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## Regional Telecommunications Review

Dear Sirs,

I am making this submission anticipating that you will have the ability to force the Federal Government to put an end to the mobile phone reception rort that dominates the Australian market.

By definition a mobile phone service is just that and customers should be able to make phone calls anywhere in Australia. But we all know this is not the case.

I have four mobile phone plans with Vodafone and I have lost count of how many times I have complained about the signal coverage.

I have three examples:

1. I live on the north side of Canberra. Watson is the first suburb one enters as they enter the ACT from the North. Telstra tower is visible from my upper level rooms. Yet I cant make a call on my mobile phone inside my home – I have to go outside! I complained to Vodafone and they did the usual thing and looked at the location of their mobile towers. Apparently there are no towers in my area they are located closer to the city centre. Vodafone told me to change the settings on my phone so my calls would go via my home wifi internet connection. What, you ask, I have to have an internet connection to make a phone call!
2. We recently returned from a trip to Tasmania. Need I say much more. Phone service was abysmal even in Hobart. On the West Coast forget about phone calls. Also along the cities on the Northern part of Tasmania the service was intermittent at best. But what has us confused the GPS system in our car never stopped working no matter where we went. So what is going on we can get internet service but not mobile phone service.
3. Travelling from Canberra to Sydney we encounter the same intermittent service. More often than not our phones display the SOS Only symbol.

While you are conducting this review I suggest you examine the call centre functions. Vodafone's call centre is in the Philippines. Telstra's is in India. With due respect to these nationalities I find it

appalling that Australian customers have to speak to someone in another country whose first language is not English. Vodafone's service is abysmal. The staff are obviously reading from a script and any problems outside this are ignored. The notion that I have to use my internet connection to make mobile phone calls is appalling but Vodafone call centre staff see no problems with this. One could easily exceed their internet allowances and get additional charges all because they have to use their internet to make mobile calls.

We are paying for very expensive mobile coverage that is not fit for purpose in a lot of regional areas and in some parts of our capital cities. Vodafone is charging a premium for a poor service. I visit the Philippines a lot and I buy a local SIM card on arrival. It does not matter where I go in the Philippines the phone coverage is always good. Not bad for a country of 7,500 islands and is considered to be third world. Australians are being ripped off by these telcos and it is about time the Federal government pulled them into line. Get them to install more towers and if they don't then cancel their licences.