

# Regional Telecommunications Review 2015

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2015 Regional Telecommunications Review Secretariat  
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Submission to the Telecommunications Review by:

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Residential Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Current Internet Access Provider: \_\_\_\_\_Telstra \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Key questions to consider:

Q1. Do people in regional Australia believe their reliance on telecommunications differs from those in urban areas? How does it differ and can you provide examples?

We definitely rely on it just as much as the city folk, if not more, as we are living in an electronic world and most things (grain/sheep contracts, sending files to accountants etc) are initially sent electronically. It is more time consuming to send via (snail) mail and being so far from our major centres if the "system" is down, we don't have any other option (such as couriers etc). We personally don't have access to a fax which does make it difficult at times but we can't warrant the cost of line rental for minimal use.

If parts are required for farm machinery – a lot of the time online research is required prior to making phone calls to ensure you get the right part, or quite often the retailers will direct you to their website to get the part number so you can be assured you will receive the right part.

We rely heavily on mobile service and this obviously puts a strain on the telecommunication towers to keep up especially during peak times when people are constantly on their mobile phones (harvest, Field Days, weekends). It is especially

difficult in the case of an emergency where a vehicle has broken down, or been involved in an accident and there is no quality mobile service to contact emergency services. Sometimes having a scratchy line cutting in/out is more dangerous in an emergency as the operators may send help to another location if they couldn't communicate with you properly.

Q2. For those users already connected to an nbn network service, has the service met your expectations?

No available in our area – not sure about satellite NBN though?

Q3. Having regard to the technical solution likely to be used in your area, do you have views on the adequacy of that solution in terms of meeting needs now and into the future?

I appreciate how costly mobile broadband is (or have been told by my provider) but I wish that for people/businesses such as myself/ours we could be compensated or offered a more competitive deal as our only affordable option for internet service is via mobile broadband.

Q4. Irrespective of the adequacy of your local access, are there issues with backhaul or long distance carriage that impacts on your use of telecommunications services?

Unsure what you mean by this question – but relying on mobile service is especially difficult as we are constantly getting calls drop out or internet access cuts out due to the mobile reception. Upon calls to Telstra they usually inform us that there is a fault and (most recently) it's been due to the use of "illegal repeaters" – or so they tell me.

Q5. For users living in areas without mobile coverage, what priorities, other than specific locations, do you consider should be recognised in future efforts to improve coverage?

Maybe subsidies for equipment that is required to gain better access to the current coverage areas? We have had to purchase numerous aerials/cables to enhance the service we have as well as purchase a Cel-Fi repeater – not a cheap exercise! This would be much cheaper than putting up extra towers! I would love to have more "country staff" that are willing to travel to your home to sort out/assist with your telecommunications bill so they can get a full understanding of just how remote you are and what limitations you deal with. There is one in our area but so busy & never available when you need him.

Q6. What opportunities does the mobile network industry see for extending coverage in regional Australia and increasing investment in mobile networks?

More competition between carriers to provide customers with better deals. Happier customers that complain less! People may be willing to pay a higher price, providing they were getting a better service – I certainly would.

Q7. Do you have any views on co-investment approaches that might help to improve the broadband technology outcome in your area?

Q8. How might new applications and services that utilise mobile networks for voice and data transform the way you live and work?

Q9. What communications barriers have you experienced in expanding or operating your business or providing services, such as health or education? Have you been able to overcome these barriers and if so, how?

Limited to no service impacts greatly on our business. My husband carts grain during harvest and I am home to “market the grain” – this makes it hard to contact my husband to let him know the prices – and sometimes hard for him to ring me with issues that have arisen at the silos. This is a general issue that occurs all year round.

Q10. What communication functions (e.g. speed, mobility, reliability, data, etc) would best suit your needs, noting the limitations of each technology (e.g. mobile, wireless, satellite, fibre)?

Would ideally love ANYTHING that will offer a better internet plan than we currently receive on mobile broadband. This is our only option due to our physical location. We have looked into satellite but the expense is far greater than we are currently paying.

Q11. Do we need to continue to guarantee the standard telephone service for all (or only some) consumers, and if so, to what extent?

Q12. Are there new or other services, the availability of which should be underpinned by consumer safeguards?

Q13. What standards should apply to your services? How might they best be enforced?