

SUBMISSION TO REGIONAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS REVIEW

For over 47 years I have experienced telecommunication problems at my farming property near Braidwood NSW and only 110km from Canberra.

The landline has been repeatedly out of order sometimes for up to 6 months at a time and since December 2020 on 6 occasions for up to 9 days.

Originally the problems were mainly line problems but in the last 12 months are due to the fact that every time there is a NOTIFIED PLANNED POWER OUTAGE Telstra makes no provision for it and the local exchange becomes inoperative for up to 9 days resulting in over 200 services being inoperative.

As I rely on adequate communications to market cattle from this 1400 acre property and for personal safety and there was no mobile coverage Telstra, after a Complaint by me to the Telecommunication Industry Ombudsman, assisted me to install a Smart Antenna Service on 20/06/2019.

This gave me some mobile and internet service until November 2019 when the service became erratic and limited. After replacement of the units in March 2020 no difference was experienced and virtually no signal was being received at all. Finally on 29/07/2020 the direction of the aerial was changed to another Tower.

The problems were then found to be the lack of capacity of the Towers in the area due to increased usage due to Covid. These problems have continued with the mobile service being erratic and unreliable so that although Telstra will divert the landline when it is out of order to a mobile service this is of little benefit to me.

I have installed a NBN Satellite Dish for internet connection but the telephone/mobile service problems remain.

During the 2019-2020 bushfires which surrounded my property the lack of capacity of the Towers caused great difficulties for local fire fighting.

I have also been advised that another problem with the Towers capacity affecting service Friday to Sunday is that it is taken up by the Canberra traffic going to the Batemans Bay area.

Apart from increasing the Towers capacity which Telstra is apparently not prepared to do there are other better sites for the Towers but these are not being examined.

I J A McArthur

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