

[REDACTED]

29th September 2021

The Secretariat
Regional Telecommunications Review
Australian Government
([REDACTED])

Dear Secretariat

In response to your request for submissions on telecommunication issues I feel impelled to describe my current situation on my farm at Toongi which is close to Dubbo NSW. My name is Royce Munro. I am 78 year old and run sheep on a 1200 hectare grazing property. While I have only been at this location for six years I hitherto managed a large family farm at a nearby location for many decades. During this time I performed a lot of administrative work and thereby became reasonably adept with telecommunications as they have been from time to time.

Since running the present business I have experienced numerous problems in regard to the quality of services provided by Telstra. In particular during the course of the current year these services have deteriorated to the extent I cannot run my business efficiently.

The internet signal I am now receiving is so bad I cannot use the internet satisfactorily for the usual purposes necessary in business. With Outlook I often cannot download emails because the speed is too slow. At other times I have to wait a frustratingly long period. I often cannot transfer an email to a selected file. Sometimes they seem to simply get lost.

Likewise with websites the signal is often too slow for me to be able to use them. For example I have great difficulty using Auction Plus which has become the dominant platform for trading livestock, machinery and almost anything else to do with agriculture. Obviously I am severely disadvantaged when compared to those who receive better signals. I have lost hundreds of hours trying to persevere with the poor quality service. Such a situation is exasperating and distressing.

Attempts to have my services improved have not been successful. The staff in Telstra shops do not seem to be able to help. Recently I purchased a booster from Telstra and installed it on the roof of the building here. This made no improvement at all. I am told there are antenna's which can improve signals where they are weak or slow.

Also I took my computer to a private expert who checked it and found there was basically nothing wrong.

I also have landline that failed months ago. Upon reporting the fault to Telstra again at the shop it was logged for attention. Nothing has been done to fix the problem.

The mobile service here is reasonable in most places but this too seems to have deteriorated in recent times. Often a conversation is truncated because of the variability of the signal.

Telstra is the only service provider available here though others can be used closer to the city.

Neighbours in the region seem to have similar problems. Some have gone to a satellite service namely Skymuster and perhaps this is what I will have to do. My son in London informs me he will pay for subscription to Starlink which seems to cove the whole world.

As for the service I receive from Telstra it is simply not good enough. The shops are good at selling new products or signing me up to a new plan but not helpful if they don't work properly. To find out from somewhere else in the organisation what my problem is and how to fix it is very difficult to do. It seems if they sell me a service that cannot be provided then that is my problem not theirs.

As for finding out why the signal I receive has deteriorated is almost impossible. I am not a technical person and there is no means known by me where I can receive such information from.

In this the third decade of the twenty first century I have worse communications than I had forty years ago.

Yours faithfully

Royce G S Munro