

 5/780 South Rd

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To ACCC

Re: Reference on Mobile roaming

I Chair both Primary Producers SA and Regional Development SA.

In relation to your enquiry on Mobile roaming there are several points we would like to make.

South Australia has a lack of major cities and also a comparatively sparse population compared with other States. Telstra is very important to SA – they have been by far the major investor in expanding the network! And prices have not been increased significantly to cover that investment. We are still in a situation where it is not just increasing access to the current network – we still have many businesses which do not have mobile coverage.

It has been predicted that grain growers without mobile coverage may be up to $5 a tonne disadvantaged by this lack of accessibility. This cost for multiple grain growers way exceeds any charges accrued by those with coverage.

Telstra have a proven record in investing in regional SA and Australia. To just allow access to the network they have expanded to others would really be a huge risk in getting our considerable number of Primary Producers not on the network connected. The Federal black spots programme is welcomed but is not on it’s own achieving what we need to. We need ongoing Telstra support and involvement. We totally understand why that investment would reduce enormously if the goal posts were shifted.

Only Telstra will provide the investment and rollout that we need, in the absence of huge Government support – which while appreciated is not achieving what needed! Any move to gift the other providers access will likely see a huge reduction in the Telstra investment!

The ACCC has twice wisely rejected roaming access to third parties. The results of those decisions have been very positive – even if not so much in S.A. from other providers due to population spread. Billions of dollars have since been invested and we do not wish to see that compromised by a different decision!

We urge a quick decision to remove uncertainty which affects investment!

I think it is also worth noting that in S.A. the vast bulk of consumers are Telstra customers as they have been the ones who have invested in the network!

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Regards,

Rob Kerin

Chair Primary Producers SA and Regional Development SA

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