

[REDACTED]

2/8/2021

Att: Review of Telecommunications to Regional areas Consumer/stakeholder feedback:

I am happy to be contacted regarding this matter if you would like further information, I am happy for this information to be used publicly. I wish for my name to be anonymous if this information is published.

This is how I feel about telecommunication infrastructure in my area, I hope that this highlights the issues that there are people living in well-established communities who are still very disadvantaged.

We live in the township of Lilydale, Tasmania. A beautiful spot which has an approximate population of 900 people, which is 30km north east of Launceston, and part of Launceston city council. It takes approx. 30mins by car to get to Launceston from Lilydale, despite being so close to a regional centre we are significantly worse off in terms of telecommunications and access.

Our mobile phone coverage is limited. Inside our dwelling we have minimal 3G service, with little to no reception in some rooms of the house. Outside of the house we have 3G coverage and sometimes 4G. We have tried Telstra and Optus with similar outcomes, both resulted in us being told to buy a booster (cost approx. \$1800) to put on the roof of our house to increase the signal. I would be happy to put the booster on if it guaranteed reception improvement, but I do not have \$1800 to spend on it. Could the government provide a rebate for houses living where there is inadequate reception to put these boosters on houses? Then the infrastructure such as cables are towers are not required for a small population. Not being able to receive phone calls when we have been working on-call is stressful and impacting on our income and career advancement opportunities.

Our Internet is basic. We have fixed ADSL, as there is no NBN option where we live. We have been informed by local telco workers that the NBN cable will not be coming up our road specifically as there are only 10 houses and the distance would not be cost effective for copper required. NBN satellite is not an option for our location with most providers listing it as a 'service unavailable to this address'. The ADLS is slow. We do not use a lot of internet, as it is slow, we can stream one movie at a time on a good day. But there are times when we do not have any internet for days. Currently our children are young, but it concerns me that when they grow up and need to do schooling online that it will affect there outcomes and I can imagine that we will need to review how important it is to stay on the farm when the kid's education could be hampered.

Through covid, it highlighted how disadvantaged we are in the location we live. Being directed to work from home in an office job the slow ADSL connection was not able to handle basic zoom meetings which meant I was often unable to participate or I could attend voice only with no camera.

This increases feelings of isolation and hampers career progression.

There are little to no options for telecommunications providers in our town, this is something that has been widely accepted as we are small. But it would be great to grow our town, encourage families to stay in the area and support businesses by providing a financial incentive such as boosters on dwellings which would apparently negate the need for home internet supply as you would be able to get it all through your mobile.

Our fixed landline is intermittent, we have it because we do not have reliable mobile phone coverage. There have been multiple times I have picked up the phone ringing and listened in to another conversation which makes me think there are a few wires crossed. Echoing down the phone is a regular occurrence and it nearly makes itself redundant.

I did not think that living in Australia in 2021 in a town 30mins form the regional centre would make my family and I so disadvantaged when it comes to access and connectivity. Such a shame. It's a beautiful place.