
Submission to 2021 Regional Telecommunications Review

To Whom It May Concern:

I write this submission with a hope for access to and improvement in what may be described as minimal services for us in what is a black spot in telecommunications and broadcast services in my area.

Living in the hinterland of the Sunshine Coast - Mooloolah Valley - provides some wonderful opportunities for enjoyment of Australia's bushland with the quietness of a rural-residential location, all with easy access to metropolitan community services such as quality shopping, parks, beaches, entertainment, medical and professional services and the like. However, with the exception of the above our quality of basic communications, including, Internet, mobile phone reception, television reception and radio reception fall far short of what anyone might rightly expect from a first world country such as Australia

As an example, and we are not alone in this frustration, to receive messages, phone calls and updates to our mobile phone I must travel a short distance (2 klm) to the township of Mooloolah Valley to reliably connect to the mobile service. In addition, to remain contactable, we are required to maintain a land line service to receive and make reliable phone calls from our home.

To receive a variety of television channels and services we have been compelled to buy satellite services from Foxtel as Free to Air television reception is only partially available on clear unclouded and non windy days. Indeed, Foxtel does not provide access to free to air television in Mooloolah Valley as it does in metropolitan regions, due to a contractual arrangement which I do not comprehend.

Because of our reliance of streaming television services we have recently been required to upgrade our Internet subscription, with additional costs, to an "Unlimited Download" package to ensure adequate access to reliable streaming services.

I have had occasion to contact our mobile phone provider, that advises that we may improve our mobile reception by purchasing an additional antenna and equipment at an increased cost to our mobile phone plan - some \$900 at last contact.

Similarly, when researching options for improved free to air television services our contractor has advised that we must make application government to gain access to an alternative service called VAST and then purchase a satellite dish and additional set-top box to receive what, in Australia, most others surely take for granted.

Living just 17 klm from Caloundra, our nearest major city, one would surely expect that basic communication services would be readily and easily accessible without the need to further financial investment in phone and satellite and Internet infrastructure.

Thanks you for the opportunity to make this submission, which may be made public if needed.

Gregory McGrath

