



18 June 2020

RE: Mobile Blackspots Program

To whom it may concern:

I am writing to lend my full support to the application from the **Splitters Creek Fire Brigade** and **Bungowannah Rural Fire Brigade** for their communities to be considered for inclusion in the Mobile Blackspot Program.

Both of these areas have significant mobile phone blackspots. This creates a situation where both communities are at substantial risk in the event of an emergency.

Solving this blackspot problem is particularly relevant for two reasons:

1. It will facilitate better access for members of the public to call 000. Currently, there are many residents who have no coverage and some who have patchy or intermittent coverage. The current lack of coverage also hampers emergency response and brigade communications.
2. The lack of mobile coverage also renders many of the NSWRFs dispatch technologies inoperable, including but not limited to the NSWRFs principle form of notification being a paging system, utilizing the BART software suite. This suite uses SMS and emails as important tools for communication during emergencies.

I note that Round 5A of the funding program will allocate funding to areas that are highly prone to natural disasters, including bushfire prone or affected areas.

On this basis, I commend strongly that the **Splitters Creek** and **Bungowannah** communities be considered for inclusion in the program.

Thank you for your consideration of this application.

Yours sincerely,

Justin Clancy MP
Member for Albury





NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE

D/Group Capt. Ian Avage
Via email

Your reference
Our reference

NSW RFS Southern Border Team

19/06/20

Dear Mr Avage

Confirmation of Representation

I acknowledge that you have submitted a submission to the Mobile Black Spot Project as concerned brigade members.

This does not fully represent endorsement by the service, other than that the points raised are an accurate representation of the challenges faced by local brigades who's charter is to respond to local incidents and protect life and property.

It is not unique to the Emergency Service Sector, however the community as a whole, no doubt does have some impact from the inability to contact 000 in case of emergency.

The RFS communications systems remain independent from 3, 4 & 5G telecommunications infrastructure for the time being and it is not relied upon beyond the ability to augment existing independent operable systems that we use. As we move towards more data dependent technology, this will likely be a critical factor in the future.

I have sought some policy guidance on our corporate position in regards to these enquiries and will remain committed to any position that is stated, should or when it occurs.

Regards,

Supt. Patrick Westwood.

DM SBT NSW RFS

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New South Wales Rural Fire Service - Southern Border Team

Mobile Black Spot Program Round 5A

18th June 2020

To who it may concern,

As a NSWRFSS Group Officer working closely with both the Splitters Creek & Bungowannah Rural Fire Brigades & Communities, I fully support the application for consideration in the Mobile Blackspot program for the Splitters Creek / Bungowannah area. Both areas have a number of Black Spots within in them which from an emergency services aspect is unacceptable and places both communities at a substantial risk in the event of an incident. It needs to be noted that the central CBD of Albury City is only 6 kms direct line from the Splitters Creek Fire station and Community Centre yet there is limited on no mobile phone reception.

The mobile phone tower issue is partly RFS response related for three reasons.

1. Facilitates better access for public to ring 000 with decent coverage. Currently, there are many residents who have no coverage, and some who have patchy or intermittent coverage. This creates additional risk for the community in terms of having the emergency rung through on 000. The lack of coverage then hampers the activation of emergency response and brigade communications where mobile phones are utilized.
2. The lack of mobile coverage also renders many of the dispatch technologies inoperable, such as Bart / data terminals. As the rollout of these technologies become the norm, the potential risks increase for the community of Splitters Creek & Bungowannah unless mobile coverage can be resolved.
3. Some emergency warnings / alerts use mobile coverage to disseminate vital information to the public such as: leave now, too late to leave shelter in place and the likes.

With an estimated population of approximately 600 persons in the combined areas of Splitters Creek & Bungowannah, these communities maybe reliant on notifications noted in point 3 at some point in time.

With reference to the Blackspot criteria, I have highlighted key elements below. This highlights the importance of the consideration for Splitters Creek & Bungowannah mobile coverage remediation.

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High priority natural disaster-prone areas including those affected or prone to bushfire



The 2019 / 2020 bushfires have again demonstrated the valuable role mobile services can play during the response and recovery to a disaster event. It is proposed that the first component of Round 5A will allocate funding to areas that are highly prone to natural disasters, with a focus on macro cell base stations

Key design points

Eligible areas—Round 5A will seek to improve coverage in natural disaster-prone areas including:

bushfire prone or affected areas:

high fire danger zone and 1-way access

flood prone areas

emergency disaster coordination zones

rural and regional emergency service premises:

limited Telstra coverage with a booster – no coverage for other carriers (Optus, Vodafone)

evacuation and assembly points:

Place of last resort for local residents

Neighborhood Safer Place located at Splitters Creek Community Centre / Fire Station

Endorsement—The applicant must provide a letter of endorsement from the relevant:

State or Territory Government:

Letter of Support – Justin Clancy MP

Emergency Service Organization:

Letter of Endorsement NSWRF Southern Border Team District Manger, Letter of Support Bungowannah Rural Fire Brigade Captain, Splitters Creek Rural Fire Brigade Captain

We look forward to your support.

Many Thanks

Ian Avage

Deputy Group Officer – Group 4 Southern Border Team



NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE



Splitters Creek Rural Fire Brigade

Mobile Black Spot Program Round 5A

18/6/2020

To who it may concern,

As the Captain of Splitters Creek Fire Brigade, I fully support the application for consideration in the Mobile Blackspot program for Bungowannah, the mobile phone tower issue is partly RFS response related for three reasons.

