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Contact: Therese Manns

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Secretariat
Australian Government
Regional Telecommunications Review

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Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to make submission towards the 2011-2012 Regional Telecommunications Independent Review.

Your website states that the Australian Government aims, by 2020 that Australia will be among the world's leading digital economies. Unfortunately many of our residents in rural areas do not feel that they are keeping pace let alone leading.

Boorowa Local Government Area contains a large expanse of agricultural land that is not able to access mobile telephone coverage. (Please see map attached) The farming area of Reids Flat in the Boorowa Local Government Area contribute millions of dollars in export income to the Australian economy.

To most of us mobile phone coverage has become essential particularly in business places. Primary production is a business that is mobile, our farmers don't sit in offices with landlines; they are in the paddocks.

Primary Producers in areas without mobile telephone coverage feel they are being left behind technology while the world is becoming more efficient. They are unable to use applications many of us consider essential and mainstream.

The practicalities of primary production in non coverage areas affect not only primary producers but those doing business with primary producers. This includes transport operators, agents and other business associates who rely on mobile phone coverage.

Business in general has become more cost efficient through use of technology, there is a definite productivity contrast between those farmers who enjoy mobile coverage and those that don't. This impact not only on profitability and competition but will also have a negative impact on land values.

Prospective employees including essential seasonal staff are not interested in working in areas without technology. Primary producers in non coverage areas have experienced this issue first hand. This problem will only worsen in the future as Generations Y and Z and those to follow now demand instant communication. Further this will hamper succession planning.

It is understood that satellite services are available however these services are less than desirable and more costly.

In December 2010, our local government area suffered a natural disaster which saw much of the non coverage area flooded and isolated. Land lines were down for two weeks and there was no communication ability for those in the flooded area. Rescue and knowledge of the safety status of those residents was hampered by lack of telecommunication ability.


On a social level, as we are all aware, primary producers suffer isolation and this often results in rural suicide. Advanced telecommunications keep people connected and can only assist with isolation.

As the dates draw closer towards digital television the rural residents in our area fear the reduction of service rather than an enhanced service.

