

7 August 2018

Regional Telecommunications Independent Review Committee
C/o Department of Communications and the Arts

By email: secretariat@rtirc.gov.au

Dear Committee,

I attach Telstra's submission to the Regional Telecommunications Review, and commend you for the comprehensive consultations you have undertaken with regional communities. We look forward to the translation of community views into your findings and recommendations.

As you know, we participated in every one of those consultations. As a result of what we heard, we have augmented our answers to the specific questions in the discussion paper with some additional views that we hope are helpful to you.

In our view, telecommunications availability is steadily improving for regional customers overall as a result of sustained public and private investment over recent years, but there is always more to do and significant barriers to full connectivity remain. In summary:

- Telstra, and the telecommunications industry more broadly, continues to invest in widening and deepening telecommunications infrastructure in regional areas, particularly mobile infrastructure.
- Public investment in the NBN has led to the availability of good broadband services for the first time in some areas, although specific problems with the performance, affordability and differential treatment of regional and metro NBN services do need to be addressed.
- Improving connectivity is not enough by itself – regional communities need targeted assistance to develop the skills necessary to take full advantage of broadband and mobility and the increasing range of value-adding services they offer.
- The industry is working to improve not just access to broadband but also information for consumers on the different types and mix of services available in different areas, in order to improve their ability to make good choices and take advantage of competition.

My team and I would be delighted to provide any further explanation of the material in our submission that you would find beneficial. In the meantime I wish you all the best in your deliberations.

Yours sincerely,



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Chief Sustainability Officer
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