

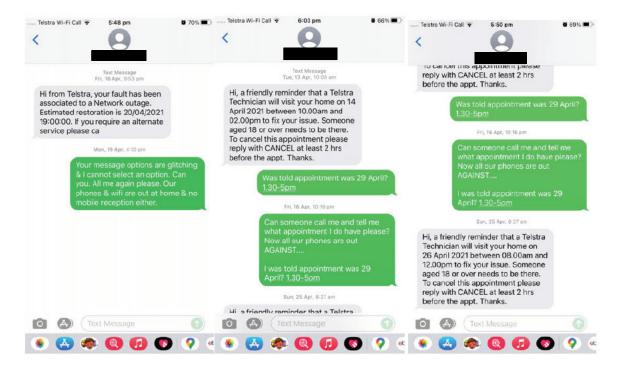
Fulltime resident of the Macdonald Valley Mother to a YR 12 2022 COVID home learner School Administration Officer, attempting to work and zoom from home

To the Secretariat,

My own personal experience is of frustration at the poor performance and service given by Telstra in the Macdonald Valley. Frustration to the point of giving up in despair of any improvement. The aging, outdated & over-subscribed ADSL network in our area is failing on many levels, just at a time when everyone, is relying more and more on telecommunications for work, school, health-everything. Mobile coverage, almost non-existent and wi-fi calling, heavily relied upon.

Back in April of this year , after suffering over many months, multiple outages and very inconsistent service, I attempted to have a Telstra technician come to my home to ascertain whether there was an actual issue or if a new modem might improve my service.

After multiple cancelled appointments by Telstra, a flood, then more cancelled appointments by Telstra, I made a complaint about the handling of my case and lack of resolution.

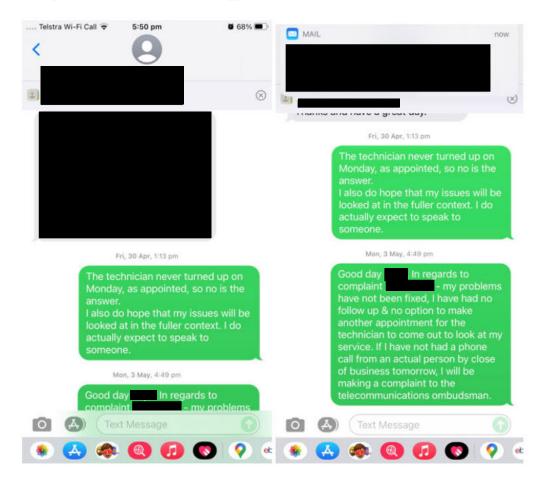


During the floods the power went out but not the phone lines, as often happens and with our back-up generator we should have been able to maintain phone and internet for the time it would normally take for power to be restored. But what no-one expected and what happened, is that the back-up battery at the exchange ran out and we all lost communications again.

Our own RFS personnel had to take shifts manning a fuel generator to run the exchange so we would have vital emergency communication, including the RFS. As if they didn't have enough to do. This was all apparently because the battery is aging and not being maintained, expensive to replace and Telstra say they have no intention of doing so. I think we all expect some day for Telstra to just not bother coming to our Valley at all anymore and just let the whole infrastructure go to the dogs.

I have heard that our local RFS are taking matters into their own hands to create a chain link of hand-held radios throughout the valley for emergency communications. It seems quite ridiculous that in 2021, 90 km from the CBD of Sydney, an emergency service must resort to last century technology to find a solution to this lack of adequate infrastructure.

After the floods subsided and communications restored to our Valley, I tried again. At some stage I received a text from my Complaints Manager asking if my problem was fixed, to answer back and she would see about a partial refund of some fees. I replied that it was not fixed, I hadn't seen a technician yet.



I am missing one text message and that was the one to follow that they advised my case was closed. What a joke. BTW, I never did get the offered refund on my service either.

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Internet speeds are typical of the ADSL services in the screenshots below.

I have since done some research locally to see what NBN Satellite services might be better but so far have found variable experiences and am uncertain whether all the hassle and expense of changing service will bring any better results.

Hawkesbury City Council have recently installed NBN Satellite at The St Albans School of Arts Hall. Borne out of their frustration at the inadequate and largely non-existent mobile coverage for much of the valley, when they are making use if the Hall for Community Hubs, information days and the like. The intention being that it will be available for all Hall users and the entire community in times of outage and emergency. Knowing as they do that we have sub standard communications across all options within the Valley and do not enjoy what most people in more urban areas have come to regard as a standard necessity for learning, working and life.

Yours, in despair,