

When considering a USO for the future the key input for many poorly connected people is the near practical mandate that in future to be able to interact with Government or other official bodies will require access to digital services some of which are only really suited to full screen type delivery. In many ways this disproportionately impacts rural dwellers who are poorly served by transport and branch or other services and are often of low income relative to those in major conurbations.

If any major body expects customers to interact digitally (including things like self help video) then any USO must be kept in line with the nature of the services people are bound to consume in order not to be disenfranchised. This move toward digital services as a primary means of communication will effectively mean that a suitable internet connection and minimum speed will be a utility requirement in the same way as electricity at 240V AC.

As part of any USO discussions I would expect a consultation with the major government departments, major banks, utilities etc. to assess their expectation of internet speeds for their customers to receive a quality of service not only today but in 5 and 10 years time using online interaction and real time communications.

At the same time consider multiple residents using services concurrently and its easy to see a higher USO than the 10Mb being considered as part of a constantly evolving digital landscape combining smart data streams, video communications, and digital applications serviced from the cloud.