

Thursday, 8 December 2011

RTIRC Secretariat (DBCDE)

GPO Box 2154,

CANBERRA, ACT, 2601.

**Re: Submission from the Cardwell District – Broadband Access**

Earlier this year, Cardwell was devastated by Cyclone Yasi. As a result of this devastating storm, many residents of Cardwell decided to leave the district as they saw little opportunity staying. Given that the recovery process will take some years to complete, the community is developing strategies to attract people to move back to the district.

One of these strategies is to enable the growing number of Tele-workers to move to the district. This can only be achieved if Cardwell has reliable high speed Broadband services. Not only would this service enable this strategy, but would also make it attractive for the younger generation to remain in the district and continue their studies via distance education programs.

Providing Cardwell with a fixed wireless Broadband service would demonstrate that NBN Co. is committed to Cardwell's recovery and could be used as a showcase for the fixed wireless service for other remote communities throughout Australia.

The current state of access to Broadband services being experienced by residents of the Cardwell District was discussed at the December 6th meeting of the Cardwell District Community Association. Issues discussed include;

- A fixed wireless service would benefit households more than 5,000 metres from the Cardwell exchange. Currently they are not able to access affordable and reliable broadband services. Most are relying on dial-up and mobile broadband services.

- Cardwell has two fibre optic backbones running along the main street and the railway line, and thus becomes a prime candidate for the NBN fixed wireless rollout: fibre-to-the-node and node-to-wireless.
- A fixed wireless service located in Cardwell could service areas south and north of Cardwell that presently have no Broadband access – Bilyana, Camu, Carruchan, Dallachy, Ellerbeck, Jumbun, Kennedy Valley and Stoney Creek.
- A fixed wireless service could provide ad-hoc emergency communications throughout the district during disasters: ie. cyclone events

Benefits to the Cardwell district of introducing faster, more reliable Broadband services include:

- Improved Indigenous Community Access
- E-Health (relating to a large proportion of elderly residents)
- Distance Education
- Tele-working
- Remote Environmental Monitoring
- Ad-Hoc Disaster Communication

I look forward to the NBN Co fast tracking the Cardwell district as a prime candidate for a fixed wireless Broadband service in the near future.

Glenn W. Raleigh

Chairman - Cardwell District Community Association, Inc.

[REDACTED]

Cardwell, QLD, 4849.

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APPENDIX 1: Existing Communication Towers:

Cardwell Exchange Balliol Street CARDWELL QLD 4849

Cardwell RT Bruce Highway CARDWELL QLD 4849  
Telstra: CARDWELL RT (56162) at Five Mile Creek

DPI Reservoir, off Gregory St CARDWELL QLD 4849  
Vodafone: Cardwell (4542)

Channel Seven TV Ellerbeck QLD 4849  
Telstra: Mulleys Hill (54842)

Red Hill, Lot 5 Bruce Hwy CARDWELL QLD 4816  
Telstra: Kennedy (KDCC)  
Optus: Kennedy (4631)  
Vodafone: Kennedy (4672)

119 Upper Murray Rd West of Bruce Hwy TULLY QLD 4854  
Telstra: Tully (58120)  
Optus: Tully South (4210)