

1.3 (cont'd)

- * sharing of private networks between different entities was not allowed unless it could be shown that the entities constituted a common interest group (CIG). A CIG was defined as a group of entities having a common interest or business other than operating a telecommunications service. Operating a private network was to be no more than ancillary to, or facilitating the group's business, and there was to be significant traffic between the members of the group arising from the common interest.

The operation and maintenance of PABXs was another area of major contention among users. While users were permitted to buy PABXs in a competitive market, Telecom retained a monopoly on the maintenance of all PABXs connected to the PSTN. Until fairly recently, this monopoly extended to the control of day-to-day customer data changes, such as change of extension number and class of service. More recently Telecom allowed the provision of customer access terminals on PABXs. Customer data changes could be made from such a terminal, providing that no access to maintenance functions was possible.

Many users were dissatisfied with the maintenance service provided by Telecom and would have preferred to have the PABX maintained by the original supplier. Some of the larger user organisations felt they could do better maintaining their own PABXs.

1.4 Competition and the Australian Telecommunications Market

The competitive part of the Australian telecommunications market can be divided into the following four components:

- * supply of public switching and transmission equipment and materials to the national carriers: Telecom, OTC and AUSSAT;
- * supply of transmission equipment to the private market;
- * supply of customer terminal and switching equipment to Telecom and the private market;
- * supply of value added services to the private market;
- * supply of mobile communications base stations, terminals and services to Telecom and the private market.