

9 March 2023

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Dear Mr O'Leary,

ACCC Regional Mobile Infrastructure Inquiry Submission

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission to the ACCC Regional Mobile Infrastructure Inquiry. Our Council considered a report with respect to this matter at its meeting on 28 February 2023.

Light Regional Council has a population of 15,792 (per the 2021 Census), with growth in the order of an additional 10,000 persons (2,500 – 3,000 new homes) projected over the next 10-15 years, primarily at Roseworthy.

Council is aware that certain areas within its district have been identified as mobile phone black spots (per the Federal Government's Mobile Black Spot Program).

Our Council has also experienced first-hand the crucial importance of mobile communications during an emergency. In November 2015 the Pinery Fire affected communities across the Light region (and surrounding areas), devastating some 82,500 hectares with losses of housing, structures and most tragically, two lives. Mobile infrastructure was affected and people in the region were unable to use mobile telecommunications to receive emergency updates, remain aware of conditions, seek help or check the safety of others.

During the Pinery fire response, the CFS Incident Management Team's ability to effectively communicate with firefighters and appliances on the ground was hampered by limited mobile phone network service along with the network congestion that affected the South Australian Government Radio Network (SAGRN).

Situational awareness is paramount for effective incident management in an emergency including providing timely public messaging. It is noted that



Recommendation 43 in the Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission identified Incident Control Centres and Teams need to have sufficient communications and IT connectivity. The provision of information to the public is critical and supports communities in implementing their own plans and appropriate responses.

With this context as background, key points for consideration are:

- Significant areas of development occurring across the Light region suggests an increased need for mobile telecommunications infrastructure with the capacity to cope with greater usage demands into the future.
- The needs of 'geographically isolated' residents in the region who are reliant on mobile telecommunications to access timely information and emergency services in times of personal crisis and during a local incident; and
- Issues with certain areas across the Light region being identified as mobile phone black spots.

Council welcomes the Inquiry and the critical role regional mobile infrastructure in supporting safety and emergency response, as well as enabling better commerce, business, and social interaction.

Yours sincerely,



Craig Doyle
General Manager, Strategy and Development

