



An Australian Government Initiative



28 January 2024

### Submission for Better delivery of universal services

I make this submission on behalf of Regional Development Australia Barwon South West (RDA BSW).

[RDAs](#) are an Australian Government initiative and are a vital link between regional stakeholders and all three levels of government. Our RDA committee members act as real-time advisers to government on critical regional development issues, opportunities and challenges in their regions, and our network provides regional intelligence to inform policy and the implementation of regional programs, information campaigns and grant funding opportunities.

Aligned with the [RDA Charter](#) and [Regional Investment Framework](#) to support strong and sustainable regions, we work in partnership with communities, other levels of government and the private sector to position our region to take advantage of a transitioning world, ensuring no one is held back or left behind as outlined in our strategic focus areas in our [Business Plan](#).

The RDA Barwon South West welcomes the opportunity for community input and engagement into the review of Universal Service Obligations but encourages further opportunities for engagement and consultation. We welcome the inclusion of the discussion paper to support feedback.

Critical to our community, is building a Universal Service Obligation that understands the future needs of regional communities, uses modern technology to meet these needs, recognises the growing importance of reliability and resilience and delivers affordable and accessible options to support and promote inclusion especially for remote and disadvantaged communities.

Reliable and resilient telecommunications underpin economic growth, capacity building and more connected and inclusive communities therefore it is critical through this review that future decisions are built with an understanding of the inter-relationship between fixed and mobile services and to ensure regulatory safeguards underpin future change.

RDA Barwon South West supports the continued consultation with regional communities to ensure their lived experience is adequately fed into and supports any change to the Universal Service Obligations.

Yours sincerely,



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Chair  
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