

Regional Telecommunications Review

I wish to offer the following comments for consideration by the Review. I make them as a private individual operating a fixed line telephone and an associated internet service (ADSL2) provided by Telstra. I also make them noting that I am in a peri-urban dwelling about 25 km from the centre of a major city in a first world, not third world, country. I note too that at 0940 this morning my internet service was providing 3.2Mbps download and 0.6 Mbps upload (it can get worse, but rarely is better than 5Mbps upload). This level of service creates real issues for those attempting to work from home. Further, our current provider is not currently making 3, 4 or 5 G available, i.e. we have no Telstra mobile connection.

The Review seems to be biased towards regional, rural or remote services and doubtless should be. However, from the comments above, it is quite clear that services in this peri-urban neighbourhood are poor, if available. Indeed, the local social media sites (e.g. Yarrambat, Plenty) are full of comment on levels of service, comment on the lack of NBN cable facilities (and the potential costs for those seeking them privately) and the quality of satellite reception. Drop-outs are frequent, service speeds are abysmal for those competing for access to a line to work from home (a situation likely to continue) and interest by our provider limited.

Clearly some resolution of some of these issues may be made. But in attempting to do so raises the associated problem of the conflict between services available via different providers. Thus while we currently have a landline and a poor (to appalling) internet provided by Telstra there is no mobile network available from them but we can, for example, receive mobile from Optus. Optus do not, however, provide a wireless broadband here. In consequence, to retain a landline (for the poor ADSL2 internet) and obtain mobile coverage becomes a more costly exercise as does any move to other providers. Retention of the current services is cheaper and provides a phone line in times of emergency, such as the bushfire season.

Thank you.