



# BALRANALD SHIRE COUNCIL

## FROM THE OFFICE OF MAYOR

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ALL COMMUNICATIONS  
MUST BE ADDRESSED TO  
THE GENERAL MANAGER

Contact:

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22nd November 2016

Australian Competition &  
Consumer Commission

### **Mobile Roaming Inquiry Submission**

The Balranald Shire is Located 850 km south west of Sydney and 450 km north of Melbourne, and covers an area of 21,346 square kilometres. Major townships within the Shire are Balranald (population 1,200) and Euston (population 600). Balranald Shire has a population of 2,361, which means that we have a very large geographical area with a relatively low population.

The Shire's economy has traditionally relied upon dry-land and irrigated agricultural production of grains, wool, sheep meet and beef (valued at more than \$80 million in 2006). However primary production is diversifying to encompass horticulture, viticulture, organic agriculture and the growing of fruit and nut trees. Tourism is also now recognised as an important economic driver.

Balranald Shire boasts a progressive well serviced and vibrant community that is committed to continued regional growth and sustainability.

Telecommunications is a vital ingredient in our ability to be competitive and an enabler for our business and social needs now and into the future.

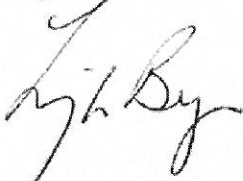
Today we have our main towns covered and in most cases we have 4G technologies which are fantastic, however we still see some major gaps in coverage in our more regional areas and along some of the major roadways.

Continued investment in mobile services and coverage is seen by our business leaders, agriculture groups and community groups as extremely important and anything that puts that at risk is not be supported.

We believe that regulated roaming could destroy many of the incentives which keep companies investing and improving the overall network and could jeopardise future upgrades in coverage and technology, without delivering additional benefits. Expanding access and improving the connectivity of our shire is extremely important, and if investment is discouraged it is hard to see how funding can be provided to increase coverage and improved services if there is no incentive for the Telecommunications companies.

We very much see mobile roaming as a risk to increasing the divide between the cities and regional areas and could have a massive impact on our communities.

Regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Leigh Byron', written in a cursive style.

Leigh Byron  
**MAYOR**