

28 September 2021

2021 Regional Telecommunications Review Secretariat
Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications
GPO Box 594
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Dear Committee Members

Submission to the 2021 Regional Telecommunications Review Committee

I write this submission to the 2021 Regional Telecommunications Review Committee on behalf of Hornsby Shire Council.

The peri-urban areas of Hornsby district have consistently received sub-standard telecommunications services over many years. The combination of a significant number of mobile black spots, multiple areas with no more than 3G coverage and no or very limited access to the Internet, has caused significant stress for many residents and businesses and put lives at risk in emergency periods.

This issue has been particularly stressful during the COVID pandemic with lockdowns requiring people to work from home and school students restricted to remote online learning. The lockdown period has seen increased strain on already limited broadband services with multiple members of households seeking to work and learn from home. The telecommunications services delivered in our area have been inadequate in a lockdown.

As we approach summer we are particularly concerned about mobile blackspots. Our fire prone area has been put at great risk during recent fire seasons because of inadequate communications infrastructure. Like the RFS and SES Council's operations have been hampered by inadequate telecommunications. Council workers are also required to carry satellite phones for their own safety in some areas due to poor reception. This is disappointing given that this is an area only 40 minutes' drive from the Sydney city centre.

The combination of unreliable mobile phone service and inadequate broadband services in this area is a source of immense concern for the communities and businesses in this area.

Our area is not currently receiving adequate or reliable telecommunication services. Please consider our area's need for improved mobile phone coverage, reduction of mobile blackspots and provision of adequate broadband services in our community.

Yours sincerely



Steven Head
General Manager