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Optus acquisition of new 900 MHz spectrum lays the foundation for strong national competition in the mobile market

- Optus has acquired 2 x 25 MHz of 900 MHz spectrum
- 900 MHz boost will help Optus deliver a **significant uplift of 5G coverage nation-wide**, in addition to its fastest 5G network as recognised by independent benchmarks

Optus customers will receive a huge boost with the ACMA announcing the outcome of the 900 MHz spectrum auction, where Optus has been awarded 2 x 25 MHz of 900 MHz spectrum nation-wide for a total of \$1.476 billion.

Optus CEO, Kelly Bayer Rosmarin, said:

“The auction result is a fantastic outcome for Australian consumers and businesses. Optus is building the network of the future for our customers and 900 MHz spectrum is its foundational layer. With this additional spectrum, and our existing mid and high band spectrum, we can continue to deliver great coverage and bring the benefits of our technology leadership to more Australians.

“We applaud the Government for prioritising competition and consumer interests in ensuring a competitive auction process that has also delivered more equitable holdings of this critical low band spectrum.”

The 900 MHz spectrum, known as low band, carries mobile signals further than higher bands, so fewer base stations are needed to service a broad area. It is critical to providing wide signal coverage for 4G and 5G technologies. This characteristic is particularly important in regional areas as it lowers the infrastructure investment required to service customers over a wide area. It also provides superior in-building coverage as it can penetrate deeper than mid and high band spectrum.

“We are steadily advancing the rollout of Australia’s fastest 5G, and combining it with value and innovation, like our suite of Living Networks features. This spectrum means we can offer a significant uplift of 5G coverage nation-wide, to even more Australians,” said **Lambo Kanagaratnam, Optus Vice President Networks**. “Optus aims to power optimism with options, and options have just become a whole lot better for Australians.”

Economic modelling by PwC shows that competitive national deployment of 5G could boost the national economy, with cumulative benefits over the decade of \$130 billion – equal to 1.2% of GDP – and the creation of 205,000 net new jobs.

The same modelling shows that the benefits of 5G deployment in regional Australia over the decade would be \$38 billion – equal to 1.4% of GDP – with 45,000 net new jobs created.

The spectrum licences have been awarded for a 20-year term commencing 1 July 2024, with early access expected.

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