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To whom it may concern,

I am writing to you regarding the 2021 Regional Telecommunications Review.

Obtaining adequate internet and mobile service at Murray Downs has been a constant challenge for many years.

Telecommunications is at the core of everything we do – from the way we work to using critical services like telehealth and education, accessing government information, and contacting emergency services.

We operate an I.T company here in Murray Downs and rely heavily on the internet and mobile services to assist our clients. Landline NBN is not available in our area and the Telstra 4G Mobile Service has a weak signal and is very expensive to maintain. We are currently spending approximately \$400 per month to achieve enough data to run our business.

Satellite internet is a last resort option because it does not meet the needs of businesses and families. Some businesses and households are spending up to \$120 per month for only 100 Gig of data then being charged \$10 per gig if they go over. Some clients have reported spending up to \$250 month to get adequate data for their business and home-schooling needs.

Murray Downs Golf & Country Club is major business here is Murray Downs is trying to run it business on an ADSL connection which is creating massive issues with its communications and linking of its clubs in town. Quotation to get Fibre to the premises exceeded \$100,000. The club is investigating alternatives which could potentially cost them between \$500 & \$700 per month to get adequate internet. If the club was in Swan Hill this would only cost them \$99 per month.

We provide critical IT services and rely on the internet to provide remote support, downloading programs, research and purchasing products for several businesses and families in the Swan Hill, Murray Downs area.

Due to the current circumstances with Covid and the restrictions we have several clients and businesses operating from home. Home schooling has been extremely challenging for children and families without reliable internet services.

We depend on the internet for everyday task such as banking, supplier payments, accessing information, telehealth appointments, government information and other online communications.

There is little to no mobile service in our businesses and homes with calls constantly dropping or not getting through and we are only 3Kms to town. Due to the poor mobile receptions some families have resorted to purchasing CELFI mobile reception boosters costing up to \$1800 fully installed.

Murray Downs is a growing community with is population set to double in the coming years. There are new proposed housing estate becoming available and unfortunately the lack of internet options and poor mobile service will be a real issue.

Local developers are now planning new subdivisions on the back of the now-viable option of working from home with a massive surge in metropolitan-based families anxious to move to the regions. However, that cohort will not accept second-rate internet connection as that is key and central to their ability to work from home, quite apart from the fact that they now take high speed internet for granted given their metropolitan experience.

There are two new developments at Murray Downs - one of 48 lots on the golf course and another of 37 + 14 lots on the Murray River, that have previously had Development Applications approved but not proceeded due in part to the lack of viable internet services. There is a further 100 lot development in the immediate pipeline to follow directly behind the 48-lot subdivision above and yet another 14 lots already designed as an extension of the

riverfront subdivision. Collectively the first stage of this expansion program (48 + 37 + 14 lots) will approximately double the village population and the following developments (100 + 14) will give the village a greater than 200% growth over the next few years, but only if the internet & mobile reception crisis can be resolved.

Murray Downs village stands on the precipice of achieving its potential in terms of community growth but can only achieve this if it is provided with viable internet & mobile services.

I would be happy to discuss further. I can be contacted by mobile or email

Regards



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