

In Brief: Aussies might delay Telstra privatization

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The planned privatization of Australian telecom major Telstra could be delayed due to regulatory uncertainties.

Telstra's plans to invest some \$3 billion in a new broadband network have been clouded by disagreements over the access Telstra's competitors would have to the proposed nationwide net.

Finance Minister Nick Minchin told The Australian over the weekend that the need for a tight regulatory environment for the broadband network "would influence the question of whether we can proceed to a sale (of Telstra) this year."

The Australian Cabinet is scheduled to discuss the potential sale of the government's 51.8-percent stake in Telstra at its May 8 meeting.

The Australian said Sunday that Minchin ruled out a role for the government in regulating competitor access to the \$1 billion third-generation wireless phone network Telstra is currently building.

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