

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:	Young Shire Council
Phone:	██████████
Email:	████████████████████
Website (if applicable):	
Date:	26 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):

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

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.

Background

Young Shire is located in South West NSW adjacent to the Olympic Highway which is the major transport route between Wagga and Cowra. The population of the Shire is approximately 13000 and includes the town of Young and the villages of Maimuru, Milvale, Thuddungra, Bribbaree, Koorawatha, Monteagle, Wirrimah, Bendick Murrell and Murringo.

Handheld mobile coverage along the Olympic Highway as improved for all MNOs with new towers being commissioned in the past 3 years along the route.

Other major transport routes include Millvale Road linking Temora and Young , the Murringo Road linking Boorowa and Young via Murringo Village. Mobile coverage along these roads is not adequate for drivers or landholders.

While the urban area of Young Township are adequately served by all 3 MNOs due to the undulating geography in the shire handheld mobile coverage and performance drops off within 5kms of the CBD affecting visitors to the Chinaman's Dam tourist precinct and the Young Showground.

Some villages within the shire have little or no mobile coverage:-

Murringo Village

Murringo has no mobile coverage. Situated on the Boorowa/Young Road there is lots of vehicle traffic. During emergency events the RFS station, Public School and Village Hall do not have any mobile telecommunications. Residents without an internet service can no longer apply for NBN interim satellite.

Population – 322

Dwellings – 174

Monteagle Village

Monteagle has limited Optus Mobile and Vodafone coverage.

Population – 415

Dwellings – 191

Bribbaree Village

Until 4 years ago Bribbaree had no mobile coverage but now has Telstra Mobile coverage only.

Population – 267

Dwellings – 141

Koorawatha Village

With the recent commissioning of new mobile towers Kooawatha has mobile coverage from Optus and Telstra.

Population – 258

Dwellings – 156

Bendick Murrell Village

Bendick Murrell has limited Telstra and Optus mobile coverage.

Population – 303

Dwellings - 174

Submission

It is our submission that a single MNO be awarded the contract to for both the \$80 and \$20 million programs with the provision of open access to other MVOs as outlined in the discussion paper. We support delivery option 1.

While it may take longer for other MNOs to co-locate equipment (if at all) we consider this the fastest way to get mobile phone and data coverage into the areas that are identified.

In our Shire new NBN towers should be made available for MNOs to co-locate mobile infrastructure and be given access to backhaul under this program. There are a number of new NBN towers being erected near villages that are impacted by lack of adequate mobile coverage.

We submit that the village of Murringo be considered for the \$20 million black spot program as the major bushfire event (Watershed/Boorowa) in January 2013 highlighted the impact of a lack of mobile telecommunications on managing the event as there is no mobile coverage at the RFS station in the village.

The minimum quality standard should be that base stations must provide high-speed 4G LTE mobile broadband data communication services and also high quality 3G mobile voice and broadband data services to a determined area of the benefiting villages and transport routes. This should be based on a minimum RSSI suitable for voice as the highest priority and data second.

Base stations will have to be built to be able to incorporate at least 2 other MNOs and have provision for backhaul arrangements as outlined in the discussion paper. NBNC should be mandated to provide accommodation for up to 3 MNOs on all its towers along with access to backhaul and this should form part of this program as it does not make sense for the Commonwealth to fund additional towers if NBN towers can provide the necessary infrastructure.

We support the open access and co-location provisions outlined in the discussion paper however other MNOs may choose not to install their equipment leaving a single MNO in place. This is still better than no MNO.

All base stations including those funded under the \$20 million program should conform with the proposed open access provisions.

We support the proposed assessment criteria for each base station or group of base stations.

Using NBN fixed wireless towers for Mobile equipment will greatly improve the handheld coverage of mobile phones in Young Shire based on current proposed NBN tower locations. NBNC0 may be worried about competition in data by co-locating mobile equipment on its towers.