

REPUBLIC OF NAURU
COMMUNICATIONS AND BROADCASTING BILL 2018
SECOND READING SPEECH

Honourable Shadlog Bernicke, MP

10 May 2018

Mr. Speaker Sir,

I have the responsibility of introducing to the House today a Bill to repeal the Telecommunications and Regulatory Affairs Act 2017, to establish the Nauru Communications Authority and, to regulate communication and broadcasting services.

Mr Speaker and Members you may notice that this entails the repealing of a very recent Act passed in 2017. The reason for this is reflected in the development in technology in the ICT sector. Nauru is actively pursuing optic fibre cable to be implemented in the very near future. You may have also noticed that Nauru also encourages competition and invites private enterprises to invest in the sector. The whole objective of this is to ensure that the people of Nauru are able to get all the benefits which any other country has in the growing technology sector. The growth of a nation is largely dependent upon its ability to communicate with the world. The original geographical boundary is no longer an issue as technology penetrates through every geographical boundary without any sanction. As the Minister responsible, I want to put Nauru on the same pedestal.

Mr. Speaker, the law needed to be reviewed in order to establish a proper regulatory framework providing for fair competition, transparency and accountability of service providers as well as affordability of communication services. Nauru's economic prosperity and wellbeing are increasingly dependent on communications networks.

The Bill establishes a Communications Authority of Nauru which comprises of the Chief Regulator who shall be a Nauruan citizen, a member recommended by the service providers and a member recommended by the Secretary for Telecommunications.

The Bill allows the Authority to monitor tariffs charged by service providers to ensure there is sufficient balance between the profits earned by the service providers together with affordable communication services provided to customers. Service providers are now required to publish tariffs on their websites or in written or electronic form accessible to the public. In the event

this is not done, the Authority has the power to require the service providers to do so.

It also allows for an improved consultative process between the Government and the service providers and, an appeals process should the service providers be aggrieved by any decision of the Authority.

Mr Speaker, the Bill will ensure consistency, transparency and proper accountability for all parts of the communication industry which will foster a strong partnership between the industry and the Government.

The Bill is accompanied by an explanatory memorandum explaining the Bill in more detail.

Mr. Speaker, I commend the Bill to the House.