

**Submission
No 23**

**THE ELECTRICITY OUTAGES AFFECTING FAR WEST NSW IN OCTOBER
2024**

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Many people spoke to relevant ministers when the NSW Government held a cabinet meeting here in Broken Hill post the electricity outage. I've personally emailed and spoken to politicians, state and federal and have always felt that there are several aspects of the outage that is misunderstood.

When our power went out so did all forms of communication for the majority of our residents and residents of outlying communities. The majority of residents had no internet as there was no Telstra service available. This meant no telephone or internet. Most residents did not have battery operated radios.

Communication was minimal.

Because of these overlooked/misunderstood problems it meant that the majority of residents didn't know about the free BBQ in Sturt Park. They didn't know that the Royal Flying Doctor Service had opened up their Wellness Centre for the public to get cold or hot drinks, recharge their phones and devices etc.

They also had no idea that Broken Hill City Council had opened The Aged Persons Rest Centre to the public to use internet, access cold and hot drinks and recharge phones and devices.

People didn't know what was available, didn't know what was happening. Our seniors living in their own homes did what they always do, bunkered down and looked after themselves as best they could with what they had on hand.

This must not happen again.

We expect power outages as we live remotely and unexpected problems occur but the lack of empowering communication was unacceptable in this day and age.

Communication is paramount for survival, emotionally and physically.

I hope that my submission helps our governments understand how important adequate services that handle communication are everything in an emergency such as we experienced last year when 7 Transgrid electricity towers were badly damaged by an extreme weather event.