

Mobile Coverage Programme Discussion Paper

Submission Cover Sheet

Submission Information	
This cover sheet should be attached to submissions made to the Department of Communications in relation to the Mobile Coverage Programme Discussion Paper.	
Contact Details	
Name of respondent:	Paul Henry, General Manager
Name of organisation:	Inverell Shire Council
Phone:	[REDACTED]
Email:	[REDACTED]
Website (if applicable):	
Date:	26.2.14
Confidentiality and privacy	
<p>All submissions and comments, or parts thereof, will be treated as non-confidential information unless specifically requested, and acceptable reasons should accompany each request. Email disclaimers will not be considered sufficient confidentiality requests.</p> <p>Respondents lodging a submission should be aware that submissions (excluding any information agreed to be treated as confidential information) will be made publicly available, including on the Department of Communications' website. Submissions and comments will be subject to freedom of information provisions. Despite a submission being identified as confidential or sensitive, submissions may be disclosed where authorised or required by law, or for the purpose of parliamentary processes.</p> <p>Do you want all or parts of the submission to be treated as confidential? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>If yes, identify below which parts of the submission are to be treated as confidential (and provide a reason):</i></p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 40px; width: 100%;"></div>	
<p>If the submission contains personal information of any third party individual, indicate on this Submission Cover Sheet if that third party individual has not consented to the publication of his or her personal information:</p> <p>Submission Instructions</p> <p>Submissions are to be made by 5:00pm (AEST) Friday 28 February 2014.</p> <p>Where possible, submissions should be lodged electronically, preferably in Microsoft Word or other text-based formats via the email address mobilecoverage@communications.gov.au</p> <p>Alternatively, submissions can be sent to the postal address below (to arrive by the due date):</p> <p style="text-align: center;">The Manager Mobile Coverage Programme Department of Communications GPO Box 2154 CANBERRA ACT 2615</p> <p>All submissions lodged will be acknowledged by the Department of Communications by email (or by letter if no email is provided). Respondents lodging a submission who do not receive acknowledgement of their submission should contact the Department. Submissions which are not acknowledged by the Department as being received may not be considered. Respondents should be aware that emails greater than 10Mb may not be successfully delivered.</p>	

Our Reference: S10.12.2

24 February, 2014

The Manager
Mobile Coverage Programme
Department of Communications
GPO Box 2154
CANBERRA ACT 2615

via email: mobilecoverage@communications.gov.au

Dear Sir

Re: Mobile Coverage Program

Council has considered the contents of the Discussion Paper at its February, 2014 Meeting and resolved to make comment on a number of issues raised by the Paper.

The issues that Council wishes to provide commentary on are;

1. Delivery Options

The option favoured by Council is Option 1.

The rationale used by Council to favour this option is;

- The areas of Australia that have inadequate mobile phone coverage are perceived to be those areas in which the pattern of mobile phone usage is less than that which would encourage the Mobile Network Operator (MNO) to provide a solution which does not need a Government Subsidy for infrastructure. Therefore, 'competitive tension' may not be present at sufficient levels to make option two (2) and three (3) viable options.
- A 'winner takes all' approach to the provision of a subsidy should encourage interest in providing a service at the priority listed sites determined by the Government. Other options proposed in the discussion paper may not generate the required level of interest to ensure all sites on the priority list of sites, receive a bid from a MNO.

Option one (1) is supported PROVIDED favourable access conditions for other MNO's are included as part of the Funding Agreement with the selected MNO. This is appropriate given the use of public funds to erect a tower that is owned/operated by one MNO. The capital costs of the tower is reduced and therefore the internal rate of return calculations for the chosen MNO needs to reflect this reduced cost.

2. Minimum Quality Standards

Council supports the minimum quality standard for any subsidised tower being 4GLTE Mobile Broadband data and high quality 3G Mobile voice and broadband data services. This is the current standard being delivered in most urban areas and it is appropriate that regional services are of this quality to ensure equity in the business and social settings.

3. \$20M Mobile Black Spots Project

Council notes that the \$80M component of the program contains criteria that deal with community safety and social inclusion issues. It is acknowledged that the number of nominated sites seeking funding will exceed the funding available to meet these requests. Therefore, some competitive selection criteria to act as a filtering mechanism will assist in the selection process.

Council supports the inclusion of a stakeholder contribution in the selection criteria.

