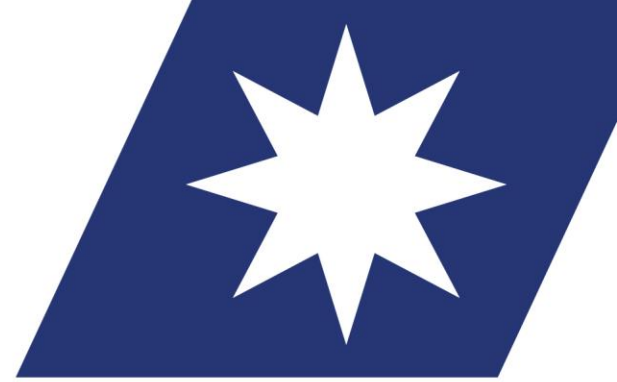


## BOB KATTER

Katter's Australian Party

Federal Member for Kennedy



## MEDIA RELEASE

5 June 2019

### **Telstra's plan to cut 10,000 jobs by 2020 a "bloody joke"**

KAP Leader and Federal Member for Kennedy Bob Katter has slammed Telstra today for its intention to cut its indirect workforce by 10,000 over the next two years, a move which will ultimately leave rural and regional Queensland further disconnected.

Mr Katter said, "When we pleaded not to privatise Telstra we were told that there would be universal service obligations and that would force Telstra to continue their communication responsibilities to the public. Universal service obligations, as everyone in this country knows, are nothing but a "bloody joke".

"So privatisation – has it reduced charges? No. Has it reduced service? Yes. And I think the technology equipment is all imported from overseas these days whereas when Telstra was Government owned was all made in Australia; in fact a big export item for the Australian economy.

"So we've lost the technological know-how. We have lost the manufacturing. We've lost the service. We've lost the jobs. And quite frankly we have lost the communications systems."

Mr Katter said the telecommunications giant is considered an 'emergency service' throughout rural and regional Queensland, and that it was imperative jobs remained in order to service the outages which occur frequently in many locations.

"Telstra is considered to be an emergency workforce – it is like electricity – and if you want the service to be there, you have to have a lot of people standing around because they have to be there when the crisis arrives.

"The fact is, a mobile telephone cannot carry mass information. It also runs on a battery. It is also much less reliable than a land line."

Mr Katter said the controversial National Broadband Network (NBN) was widely unpopular in North Queensland given its consistent unreliability.

"The NBN will only ever be half a service. It goes down your street, but it doesn't connect adequately into your house. For those that squealed about the NBN, you're the same mob screaming our telephones were going to bankrupt the country when Chifley proceeded to put a phone in every house in Australia."

Mr Katter warned there would be public outrage should the government consider ever privatising the NBN.

"There will be a tiger in the tank of every Australian when they try to privatise the NBN and we must push for the real NBN service which carries the message that adequate bandwidth from the node goes down your street into your house," Mr Katter said.

"Once again, the free market fundamentalist zealots, like all zealots, are interested in ideological purity, and live in a fantasy world completely disconnected with reality."

—ENDS—