

Dear Sir/Madam,

I wish to advise that the Gippsland Regional Executive Forum strongly support the ACCC's initial draft decision to not declare domestic roaming.

Our Forum represents key businesses across the Gippsland Region. Mobile coverage is critically important for them to operate their businesses efficiently and to be competitive in regional, state, national and international markets.

To maintain ongoing employment and new investment we need ensure ongoing investment in regional mobile markets. With the emergence of 5G technology it is critically important for regionally based businesses to have access to the latest and fastest technology. From a state and national perspective it is also critical that communication and infrastructure standards enable businesses to be competitive, and thus facilitate ongoing investment and employment opportunities outside capital centres. Ongoing investment in communication and key infrastructure thus enables and facilitates greater population growth and balance between capital cities and regional communities. This policy setting is critical to achieve more equal and better connected social and economic outcomes.

Any regulation that risks further investment in infrastructure in regional Australia is strongly opposed by our organisation.

As stated in our submission, the mobile phone industry is a competitive free market and already provides an environment conducive to network and technological advancement in regional areas.

Yours sincerely

John Mitchell

Chair, Gippsland Regional Executive Forum