SUBMISSION TO MOBILE ROAMING INQUIRY

Prepared by Champions of the Bush Inc

15 November, 2016

Champions of the Bush Inc (CTOB) represents a diverse range of businesses with investment and operations in various areas of regional and rural Victoria including Western Victoria, Gippsland and Northern Victoria. The CEOs, senior managers or owners of these businesses are brought together on a monthly basis under the auspices of the COTB’s Regional Executive Forums which meet in separate chapters in Traralgon, Wangaratta, Warrnambool and Ballarat. The businesses involved cover a wide range of industries including: food and beverage production and processing, transport, manufacturing, tourism, health, water management, building, retailing, energy, finance, insurance, marketing, communication, disability services, and the not-for-profit community sector. Detailed information about Champions of the Bush Inc is available at [www.championsofthebush.org.au](http://www.championsofthebush.org.au)

The business leaders involved in the COTB’s Regional Executive Forums are very concerned about the consequences of domestic roaming being regulated and the likely impact of this on further investment in communication technology in rural and regional Victoria.  Like most rural and regional industry, the business leaders represented by COTB are often more exposed than their metropolitan counterparts to trends in the global market such as those relating to changing agricultural commodity prices. Operating in this highly competitive international environment makes mobile coverage critically important for our businesses. Mobile data is fundamentally important for our businesses which are often remotely located or required to deal with a remotely-located customer or business-to-business base. The advancement in 4G technology and the R and D into further high speed mobile date as well as the ongoing expansion and upgrade of the existing communications network is important to our businesses as it is to all who work and live in rural and regional Victoria.

We are deeply concerned that the regulation of mobile roaming will inhibit further investment in and advancement of the mobile coverage network in rural and regional areas and greatly disadvantage rural and regional business.

COTB is happy to add to this submission and appear in person should this be required.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Greg Walsh

Chairman

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