Council has resolved to provide the following financial support for each of the six (6) sites (details shown below) Council will nominate for this program;

- a) \$10K towards the construction of access roads to tower sites, and
- b) \$10K subsidy to a MNO chosen to erect a tower on the site nominated by Council.

4. Nominated Sites

A detailed submission will be submitted at the appropriate time, however Council wishes to give notice of its intention regarding this program. The sites, in priority order, that are of interest to Council are;

Priority 1: Fig Tree Hill Site

Location: Proposed tower site is 151°04'40"E, 29°55'45"S. Power is available at 151°06'35"E, 29°56'15"S.

Reason: This site will serve the Inverell to Bundarra Road from a point 7km south of Inverell to a point 27km south of Inverell uninterrupted, the Gilgai to Tingha Road and will serve the townships of Tingha, Gilgai and Stannifer, and the whole of the foreshores of Lake Copeton, an estimated total population of 2,200 plus the 100,000 annual visitors at Lake Copeton. Lake Copeton is in a blind spot from all installed mobile phone transmitters, being located in a valley with a rim of high ground all around it.

Annual agricultural production in the proposed coverage area is \$50M.

Priority 2: White Rock Mountain Site

Location: Proposed tower site is 151°32'40"E, 29°48'45"S. Power is presently available at 151°34'55"E, 29°48'30"S.

Reason: This site will serve the Gwydir Highway from a point 23km east of Inverell to a point 53km east of Inverell (14km west of Glen Innes) uninterrupted. It will also serve the township of Wellingrove (handheld coverage) (Severn Shire), the villages/localities of Sapphire, Kings Plains, Kingsland, Elsmore, the Danthonia Bruderhof community. Also the Swanbrook, Kings Creek and Wellingrove Creek in Severn Shire (including Ilparran and Matheson), and Tingha to Guyra Road, Maybole area, servicing an estimated population of 1,600.

Annual agricultural production in the proposed coverage area is valued at \$45M.

Priority 3: Gagan Mountain Site

Location: Proposed tower site is 151°12'35"E, 29°35'20"S. power is presently available at 151°11'50"E, 29°35'20"S.

Reason: This site will serve the Inverell to Emmaville Road from a point 10km north of Inverell to a point 50km north east of Inverell, including the village of Nullamanna - presently a black spot. It will also cover the Inverell to Ashford Road from a point 20km north of Inverell to 45km north of Inverell including the village of Bukkulla, and the Bukkulla to Pindaroi Road. This area has an estimated population of 350 and has little or no existing coverage.

Annual agricultural production in the proposed coverage area is \$40M.

Priority 4. Hetherington's Sugarloaf Site

Location: Proposed tower site is 151°18'00"E, 29°12'50"S.

Reason: This site will serve Bonshaw and the Bruxner Way along the Dumaresq valley upstream and beyond Roseneath, and the Beardy River. This area was subject to a major flood in 2011 and communications were non existent.

Current annual agricultural production in the proposed coverage area is valued at \$35M.

Priority 5. Graman Site

Location: An existing radio transmission Telstra tower exists in the Graman village. Power passes right past the site.

Reason: This site will serve the immediate Graman district but is blind to the North West. This area has little or no existing Telstra mobile coverage although Optus has a site nearby with a 60 metre tower, on which the NBN Co is intending to install a fixed wireless transmitter.

Current annual agricultural production in the proposed coverage area is valued at \$50M.

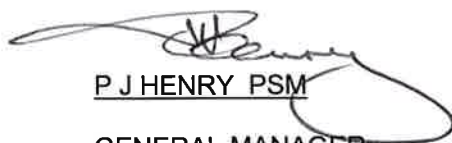
Priority 6. The Pines Site

Location: Proposed tower site is 151°15'30"E, 29°20'55"S. Power passes right past the site.

Reason: This site will serve the Pindari Dam with an estimated 30,000 visitors annually, the area north of the Dam serviced by the Ashford to Emmaville Road and the Severn River valley west of Pindari Dam and surrounding areas, being an area with an estimated population of 200, plus visitors to Pindari Dam recreation area. In addition this site will cover Emu Gully, a bushcraft camp for city teenagers with accommodation for 120. This area has little or no existing coverage.

Current annual agricultural production in the proposed coverage area is valued at \$30M.

Yours faithfully


P J HENRY PSM
GENERAL MANAGER