
The Hon Luke Hartsuyker
2021 Regional Telecommunications Review Chair
Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications
secretariat@rtirc.gov.au

Submission to the Regional Telecommunications Review

Dear Panel,

The Finch Hatton Progress Association is pleased to provide a formal submission to the 2021 Regional Telecommunications Review.

We thank you for the opportunity to outline the connectivity issues our communities face and to suggest solutions for the Review's consideration.

Our internet (NBN) is intermittent and can go without internet for up to 5 days and mobile phone reception in the Eungella / Finch Hatton region is very poor or none existence in some areas. How in this day and age can a service provider expect people to call emergency services and stay in touch with their loved ones in this situation? How can a service provider charge for phone plans that people are not able to use.

Our area has seen a number of fires over the recent years as well as cyclones and to top that off we are a tourism destination spot where people visit our natural wonders like Eungella as well as the Finch Hatton Gorge who has no service at all. The wheel of fire at the Finch Hatton Gorge is a popular swimming hole and a number of people have died over the years due to its remoteness.

Our local SES has to climb mountains to retrieve lost walkers and is limited to hand held radios

We would like to help our community to get this matter on the agenda for better services in our region

In particular,

- We have little to no connectivity with Mobile phones or NBN
- Finch Hatton is not only a socially isolated for locals who live here but is an issue regarding safety as it is a very unique tourist destination amongst the foothills and mountains of the Eungella National Park and as such there are many a time the SES and emergency services are called out to rescue people that are lost and or have fallen from walking tracks and there is no mobile phone service. Mackay Regional Council is building a world class mountain bike track and connectivity will be a detriment if not fixed in the area to the project.
- We know that the geographic location is difficult but surely there are other sites in Australia that are in a similar position and you have enhanced and fixed these problems. Please bring our township into the 21st century.

Queensland councils have also passed a range of resolutions for the Local Government Association of Queensland to action on our behalf to improve connectivity. These include calling for mobile roaming to be legislated to allow consumers access to available networks throughout regional remote areas, and ensuring the blackspot program prioritises improving

coverage of non-commercially viable mobile blackspots. We would also like to reiterate our support for those resolutions.

It is important the local government is given the opportunity to provide the Review with a local understanding of how better digital connectivity would provide greater opportunity and overcome barriers for those living, working and raising a family in regional, rural and remote Queensland, and we thank you again for providing us with the opportunity to do this via our submission.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alison Jones', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Alison Jones
Finch Hattin Progress Association, President



I give permission for this submission to be made public.