we believe today's agreement... is a positive development for Seven and Telstra Dome," Seven project director Steve Wise said.

The network has been the manager and operator of Telstra Dome through one of its wholly-owned subsidiaries, Melbourne Stadiums (MSL), since 2001.

Village quits UK cinemas

ENTERTAINMENT group Village Roadshow has paid \$33.5 million to dispose of its UK cinema interests.

Village is also moving to complete the sale of its cinema operations in New Zealand, Fiji and Austria as it turns its attention to theme parks.

Directors yesterday said Village had sold the group's UK cinema interests, which resulted in a cash payment to the purchasers of about \$33.5 million.

"As a result of this sale, [Village] will have no ongoing commitments in respect of the long-term leases over these cinema sites," the company said.

Village is in talks about the sale of its two remaining cinemas in Austria.

Nine has float plan on ice

A FLOAT has been cancelled by IceTV which blames a court challenge of its program guide by Channel 9.

CEO Duncan Ross said the company was disappointed with Nine's "unusual and petulant actions", which involve taking IceTV to the Federal Court for alleged breach of copyright.

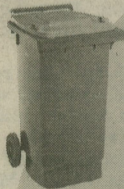
IceTV makes an electronic program guide which Nine says copies its published program guide, denied by IceTV.

Mr Ross said the challenge would be defended and the float would go ahead later.

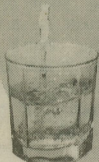
All money from prospective investors would be refunded in the next 14 days, Mr Ross said.

Recycling this...

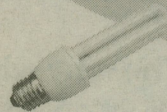
saves waste



saves water



saves energy



and ultimately saves this



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Timing was CSL's lifeblood

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"overstocked" so they were sellers rather than buyers.

Or they misjudged — betting McNamee was buying too much of the wrong product at the wrong time.

The critical thing to understand, and so how badly CSL and its shareholders could have been burned if McNamee had misjudged, is that it is not just a matter of being well and truly overstocked at a single point in time.

The blood keeps pouring in. The nature of the relationships meant you cannot just turn off the tap, so to speak.

But the positive gains from the global plasma market turning up were themselves leveraged. It turned out to be great time to "go long blood".

The buy has arguably created about

\$4 billion of value in just two years off a zero net outlay.

Buying Aventis was a very big step.

But it has paid off in three big ways. The first was to make it global leader in plasma at what turned out to be exactly the right time.

The second was to give CSL critical corporate mass, building it from a \$2 billion company into a \$9 billion one.

The immediate huge pay-off was it would retain significant ownership of its world-conquering Gardasil anti-HPV cervical cancer vaccine.

The third benefit is to keep this company managed and largely owned in Australia. Or force a big global player — like Merck, CSL's partner in Gardasil — into now paying very big bucks to snap CSL up.