1. Facilitates better access for public to ring 000 with decent coverage. Currently, there are many residents who have no coverage, and some who have patchy or intermittent coverage. This creates additional risk for the community in terms of having the emergency rung through on 000. The lack of coverage then hampers the activation of emergency response and brigade communications where mobile phones are utilized.
2. The lack of mobile coverage also renders many of the dispatch technologies inoperable, such as Bart / data terminals. As the rollout of these technologies become the norm, the potential risks increase for the community of Splitters Creek unless mobile coverage can be resolved.
3. Some emergency warnings / alerts use mobile coverage to disseminate vital information to the public such as: leave now, too late to leave shelter in place and the likes.

With reference to the Blackspot criteria, I have highlighted key elements below. This highlights the importance of the consideration for Splitters Creek mobile coverage remediation.

a. High priority natural disaster-prone areas including those affected or prone to bushfire

The 2019 / 2020 bushfires have again demonstrated the valuable role mobile services can play during the notification, response and recovery to a disaster event. It is proposed that the first component of Round 5A will allocate funding to areas that are highly prone to natural disasters, with a focus on macro cell base stations.

Key design points

Eligible areas—Round 5A will seek to improve coverage in natural disaster-prone areas including:

bushfire prone or affected areas:



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high fire danger zone and 1 way in / out access

flood prone areas

emergency disaster coordination zones

rural and regional emergency service premises:

Splitters Creek Fire Station / Community Centre - limited Telstra coverage with a brigade funded booster – no coverage for other carriers (Optus, Vodaphone)

evacuation and assembly points:

Designated Neighborhood Safer Place at Spliters Creek Community Centre / Fire Station

Endorsement —The applicant must provide a letter of endorsement from the relevant:
State or Territory Government:

Letter of Support – Justin Clancy MP

Emergency Service Organization:

NSWRFS support via NSWRFS Deputy Group Captain

We look forward to your support.

Many Thanks

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Wayne Fraser'.

Wayne Fraser

Captain - Spitters Creek Rural Fire Brigade



NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE



Bungowannah Rural Fire Brigade

Mobile Black Spot Program Round 5A

18/6/2020

To who it may concern,

As the Captain of Bungowannah Fire Brigade, I fully support the application for consideration in the Mobile Blackspot program for Bungowannah, the mobile phone tower issue is partly RFS response related for three reasons.

1. Facilitates better access for public to ring 000 with decent coverage. Currently, there are many residents who have no coverage, and some who have patchy or intermittent coverage. This creates additional risk for the community in terms of having the emergency rung through on 000. The lack of coverage then hampers the activation of emergency response and brigade communications where mobile phones are utilized.
2. The lack of mobile coverage also renders many of the dispatch technologies inoperable, such as Bart / data terminals. As the rollout of these technologies become the norm, the potential risks increase for the community of Bungowannah unless mobile coverage can be resolved.
3. Some emergency warnings / alerts use mobile coverage to disseminate vital information to the public such as: leave now, too late to leave shelter in place and the likes.

With reference to the Blackspot criteria, I have highlighted key elements below. This highlights the importance of the consideration for Bungowannah mobile coverage remediation.

a. High priority natural disaster-prone areas including those affected or prone to bushfire

The 2019 / 2020 bushfires have again demonstrated the valuable role mobile services can play during the notification, response and recovery to a disaster event. It is proposed that the first component of Round 5A will allocate funding to areas that are highly prone to natural disasters, with a focus on macro cell base stations.

Key design points

Eligible areas—Round 5A will seek to improve coverage in natural disaster-prone areas including:

bushfire prone or affected areas:

high fire danger zone



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rural and regional emergency service premises:

Bungowannah Fire Station - limited Telstra with no coverage for other carriers (Optus, Vodaphone)

evacuation and assembly points:

Bungowannah Fire Station

Endorsement —The applicant must provide a letter of endorsement from the relevant:

State or Territory Government:

Letter of Support – Justin Clancy MP

Emergency Service Organization:

NSWRFS support via NSWRFS Deputy Group Captain

We look forward to your support.

Many Thanks

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G Starr', written over a horizontal line.

Graham Starr

Captain - Bungowannah Rural Fire Brigade

Splitters Creek Community

Mobile Black Spot Program

1/6/2020

To whom it may concern,

As a Splitters Creek residents, we strongly support the Mobile Blackspot program and propose the urgent need for mobile coverage across the Splitters Creek Valley. As a semi-rural community of approximately 500 residents 10kms west of Albury, NSW there are a number of significant factors which would support a mobile tower or base-station implementation to service the valley of Splitters Creek as follows;

- The area is prone to high Fire risk, with only one road in (and out) of the community.
- The Splitters Creek Valley support the Splitters Creek Fire Brigade – a dedicate volunteer team who have mobile phone requirements.
- There are a mix of professional and semi professional residents in the valley who would benefit from reliance mobile phone coverage.
- A number of older residents would benefit from improved connectivity with services and loved ones.

COVID19 has highlighted the challenges of working from home with no mobile coverage. The risk is significantly higher in the summer months due to bush fire threat. Mobile phone coverage in Splitters Creek will make a real difference for families, businesses and emergency services, living and working in remote communities have better connectivity.

We look forward to your support.

Many Thanks



Phil Paterson

Spitters Creek Resident