



Government of **Western Australia**  
Department of **Health**  
WA Country Health Service

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Dear RTIRC Secretariat

**Re: Regional Telecommunications Review, Western Australia Country Health Service (WACHS)**

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to the 2011 – 2012 Regional Telecommunication review.

- WACHS uses ICT technologies for patient information systems, Internet, corporate applications, voice calls and Telehealth.
- WACHS would expect the National Broadband Network to deliver affordable high speed broadband bandwidth to remote locations where currently only low bandwidths are available.
- Lack of high speed terrestrial infrastructure in remote locations presently restricts access and ultimately the services that can be delivered.
- The cost of installing 2-way satellite services (Quoted \$9,000.00 PM) for a 1Mb link) is inhibitive. Latency issues with satellite make it unsuitable for videoconferencing.
- No terrestrial infrastructure exists into most Indigenous Communities resulting in limited ability to deliver health services such as patient information systems and Telehealth.
- Where terrestrial infrastructure is available, frequently the capital cost is too high for agencies to implement. For example, to extend a fibre connection at a Primary school in the Kimberly to the health clinic 500 metres away, the carrier quoted \$65,000.
- The Regional Mobile Communications Project will fill in some black spots in relation to mobile phone coverage, however many parts of regional and remote WA will remain without cover.
- Telehealth is integral to improving access to health services in rural and remote locations for both patients and health workers. The WA Telehealth program is undergoing significant investment and development

Yours faithfully

Ian Smith  
**CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

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*Working together for a healthier country WA*