

RTIRC- SUBMISSION

I am putting in the submission on behalf of the North Star Branch of the Country Women's Association.

We use the internet, telephones and other telecommunications between members of the branch and to do business.

Most of the members take part in the digital economy, when possible.

As a branch we have used telecommunications services to communicate with Federal Members, and with State Members of Parliament and also our local Shire Council.

As our mail services are not really good, a lot of our communication is by internet.

We use internet to find out about programs and funding that may be available, and to make submissions. Most banking transactions are by internet.

It would be good if the information was clearer, and the forms not quite so difficult to fill in, but mainly that access to the internet is very slow, particularly in the village of North Star. However I must congratulate you on this information, and suggestions for the submission.

Our local school has a major problem Internet access is very slow, and even though there is an optic cable running past the school, it is not connected to this.

At the moment the school has 2 way satellite access, which makes it very difficult when a number of children are trying to get access at the one time. If the weather is stormy then access to the satellite is intermittent.

As an organisation we have only used internet access as individuals for education.

North Star is a small village, but has a very active community, 100kms north of Moree, and 80 north west of Warialda. It is a highly productive agricultural area, where good communication is vital for an efficient and economic future.

Mobile phone coverage is hopeless. It is difficult to get in North Star itself, and for a lot of us it is not available in our homes. The general public seems to think it odd that we can only use our mobile phones in the vehicles, or when we are in certain spots in the village or on the road. We have made many complaints about the lack of service, however it is usually just that' we must be in a bad spot.'

Actually many people living in rural and remote areas,(villages & on properties) feel they don't have any rights. There are not enough of us to count.