

Dear Commissioners,

As Mayor of Toowoomba Regional Council, a Southern Queensland 13,000 sq kms local government area which takes in townships and rural zones on the Darling Downs and towards the Surat Basin, I would like to endorse the ACCC Inquiry's proposal not to declare a wholesale domestic mobile roaming service at this time.

It is vital to rural and remote Australia that ever-increasing investment is made in telecommunications capabilities right across the country, and that competitive offerings by various providers are encouraged. At this time, I believe declaration would be counter-productive. Only when mobile coverage from the major players is almost complete geographically will competitive forces come properly into force in the bush. At this stage, declaration would only ease the pressure on providers to continue expanding their coverage, and have the potential to increase, rather than decrease, user charges over time.

The Toowoomba Region is best served by the current arrangements, both now and for some time into the future – unless and until mobile coverage by multiple providers expands to serve the entire inland area.

Personally, as a farmer with long experience in the western parts of our local government area and beyond, I feel strongly on this.

Yours sincerely,

Paul

Paul Antonio

Mayor – Toowoomba Regional Council

Toowoomba Regional Council

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