

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments on Telecommunications Availability in Rural and Regional Areas.

I live in the Mid & North Coast hinterland, in the Clarence Valley Shire.

Mobile phone coverage is very poor in my local area and Telstra in 2009, also tried to remove a local payphone at Tyringham, on the Armidale-Grafton Rd (Lyrebird Way). As there is no mobile coverage the payphones in regional areas are vital, especially in emergencies. This RTA road has increasing traffic flows, but no improvements to mobile phone coverage.

I have no ADSL broadband availability at home, as I live more than 10km's from the local exchange. There are many households in my area in the same position, with Telstra saying they will not upgrade the lines.

My telephone landline is above ground and subject to lightning and rain events, which effect the sound quality continuously.

I do have a satellite connection, but the technology is limited and the advertised speed is often unavailable. Satellite companies also charge more for these connections in comparison to ADSL.

More needs to be done to improve local mobile phone coverage and to retain roadside payphones.