The Territory Government has reacted with disappointment to CLP Senator Nigel Scullion’s statement that remote communities in the Northern Territory will receive just $14 million from the $3 billion fund for future telecommunications infrastructure following the sell-off of Telstra.

Communications Minister Dr Chris Burns said advice received by the Territory Government from an independent economic consultancy – ACIL Tasman - was that remote communities in the Territory require at least $100 million to ensure provision of adequate telecommunications services.

“Senator Scullion boasted about the success of his ‘lobbying’,” Dr Burns said.

“It has been about as successful as his lobbying against the nuclear waste dump.”

The advice received by the NT Government identifies deficiencies in about 60 communities across the Northern Territory.

These communities range in population from just 100 people to more than 2000 people, and are home to a total of about 20,000 Territorians.

Senator Scullion told ABC Radio this morning that just $90 million has been allocated to remote communities throughout Australia.

“This is less than the Territory alone requires,” Dr Burns said.

“The Territory Government will be strongly arguing the case to secure the minimum investment required to bring telecommunication services throughout the Territory up to standard before the full sale of Telstra takes effect.

“The Martin Labor Government does not support the full privatisation of Telstra.

“Senator Scullion has been an abject failure in defending the rights of Territorians in Canberra. First the nuclear waste dump; now this.

“Senator Scullion has given up any pretence of working for the people of the Northern Territory.

“He is grovelling to his masters in Canberra, and now he has the hide to wave about the scraps they have tossed him.”