



Tumbarumba
SHIRE COUNCIL
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Tumbarumba Shire Council

Submission to Broadband in Rural and Regional Communities

There are a number of areas of concern regarding Regional Broadband services within the Tumbarumba Shire. These concerns relate to lack of service availability, cost of services, in particular satellite services, lack of ASDL services outside of major towns, speed of ASDL service, lack of inter carrier roaming for mobile service, complexity of communication billing plans and complaints regarding slow access to Government on line services in rural areas.

Like many other small Regional Shires, Tumbarumba Shire relies heavily on Broadband access. Local Shire residents, particularly those in small villages and farm areas have been raising concern regarding the quality and cost of service available to them.

Of major concern is the lack of mobile phone service area within the Shire, with approximately only 30% of the Shire having full mobile phone reception.

The concern of Shire residents regarding availability of mobile service was heightened recently when a severe bushfire broke out in the Tooma District of Tumbarumba Shire, and no mobile service was available to any of the emergency services attending the fire. This emergency situation caused major communications problems for staff manning the operations centre and the fire fighters and other emergency services. The lack of service available also effects volunteer callouts, the ability to warn the community of impending danger and current the situation during an emergency.

A similar concern exists relating to road accident sites, where a lack of service can prove life threatening.

A considerable portion of this non reception area could be covered by the erecting of two or three additional communication towers in strategic positions throughout the Shire.

The lack of broadband services is a major economic drawback for the Shire, with potential new businesses and residents not being able to be assured of service availability in the Shire.

Concern has also been expressed by rural residing families with School and University students living at home, who cannot get access to the Internet service. This causes major interruption to their studies, and their access to information required for assignments.

The cost of services was another matter of concern with awareness that rural residents are paying more than metropolitan area residents for a lower quality service. The cost of quality broadband services is a matter of particular concern.

Council would like to request that all forms of telecommunication requirements be considered by the Inquiry including radio and television reception availability in rural and regional areas.

Chris Blake



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Tumbarumba Shire Council
3rd March 2010