

4.52 It is therefore almost academic to talk of other providers of optical fibre outside Telecom, including such providers for the final stages of cable. It is a move that would be impractical because of the broadband nature of the services provided.

4.53 Any move to duplicate the Telecom services would be wasteful and a misdirection of resources given particularly the virtually unlimited capacity of fibre optic cable. Therefore, Telecom should be the common carrier for cable pay television. Telecom should not be allowed to be a pay tv operator and neither should it have any say in influencing or determining program content. The former would take it outside its charter of responsibilities, the latter would give it regulatory powers it should not have.

4.54 In view of the foregoing the Committee recommends that:

- (a) Telecom Australia be made the common carrier for cable pay television, as prescribed in legislation; and
- (b) the legislation prohibit Telecom Australia from being a pay television operator and from influencing or determining the program content of such television.

4.55 Tied in closely to the method of delivery are other establishment issues relating to structure of the system and covering issues such as the separation of carriage and content, the number of markets, exclusive franchises, single or multiple channel systems and ownership and control. It is these matters that the next chapter discusses.