



Convergence Green Paper Q&A

What is convergence?

Convergence is a term used to describe the common delivery of previously discrete service functions such as broadcasting and telecommunications over shared digital infrastructure, and the consequent reduction in boundaries between previously separate industries.

What is being launched today?

The Green Paper “Exploring Digital Convergence” signals the launch of the Government’s work programme to ensure our laws are fit-for-purpose. The work programme aims to create a level playing field for content and information, regardless of what type of technology delivers it.

What’s in the Green Paper?

The Green Paper examines the cross government work programme under way to consider and respond to convergence. The aim of the Green Paper is to spark public debate on the implications of convergence in the telecommunications, information technology, media and entertainment sectors, and the Government’s proposed response.

This work is part of the Government’s Business Growth Agenda work on Building Innovation, ensuring that we proactively review market regulations to ensure they support the development of new, innovative products and services. It is a cross-government work programme involving several agencies.

Why is responding to convergence important?

Convergence offers a number of benefits to New Zealand. These include improving access to markets for content creators and reducing the barriers to entry for local and international industry players to enter the New Zealand market.

For consumers convergence provides an opportunity to have increased access to a range of local and overseas content anywhere 24/7. Where previously consumers would need to access specific types of content through different devices and mediums, now this can be done on a single device. This means better choice and lower costs.

For example, consumers can make calls, stream data, watch movies and make financial transactions through their smartphones. Another example is subscribing to voice, video, data and mobile from one provider or mixing and matching supplier with service offerings.

Why is the Government launching a convergence work programme?

The convergence work programme aims to create a level playing field for providers of content and information, regardless of what type of technology delivers it.



It is timely to consider whether our legislation and policy remains fit for purpose in a converging sector, as much of it was written before convergence was apparent in New Zealand.

We want to ensure our legislation enables innovation and growth, and supports a level and fair competitive market, without steering the sector or limiting it.

What does it mean for business and for consumers?

Convergence is disrupting traditional business models by enabling greater competition and innovation in industry revenue models and product offerings. Increasingly, telephony, data and audio-visual content are being bundled together in a complementary product offering. Consumers now access different types of content, once only available through different devices and mediums, on a single device via online transmission. This increases both accessibility and potentially choice.

What does the Green Paper propose?

The Green Paper “Exploring Digital Convergence” provides an overview of the convergence of traditionally separate industries, the policy and legislative issues that arise from this. It sets out the cross government response to the impact of convergence on the legislative framework. The cross government response includes:

- A review of the regulatory framework for content
- A review of the regulatory framework for telecommunications and radio spectrum
- Developing the infrastructure needed to support convergence
- A refresh of the Cyber Security Strategy and Action Plan
- A review of the applicability of GST to cross border services and intangibles
- A study of the creative sector use of the copyright and designs regimes
- The Data Futures Work Programme.

It asks for feedback on how convergence is affecting NZ, and whether there are other issues, not covered in the work programme outlined, that government should be aware of.

How do I make a submission?

Submissions can be made by email to: convergence@mch.govt.nz or by Post to

Media Policy Team
Ministry for Culture and Heritage
PO Box 5364
Wellington 6145
New Zealand

Submissions need to be received by 5pm on Friday 16 October 2015.