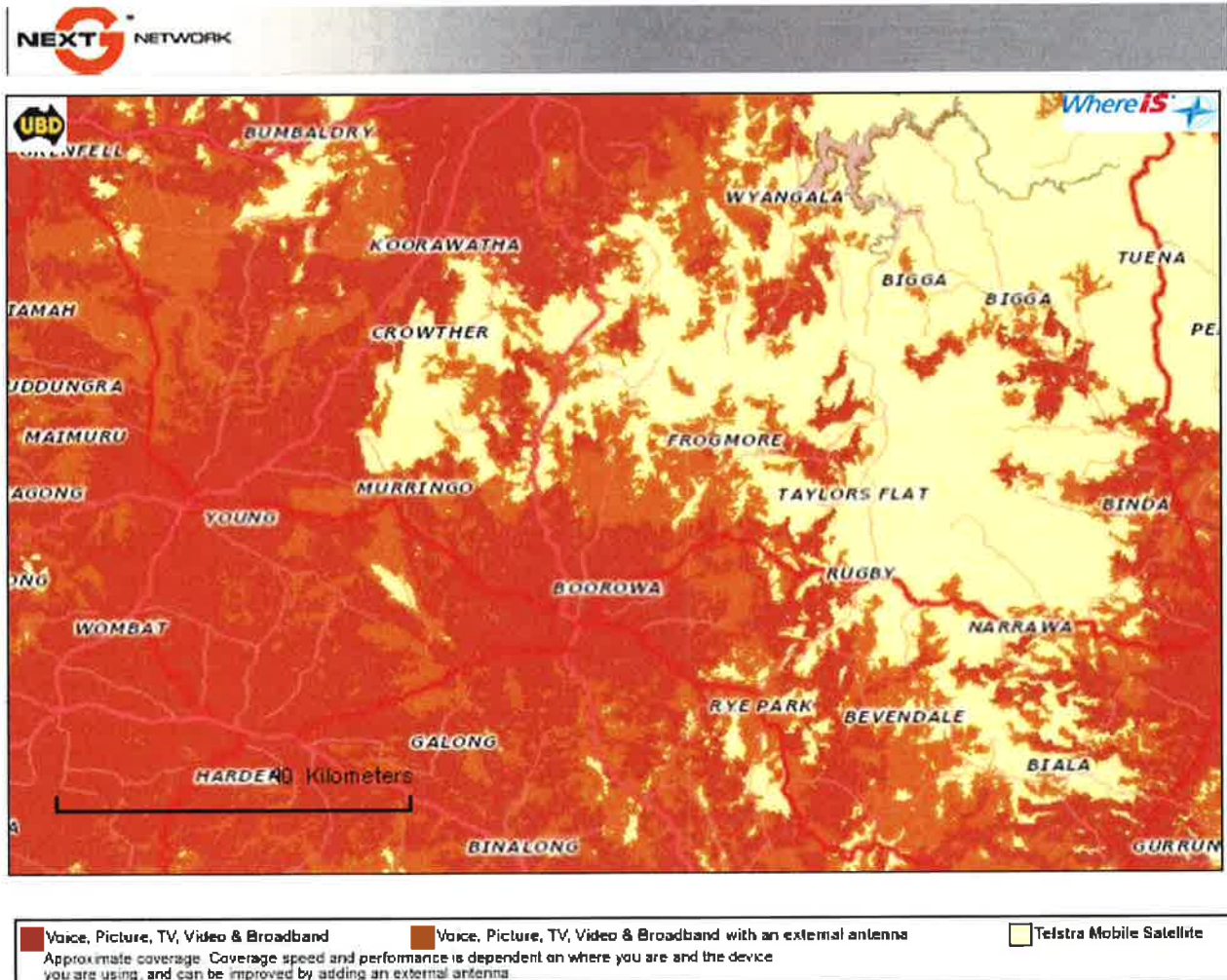
In addition, the rural community is unaware of how they will benefit from the NBN roll out, whilst seeing its benefits; they are concerned about access and the cost of that access. In addition, flexibility and ability to access mobile telecommunications is always a concern.

As part of your review, I would strongly encourage you to consider incentives for telecommunication providers to extend their mobile coverage to our primary producers and assist the future of primary production in today's modern world.

Yours faithfully



Therese Manns
General Manager



Disclaimer

All mobile devices have been tested to operate within the coverage contours of the displayed coverage maps. Mobile device coverage depends on where you are, the device you are using and whether it has an external antenna attached. For tips on maximising your coverage, visit the [Maximise Your Coverage](#) page.

Customers should be aware that the Telstra mobile coverage maps displayed have been created using tools that predict the likely areas of coverage. Not every particular location within the identified coverage areas has been individually tested for coverage. This means that while the footprint of coverage outlined on the maps is generally accurate, there will be specific areas described as being within a coverage area where a customer's device will not work. This is a common characteristic of wireless systems. For example, coverage could be degraded or not exist in specific locations due to certain physical structures or geographic features or as a result of the device used. Physical structures which may block or inhibit coverage could include basements, lifts, underground car parks, concrete buildings, tunnels and road cuttings. Geographic features which may block or inhibit coverage could include formations such as hills and mountains or even trees.

Customers should also be aware the Telstra mobile coverage maps also may indicate planned coverage expansions of the Telstra mobile network. Coverage planned for the future is based on Telstra's rollout schedule. Telstra reserves the right to modify this schedule without notice, as required from time to time.

Data speeds experienced on Telstra's mobile networks may be affected by network availability, the type and configuration of customer equipment, the performance of external networks (for example the Internet), the signal strength of the device used and other factors such as the type of application.

The offshore coverage shown is only indicative of where a Next G® device may operate. Factors beyond Telstra's control such as the weather, tides, sea conditions and the customer's installation (type and height of antenna above sea level) can significantly influence the actual user experience of coverage, data speed and performance. Public mobile networks must not be relied upon as a primary method of emergency communication at sea.

For more information about Telstra coverage, visit www.telstra.com.au/mobile or call Customer Service on 125 111*

* Call charges apply

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