

Mobile Coverage Programme Discussion Paper

Submission Cover Sheet

Submission Information

This cover sheet should be attached to submissions made to the Department of Communications in relation to the Mobile Coverage Programme Discussion Paper.

Contact Details

Name of respondent:	William Leane , President
Name of organisation:	Anglers Reach & Old Adaminaby Progress and Preservation Association
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Website (if applicable):	
Date:	23 rd February 2014

Confidentiality and privacy

All submissions and comments, or parts thereof, will be treated as non-confidential information unless specifically requested, and acceptable reasons should accompany each request. Email disclaimers will not be considered sufficient confidentiality requests.

Respondents lodging a submission should be aware that submissions (excluding any information agreed to be treated as confidential information) will be made publicly available, including on the Department of Communications' website. Submissions and comments will be subject to freedom of information provisions. Despite a submission being identified as confidential or sensitive, submissions may be disclosed where authorised or required by law, or for the purpose of parliamentary processes.

Do you want all or parts of the submission to be treated as confidential? No No

If yes, identify below which parts of the submission are to be treated as confidential (and provide a reason):

If the submission contains personal information of any third party individual, indicate on this Submission Cover Sheet if that third party individual has not consented to the publication of his or her personal information:

Submission Instructions

Submissions are to be made by **5:00pm (AEST) Friday 28 February 2014**.

Where possible, submissions should be lodged electronically, preferably in Microsoft Word or other text-based formats via the email address mobilecoverage@communications.gov.au

Alternatively, submissions can be sent to the postal address below (to arrive by the due date):

The Manager
Mobile Coverage Programme
Department of Communications
GPO Box 2154
CANBERRA ACT 2615

All submissions lodged will be acknowledged by the Department of Communications by email (or by letter if no email is provided). Respondents lodging a submission who do not receive acknowledgement of their submission should contact the Department. Submissions which are not acknowledged by the Department as being received may not be considered. Respondents should be aware that emails greater than 10Mb may not be successfully delivered.

Anglers Reach and Old Adaminaby Progress and Preservation Association Inc.

PO Box 190 Adaminaby NSW 2629

The Manager
Mobile Coverage Programme

Department of Communications
GPO Box 2154 Canberra
Canberra 2615

2014-02-09

RE Mobile Phone Coverage - Adaminaby District

In response to your call for public submissions on the matter of mobile phone coverage, I wish to nominate the Adaminaby district, and in particular the villages of Old Adaminaby and Anglers Reach, for consideration under the proposed project.

The Adaminaby district comprises small rural communities which experience seasonal population growth from tourism. (This includes a long popular trout fishing season and a shorter snow sport season). (Other activities such as bush walking and horse riding have many keen participants throughout much of the year.)

The area has poor mobile phone reception or in many places no service at all. The above mentioned villages are the nearest available location for residential rental properties to service the Mt. Selwyn ski fields, and are host to an influx of trout fishing enthusiasts from Spring through to Autumn. Horse riding treks and bushwalking also bring many visitors to the area again through a long period from Spring through to Autumn. The wider district is served by the Snowy Mountains Highway along which there is patchy mobile coverage between Adaminaby and Cooma, and more intermittent service between Adaminaby and Tumut.

The area comprises much of the heritage listed Kosciuszko National Park and the culturally and historically important Lake Eucumbene precinct. This area is very prone to the ravages of bushfire and related natural disasters, (habitat loss, loss of biodiversity, loss of cultural and historical dwellings and artifacts), the most recent being in 2003. The villages of Anglers reach and Old Adaminaby are at the eastern perimeter of the fire zone, and are under threat from catastrophic fire almost every summer.

The area is underdeveloped in a context of the potential tourism and the exploitation of the natural amenity, attributes and attractions. Access to good communications technology would help unlock the potential for business growth in tourist ventures, and the viability of investment in the existing and new settlements. New growth would provide an increase the number of rateable properties and revenue streams available to local government.

In the execution of your assessment of applications for small rural communities we ask that you would take account of 2 important considerations which have a bearing on your Projects and which are related to the withdrawal of public infrastructure and sector services.

A. Many small remote communities (including the Adaminaby community) now experience a significant commercial disadvantage, and inequitable access to basic amenity standards. This situation is highlighted by the situation that

there are no banking or bill paying facilities within 50 km of Adaminaby. The mobile and internet service is poor, unreliable or non-existent. Thus, the community regard access to on-line banking and e-commerce as an essential offset to the withdrawal of traditional services.

B. Social capital and available resources are heavily committed.

The withdrawal of infrastructure and the paucity of support services in aged care, health, transport and education means that the community sector is left to make alternative arrangements, and to bear the financial and manpower services provision burden. In the Adaminaby district, the calls upon the community to support aged care, disability support, school parent and sports coordination, and the manning of local emergency services (RFS, Marine rescue, Red Cross) has already over-extended community resources.

The significant combined impact of these factors is that there is little resilience or capacity available for financial or other co-contributions to other essential programs, eg a communications upgrade.

That said the need for a communications upgrade is evident. Poor reception has a multi-faceted economic impact on tourism in the area.

(1) Poor mobile service has a significant impact on seasonal visitor numbers and satisfaction: Poor reception is a deterrent to many visitors who have an expectation of quality 3G mobile and internet coverage. All accommodation providers report frequent early departures and cancelled forward bookings as the absence of mobile connectivity is experienced.

(2) Residents' support and security is somewhat reduced: many existing residents are of advanced age and have poor mobility. The availability of a quality mobile service and the technology thus enabled would greatly improve the quality of life for such residents. In the absence of such technology, residents are required to relocate to other locations where services are available, at great cost and social disruption. Moreover, incoming investment, in new dwellings and businesses, is put off by the poor infrastructure and lack of services support

(3) Residents and Recreational visitor safety is at risk: The area is very popular with boat based fishermen, fly fishermen and bushwalkers. Most casual visitors expect that the mobile phone will be the primary communication device in the event of an emergency. With no service availability, such visitors are left in isolation in an accident or emergency situation.

(4) Users of the Snowy Mountains Highway are very poorly serviced by mobile communications: The Snowy Mountains highway passes through large tracts of park and sub-alpine forest which are remote, may endure extremes of climate in winter and summer, and carries a high vehicle accident risk associated with weather conditions (snow and ice), wildlife accidents (brumbies, kangaroos and wombats are common on the highway), and high traffic with changeable road and weather conditions in the ski season. These factors underpin the need for quality mobile phone communications access and ready service availability.

I urge your department to consider the Adaminaby district claim for project funding, and look forward to your consideration of our case. We are available to assist with coming stages and to investigate the scope for collaboration with the local business community and local government.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Bill Leane". The signature is stylized with a large, looping initial "B" and "L".

Bill Leane
President