

Following on from the recent devastating bushfire at Coolah I am writing to state the urgency of a Telstra tower to be put up, ASAP to cover the Uabry area. My husband started work as Manager of Tongy Station (11,500 acres) only one week prior to the Sir Ivan bushfire which burnt 135,000 acres, livestock and fences. When we moved we were stunned that there was no mobile reception in the area – none at all. We have an expensive mobile booster box in our house – which is ok when we have power and it only works within the house – useless when there is a blackout, of which there are many. Roger has been used to doing most of his business on his mobile phone during the day on the motorbike, tractor or ute. It is astounding that in 2017 that he has to come home to make a phone call – very inefficient on an operation this size. After the fire, in all the aftermath trying to organize a million things to get back on track, the lack of mobile reception is even more frustrating and debilitating. We are not in Outback Qld where the population is small - we are in a populated area - 4 hours from Sydney. Prior to the fire our stationhand had a fall from his horse and had to walk 5km with a broken collar bone for assistance. It is a dangerous enough workplace let alone having no mobile phone reception. We pay for our mobile phone plans and can't really use them! Two days after the fire my husband and owner went to town and 351 missed calls and messages all came through at once. The calls were made DURING the fire. I was evacuated into town and for 6 hours I had no idea if they were OK as they stayed at the fire to defend the property. I was told they had evacuated and that the whole property had been wiped out, they were uncontactable. The 150 year old homestead burnt, probably as no-one could be called for assistance. So, please consider this application favourably before there is a car or farm accident and emergency services cannot be contacted. Thank you in advance.