14/10/2016

Dear ACCC,

I am writing regarding your request for submissions into “Competition in evolving communications markets”. From the outset I would like to state that there is NO competition in the area that I live. It would appear (as you will see in my attachments) that there is no plan to introduce any. Furthermore, due to the lack of completion, I cannot even adequately access the ONE service available. The current plans (or lack of) will not meet my current needs, let alone the future ones.

It is impacting on my health, and my finances, as I am left in this communications limbo land with no hope for the future.

Three main issues are of concern to me:

1. NBN rollout and suggested deployment.
2. Current Telstra services and future lack of plans.
3. My personal situation and its impacts.
a) Costs incurred
b) Social impacts
c) Psychological impacts

I have been dealing with the NBN and their supposed rollout for a few months now (see attached emails). They were scheduled to start planning Q3 this year. See article from the age, in the references below. I had also been told I was slated for satellite coverage. During my time working in Port Macquarie, people I work with were on satellite. I was shocked to discover that satellite plans are like the old ipStar where you have peak and off-peak data. Also data limits. This is the whole point that NBN was supposed finish that everyone in Australia gets about the same service for about the same price. Seems that country people do not matter, and due to lack of competition the NBN and resellers are glad to keep it that way.

Currently the only service I am able to access is Telstra wireless 3g. This is only with ariels and equipment I have had to install at my own expense. I am in a blackspot, and regardless of Federal funding being set aside, there is no date around when services to the 4G spec that I pay for will be delivered. I have been working with my state member to try and find out what is happening. The tower at Newlyn that I link to has been down half the year. I get slow patchy service and it seems to be degrading. I have about %50 up time and pay a fortune for it.

I have a real time necessity for cable to the home now. I cannot get any information as to when and how much it is going to cost.

So all this frustrating anti-competitive lack of hope situation is expensive.

I work for Essential Energy with head office in Port Macquarie. I am a computer applications programmer and connect to their network via the NBN. As this is not available at my home and there is no other option than, moving back to Port Macquarie, or driving half an hour a day to get the internet service required. I must pay for office space and a second internet connection. I spend about $300 a week doing this out of my own pocket as there is just no other option.

To date I have spent about $3500 thousand dollars trying to get better Telstra services. This included installing a home phone (trenches and cables required) to then be told that the ADSL service they promised is not available. Several ariels, and equipment to try keeping the 3g signal.

I also pay a heavy social cost. Recently my sister was visiting from England. As the connectivity is so poor, I missed a text inviting me to dinner before she left. I cannot respond or receive emails in a timely manner. I am keeping a list of websites I want to look up when I get to work.

All this uncertainty is having a cost to my well-being. I am simply just left hanging with no way forward. Any attempt to access service is met with a brush off. Each time I try to use the internet at home (particularly on the weekends when tourists are also using the towers) after several page reloads, and email download failures. I generally give up with a lump in my throat and a tear in my eye.

Warm regards,

Name redacted

**[Attachments redacted – personal details]**

<http://www.lifehacker.com.au/2015/10/here-is-every-suburb-that-will-be-getting-the-nbn-in-2016/#victoria>