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OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

Our Ref: 210841

1 June 2017

To Whom It May Concern

RE: Mobile Roaming Decision

Burke Shire is a remote Queensland Shire situated on the Gulf of Carpentaria adjacent to the Northern Territory Border. As Mayor, on behalf of Council and the communities it represents, we would like to respond to the ACCC decision made on May 5th 2017 to not declare mobile roaming.

Burke Shire Council is firmly of the view that the ACCC made the right decision. We believe that mobile roaming would have further exacerbated the communications challenges already evident in remote Australia. It would have done so by:

- Potentially raising the cost of mobile calls, well above their urban counterparts, by applying a surcharge should rural customers roam on another provider
- Reducing investment in critical infrastructure resulting in a stagnant or reduced expansion of services

It is critical that mobile providers continue to invest in their rural networks on both a standalone basis and as co-investment partners with governments through programmes such as the Mobile Black Spot Funding Programme. Mobile roaming would potentially reduce competition for this funding from mobile service providers thus crippling investment and possibly reducing the coverage per government dollar invested.

Mobile roaming would not increase services in rural and remote areas nor encourage investment in essential infrastructure necessary to increase coverage.

We would also support the ACCC's suggestion to encourage greater transparency about network quality, expansions and improvements.

It is essential for both residents and travellers in our Shire that expansion of the mobile network continues and that new ways of offering more mobile service effectively be investigated.

We thank ACCC for instigating the inquiry into this issue. Burke Shire Council thanks ACCC for providing an opportunity to contribute to the discussion on the draft decision and ways to improve coverage in rural and remote areas.

Yours sincerely,



Ernie Camp
Mayor