

With reference to the Telecommunications USO Draft Report, please accept the following as my submission. How many lives do we need to lose in the remote parts of Australia, before the powers that be finds it necessary for us to have fixed land lines. Any system reliant on power is not good enough for emergencies. I have met with a telecommunications guru in Canberra last year who suggested that "you are all big girls in the bush, you should be able to start the generator and get the power going?" to make a phone call over the net???? I'd love to challenge a few of the decision makers to do a bit of time in our shoes, and run over to the shed in the middle of a storm, leaving your frightened kids in the house, check for brown snakes, and then try and start an old back up engine to get the power going. Please realise that this land line is our lifeline, and is a necessity for our existence in the bush. Spend the money on the mobile phone service for full coverage Australia wide, or come up with an affordable fixed land line system. BUT PLEASE don't take this away from us.