

Ruth Weatherall

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

North Star, NSW, 2408

December 10, 2011

RTIRC Secretariat

secretariat@rtirc.gov.au

Re: Regional Telecommunications Independent Review

Dear RTIRC Secretariat:

I am writing to express my concern as to the current telecommunication options and services available in the area surrounding the township of North Star. I live at Yallaroi, a locality approximately 30 kilometers south from the village of North Star. We are located approximately 90 kilometers from the NSW/QLD border, and approximately 120 kilometers from Moree. Given our regional locality, we experience significant difficulties with various telecommunication services.

Mobile phone service in our area, can be nonexistent at times, and at best can be described as patchy. The closest mobile tower is approximately 25 kilometers away and despite this the mobile service at our house is poor. I can receive a text inside my house but have to go outside to send one. To talk using the mobile phone requires me to walk a distance from the house to the chook house- which as you can imagine is not always convenient.

Our **landline service** is often crackly, and despite Telstra's repeated efforts to rectify this, as soon as it rains the crackle in the phone line appears again.

Satellite broadband is also relatively expensive, unreliable, and slow. On days with heavy cloud cover it is reminiscent of using dial-up internet. Those in rural locations are forced into paying higher prices, given the lack of alternative forms of access and it seems unlikely that our community will gain any benefit from the **National Broadband Scheme**. But while ever the NBN is under discussion, it is difficult to see money being spent to upgrade our current access to ADSL.

We also seem to fall into a black hole in regards **Digital television and radio** signal. Despite having the appropriate equipment to access television stations some channels are difficult to see clearly. Whilst this does not hugely impact on our lifestyle, it contributes to a bigger picture of inadequate access. This region contributes a great deal to the national economy, and yet we continue to receive adequate telecommunications options.

Sincerely,

Ruth Weatherall

