To the ACCC Mobile Roaming Inquiry,

Gippsland is a region in the eastern part of Victoria that stretches from Phillip Island in the south west to Mallacoota in the east and includes the Alpine High Country areas of Mt Baw Baw, Walhalla and Omeo in the north.  It is a popular nature based tourism destination that attracts over 10 million visitor per year and supports over 3000 small businesses. These visitors primarily experience the many National Parks including Wilsons Promontory and Croajingolong as well as the Gippsland Lakes.

Destination Gippsland is the Regional Tourism Board for Gippsland and our interest in this inquiry is improving the mobile phone coverage and service for our visitors and small tourism businesses. Mobile coverage is important to our region and tourism industry as it conveys visitor information, safety messages, social media sharing as well as the transactions of tourism businesses in rural and remote areas.

Any potential changes to regulate roaming must consider the question of how they will encourage the extension of coverage to regions such as Gippsland?  There are still many blackspots across Gippsland and we need an overall system that encourages investment and innovative customer services.  We do not want a situation that creates a mobile phone market that adds complexity, increases costs for providers and potentially prices for consumers. There must be a government framework and market incentive for any network operator to add to its coverage in Gippsland.  We are concerned that there is potential for network investment to only focus on metropolitan areas where there is already network-based competition.  There needs to be an understanding and considered response to the different elements that make up rural and regional communities across Australia.

Kind regards,

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| **Terry Robinson** Chief Executive Officer   |  |  | | --- | --- | | DGL_Logo_Spot-[Converted] |  | |

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