



MacDonnell
Regional Council

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Attention:

Productivity Commission

www.pc.gov.au/inquiries/current/telecommunications/terms-of-reference

To Whom It May Concern

TELECOMMUNICATIONS UNIVERSAL SERVICE OBLIGATION

Input provided as requested :

1. The current network configuration in MacDonnell Regional Council is as follows :

- a. Satellite Connected Communities – 8
- b. 4 Meg/ADSL, 3 or 4 G Sites – 5

Total 13 Communities – Upgrades Planned as follows (under the Government Black Spot Program which will take up to 3 years to complete)

- (1) Of the 8 on Satellite, 6 will be upgraded to 3-4 G However 2 communities will remain on Satellite services
- (2) The Other 5 Communities on varying degrees of Mobile services will be aligned to a corporate service

2. For the USO to meet all standards it will need to consist of

- a. The agreement will need to continue to provide services that are considered Outdated (Fixed Line Services – Payphones – Faxes) at least until the new setup is fully operational and tested (3 Years Minimum)
- b. The agreement will also need to provide reference to All New Technologies that are being implemented
- c. Although NBN is great in Most Major Centres – There is not much benefit of it out in Remote Communities, and doesn't appear to be unless they go to a NBN Satellite Connection – Via one of the NBN Application processes

- d. Most of this appears to have been considered however it really needs to be addressed in this forum
3. In Relation to the Government Black Spot Program
 - a. Some Communities seem to benefit from this however those that don't are still growing in size and population and deserve to be included – even if it is a little further down the track
 - b. Areyonga and Kintore are two of our communities that do not get the Black Spot support at Present and they are the two communities with the worst satellite reception in the Northern Territory.
4. The recommended solution
 - a. Increase the Government Black Spot program to include the above two communities – So that they will all have 3 or 4 G Access – Mobile and Data
 - b. Improve all the networks across the NT – in all communities so it shows a broad brush stroke to assist with the issues
5. Satellite is not necessarily the Solution as the Satellite connections in the NT are currently totally overloaded – Oversubscribed. This is just going to make the current situation worse.

PP

Peter Blythman

ICT Manager

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