



## W-850 decision due

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TELECOM is expected to confirm this week that it will build a nationwide WCDMA mobile network using its 850MHz radio spectrum, but speculation that long-standing partner Alcatel-Lucent — and not rival Ericsson — has won the contract threatens to take the shine off the announcement. ABN Amro said in a research note that Telecom could time the announcement to coincide with its annual

general meeting on Thursday.

Analyst Geoff Zame has described W-850 as a “silver bullet” that would give Telecom a technological lead over rival Vodafone, but said it was important which vendor was selected. Alcatel-Lucent’s roll-out of 2100MHz cell-sites in the main centres had been “problematic” and it was “not a top-tier player” in mobile. Sources have suggested the upgrade could be shared with Ericsson, which built a W-850 network for Telstra.