

# 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:	
Name of organisation:	Shire of Dalwallinu
Phone:	
Email:	
Website (if applicable):	www.dalwallinu.wa.gov.au
Date:	27 February 2014

#### Confidentiality and privacy

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.

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.

Do you want all or parts of the submission to be treated as confidential? Yes ☐ No ☒

*If yes, identify below which parts of the submission are to be treated as confidential (and provide a reason):*

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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:

#### Submission Instructions

Submissions are to be made by **5:00pm (AEST) Friday 28 February 2014**.

Where possible, submissions should be lodged electronically, preferably in Microsoft Word or other text-based formats via the email address [mobilecoverage@communications.gov.au](mailto:mobilecoverage@communications.gov.au)

Alternatively, submissions can be sent to the postal address below (to arrive by the due date):

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

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.

# SHIRE OF DALWALLINU

## Submission to the Mobile Coverage Programme – Discussion Paper

- **National Highway Emergency Services**
- **Farm Safety**
- **Increased Productivity**

The Shire of Dalwallinu is one of the largest grain producing shires in Western Australia. It has three (3) towns located on National Highway 95 (Great Northern Highway) which carries significant volumes of heavy transport vehicles from Perth to the mining areas of the East Pilbara in Western Australia. The town of Dalwallinu is the only agricultural and mining service centre located on National Highway 95.

There are a number of important reasons that a good mobile coverage is needed in this shire. They include:

- **National Highway Emergency Services**  
Police and volunteers from the Shire of Dalwallinu provide emergency services for over 221 kilometres of National Highway 95 (Great Northern Highway) and the lack of mobile coverage could have dire consequences. Only recently, in 2013, a truck carrying ammonium nitrate was involved in a head on collision, caught fire, and the driver incinerated. The emergency management of this event was very difficult due to the location being in an area with no mobile phone coverage.
- **Farm Safety**  
With modern farming practices it is common for drivers and farmers to be working alone. In case of an emergency, there are many areas of the shire (which is 7,187 square kilometres) where there is no coverage and it is not possible to make a call for help.
- **Increased Productivity**  
Most farmers now conduct their business by mobile telephone, ranging from directing deliveries of gypsum, fertiliser, etc to marketing of their own products by smart phones. This is extremely difficult, if not impossible, in some areas due to the non-existent coverage. The transport industry would also benefit from improved coverage as they would be able to make timelier destination arrangements (including assembly in Wubin and loading/off loading in Perth).

In the case of the \$80 million Mobile Network Expansion Project, delivery option 1 would seem the most appropriate. Currently this shire and region are only serviced by the one mobile network operator (MNO) and an expansion of their network would have advantages. There is of course, always the chance that one of the other MNOs could win the bid, in which case there would be no possible benefit for our shire or region because there would be no continuity of service.

Although delivery option 2 has merit, it is believed that this would become too complicated to manage. The perceived increased benefits may not be realised because there will be multiple operators and multiple contracts to administer, which again affect the continuity of service (causing customer black spots).

Delivery option 3 may be likely to maximise competition benefits but could also result in many unforeseen complications (such as the financial failure of the parties who have built the independent base stations and service problem resolution).

In the case of the \$20 million Mobile Black Spots Project, there are many locations with unique problems which include those areas that experience increased population during peak seasons. It is recognised that many coastal communities in particular struggle with this increased population at peak times, but this does not necessarily mean that the current mobile coverage is not sufficient. Many areas, such as the wildflower regions, have increased visitors who may just be passing through. In some of these cases they are visiting reasonably remote areas that do not have mobile coverage. Some consideration must be given to these areas as well.

The Shire of Dalwallinu itself has many places that do not have adequate or any mobile coverage. The areas of poor or non-existent coverage that cause most concern for the Council are:

➤ Goodlands

This area at the north eastern side of the shire is the most remote with some farms being over 100 kilometres away from the town of Dalwallinu. There is no mobile coverage in this area and this not only affects the local residents, but also the tourists that travel to Goodlands Road to visit the spectacular wreath leschenaultia flowers. A tower in this area, situated on an elevated location, could be equipped for mobile phone reception that has potential to also provide coverage to National Highway 95.

- National Highway 95 (Great Northern Highway)  
There is an area between Miling and Pithara and some places between Pithara and Dalwallinu that has inadequate or no mobile coverage. The major problem is the area of Great Northern Highway north of Wubin. Once the mobile signal is lost, the next service is not available until near Mt Magnet over 200 kilometres further up National Highway 95. This has presented many problems for the volunteer emergency service providers and Police, and has been raised with politicians and District and State Emergency Management Committees.
- Dalwallinu-Kalannie Road  
Some areas along this road have inadequate or no mobile service. This is prime agricultural land and includes the iconic Rabbit Proof Fence Road which has increased usage at certain times of the year.

Increased mobile coverage would provide substantial benefits for not only local communities and farmers, but also for the tourists and heavy transport vehicle operators who pass through the shire and region. Of vital importance is the expansion of mobile coverage on National Highway 95 (Great Northern Highway) to allow the Police and emergency services volunteers to provide an extremely important service to all road users.