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To whom it may concern

Temporary Disaster Roaming

For the past five years, RDA Grampians has been advocating for mobile roaming in emergency situations on behalf of rural and regional communities. We wrote the technical reports, secured the support of the RDA network nationally, advocated to Ministers and brought the ACCC to the table for an inquiry with the Telcos.

In October last year the ACCC Regional Mobile Infrastructure Inquiry final report was released, which resoundingly supported substantial advancements in the pursuit of mobile roaming. It recommended that both the Government and industry collaborate to establish frameworks and protocols for the seamless initiation and deactivation of temporary mobile roaming.

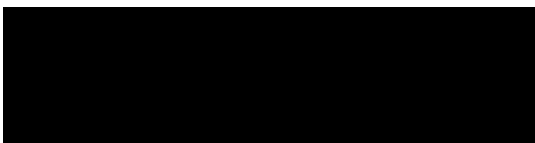
Earlier this month Telstra released a statement advising they have been working with all network providers to develop a temporary disaster roaming (TDR) solution. The solution they have been investigating would enable mobile roaming between networks within a localised area during natural disasters, for a short, specified duration. Simulation testing has been done with what seems like pleasing results.

We are delighted to see this commitment from Telstra and welcome the Australian Government's examination of universal service arrangements following changes in available technologies and consumer preferences over recent year. RDA Grampians request that emergency roaming be a key outcome that a modern universal services framework delivers for regional, rural and remote communities across Australia.

RDA Grampians remain committed to continuing our advocacy efforts to support temporary disaster roaming and seeing TDR become a reality before the next fire season.

I am happy to speak with you about any initiatives that increase telecommunications equality for all regional and rural Australians.

Your sincerely



Stuart Benjamin
Chair