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*Nookanderri Farms*

Rohan and Carol Ford

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To whom it may concern:

I am writing this to lodge our objection to allowing mobile roaming on the Telstra network as we feel it will lead to less investment in telecommunications in country locations- Telstra mainly and Optus to a lesser extent have been part of helping rural and remote people stay or get connected. Telstra who are our only service provider in rural WA area have chosen to invest their funds to help allow those of us who live and work in agricultural areas have access to modern communication technology. If other providers want use of the towers for their customers then they should get on board and invest in the rural and remote areas like Telstra have been.

We are lucky to live in a rural area that has benefited from Telstra’s investment but we have many friends who still live in black spot areas and if mobile roaming is allowed then this takes away the incentive for Telstra to continue to invest the funds to open up those areas still unable to access mobile services. We are also concerned that opening the networks up to mobile roaming with decrease the service that we get due to increased congestion – we already notice a drop off in service during our seasonally busy times of seeding and harvest when we have quite a number of workers also accessing the network. We rely on up to date and reliable (this is becoming more so with new technologies) telecommunication networks to run our businesses that provide a significant amount of income to the WA economy.

Living in a rural area we have always paid more than our city cousins who have access to numerous service providers but we have understood that other providers could invest in our areas and use Telstra towers but choose not to and so we want to support the Telstra Corporation that has stood behind us now and into the future as our communities shrink in size but our telecommunication requirements are as vital as ever in so many areas of our lives.

One of our biggest concerns is reliable communications when we are faced with emergencies and we need to access the services of police, ambulance and fire services, if other service providers invested in our regions and made use of the Telstra towers it would make a whole lot more sense to us because they would be showing that they are part of the solution and happy to put money in to the network rather than just getting a free ride.

Therefore we need to encourage the other providers to invest in our regions and pay their fair share to access the network.

Mobile roaming regulation has twice been rejected by the ACCC and we feel that nothing has changed in this regard and it should be rejected again.

Yours Sincerely

Carol & Rohan Ford

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