

Mistake Creek Area Progress Assoc. Inc.
P.O. Box 274
CLERMONT QLD 4721
ABN: 41 887 737 038

Friday 27th January, 2017

To:
Telecommunications Universal Services Obligation Inquiry
Productivity Commission
G.P.O. 1428
CANBERRA CITY ACT 2601

SUBMISSION

To the Telecommunications Universal Service Obligation Draft Inquiry Report

The Mistake Creek Area Progress Association Inc. Members wish to lodge our objection to the removal of the Telecommunications Universal Service Obligation. Our members believe that this is totally unacceptable for regional, rural and remote telephone services.

The right to a standard telephone service is essential, as there is no mobile phone coverage for the majority of our members. Therefore, we depend solely on fixed radio telephones services to conduct our businesses and educate our children.

The standard telephones which are currently being used, have proven to be more reliable than satellite during bad weather events. When and if an incident occurs where safety is paramount, we have the ability to communicate with emergency services using our landlines. In our area we can endure long periods without mains power due to storms or fires effecting powerlines. VOIP services proposed to replace the existing Landline phones require power to operate.

Our local area includes the Mistake Creek State School located 65kms southwest of Clermont, Queensland with an enrolment of approx. 16 students. The mobile phone coverage cuts off approx. 15kms from Clermont. The greater school community relies on fixed landlines (and UHF radios in the case of an emergency) for the majority of their communication purposes.

The USO should be improved regarding the telephone service fault restoration times. Service outages seem to be more frequent, due to the aging infrastructure, reduced maintenance and the lack of skilled staff (technicians) to carry out repairs in rural and remote areas.