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Keeping Australians connected in times of crisis



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Key points

Keeping Australians safe by enabling communication in times of emergency is essential. The community expects to have connectivity in emergencies to keep safe, and to connect with others and be informed. The Government and emergency services organisations have a responsibility to ensure public safety – but so too does industry, which provides the communications infrastructure and networks we rely upon.

Contact: Lisa La Rance, First Assistant Secretary, Communications Infrastructure;

02 s22(1)(a)(ii) | s22(1)(a)(ii)

The community expects to have connectivity in emergencies to keep safe, connected with others and informed

Since 2019, Government has invested in building the resilience of the telecommunications and broadcasting sectors. Industry has also made some efforts to improve network resilience but there is room to drive further improvements through stronger regulatory incentives on industry combined with program assistance.

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s22(1)(a)(ii)

Learning from the 2023 Optus outage

Following the 2023 Optus outage, the Government commissioned Mr Richard Bean to complete the *Review of the Optus outage of 8 November 2023* (the Optus Outage Review). The Optus Outage Review made 18 recommendations relating to Triple Zero, the role of Government in national outages, and other resilience matters. The former Government committed to implementing all of the recommendations of the Optus Outage Review to ensure that Australians can always rely on Triple Zero in an emergency.

The department is progressing the following recommendations:

- a review of the contract under which Triple Zero is delivered;
- improving the Protocol for Mass Service Disruption;
- facilitating a mutual assistance memorandum between telecommunications providers;
- reviewing Government telecommunications redundancy arrangements; and
- updating educational materials for the public.

The Government requested the Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman (TIO) chair a steering committee with industry, consumers, Government, and emergency services organisations to recommend the model for a Triple Zero Custodian. The Triple Zero Custodian would have oversight of and overarching responsibility for the functioning of the Triple Zero ecosystem. The TIO provided a report in November 2024 recommending the Office of the Custodian be established within an existing Government agency, with powers to compel information from telecommunications providers.

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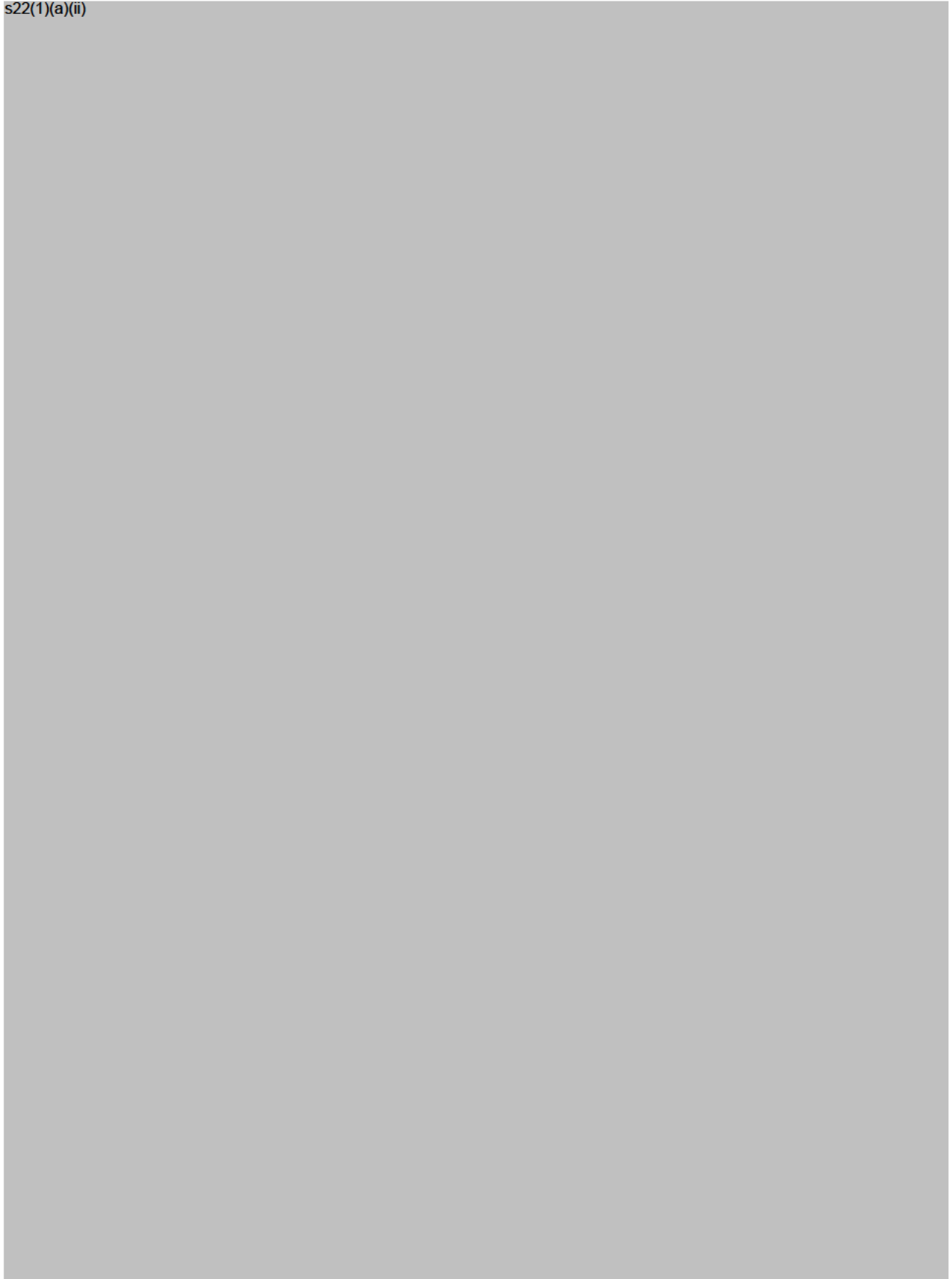
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