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Submission – “Broadband Connect & Clever Networks”

I am a rural/regional Telstra customer located some 2 kilometres from Goolmangar telephone exchange, which itself, is located some 10 kilometres from the City of Lismore in northern New South Wales.

Goolmangar telephone exchange is serviced by optical fibre cable, which coincidentally runs through my property.

My telephone service is quite new, having been installed some 12 months ago.

In my day to day activities as a senior member of an international community service organization, I use telephone, fax & a dial up internet service.

Despite what, by all accounts is an up to date telephone service in all aspects, I along with all other Goolmangar customers, currently am unable to access broadband.

To compound the situation, & despite being only some 8 kilometres from the largest regional City on the NSW north coast, I also have a limited mobile telephone access.

I recently provided to the Telstra Countrywide office in Lismore, an “expression of interest” list of some 60 customers in Goolmangar telephone area who are interested in accessing a broadband service.

Goolmangar telephone exchange services a large & diverse rural area in which a number of enterprises flourish.

The continued prosperity of these enterprises depends on up to date telecommunications & will continue to grow & flourish with the advent of a state of the art communication facility, i.e. broadband.

Some of the enterprises serviced by Goolmangar telephone include:

2 x Official Post Offices	2 x Community stores/shops
2 x Environmental Consultants	2 x Medical Practitioners
2 x Accountants	3 x Academics in post graduate study
2 x Light engineering facilities	2 x Piggeries
2 x Builders/Carpenters	

A Primary School	A recognized world class wood worker
An olive grower	A coffee grower & processor
A travel agent (works from home)	A heritage painter
An earth moving contractor	A cattle & general transport carrier
A world class forestry seedling production facility	
A rock quarry & road material processing facility	
A forage harvesting & hay making enterprise	

The above list does not take account of, or include, quite a number of farmers who carry on in their industry in a variety of disciplines including beef cattle production, banana growing, small crop production, macadamia growing & sub tropical fruit production.

The area is serviced by 2 school buses & there are some 60 primary & secondary school children whose studies would be greatly facilitated with the advent of a broadband communication service.

These children are in addition to those that attend Goolmangar Public School.

I submit to you that this area is quite typical of rural/regional Australia that is in need of access to a world class telecommunications service -:

Business people who use, & appreciate, a world class service telecommunications in their city/regional offices, find they lack continuity of that service once they return home & attempt to continue in a "work at home" scenario.

The general public relies on such a service in their day to day commercial & leisure activities, & yet return home to a service that is much less than satisfactory.

The majority of rural/regional primary & secondary children who attend a city/regional school, & who are accustomed to learning the benefits of broadband at their school, return home, like their parents, to struggle to continue their studies with a less than perfect telecommunications service.

The discussion paper also places some emphasis on the role of community or non profit organizations in our communities.

I know that from a personal perspective, as an incoming District Governor for an international community service organization, that I will find my task that much more difficult by not having access to a "state of the art" telecommunication service.

I am but one customer in an endless list that looks to the day when they are able to access, & use, a telecommunication facility that our city counterparts take very much for granted, & is the norm in their day to day activities.

I submit to you that the advent of a "state of the art" broadband communication facility to rural & regional Australia will continue to reap economic, & social, benefits long into my children's & grand children's future.

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cc.

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