

19/9/2021

In response to the 2021 Regional Telecommunications review, I would like to contribute the following.

I live part way between Mullion Creek and Long Point NSW. This is approximately 30kms from Orange NSW, 10kms from Mullion Creek NSW.

I have a satellite to receive internet connections. This provides me with my limited mobile phone connection and enables me to work from home. During our frequent power outages, I am left without the ability to use either of these.

This is a problem in our area and district, going back towards Orange, past Mullion Creek village which would only be 20kms from Orange. It also impacts Ophir and surrounding areas which would be approximately 25kms from Orange. It is important to note here though, there are a lot of new housing estates being developed on the northern side of Orange and on the perimeters of Mullion Creek. The distance between the two is decreasing continuously.

The lack of internet coverage impacts in several ways.

In an emergency there is no ability to contact assistance. An example would be recently, a young man was missing in the Ophir area, a mother from Mullion Creek took her children for a walk and broke her foot. Her 12 year old son had to carry her back to the car, she couldn't call for help.

A medical emergency cannot be called in from many homes without someone travelling to find reception. The village school itself has very unreliable reception. The same problems are faced by those that have car accidents, hit roos, wombats, deer etc. Those that need to report a bushfire etc. Recently Transgrid advised us they got bogged and had to walk 3 kms to get a signal to call for help.

Residents running businesses from home or forced to work from home due to covid, children home schooling, all face intermittent signals. This results not only in frustration but for children who are already isolated on properties, the lack of contact with school and peers can create well being issues for them. I was contacted by a community member only last week, who advised she was trying to do an on line course and would have to travel to Orange and sit in the bunnings car park at 6am to do it as her internet was too unreliable.

In 2021, it is inconceivable that services for homes 20 to 30 kms from a large urban city with a population of 40493 (2018) could be so overlooked and they, left without, what most would consider a basic right.

Regards

Toni Searl