
From: Alun Davies [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, 12 October 2022 11:27 AM
To: Merger Authorisations
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Support for merger authorisation lodged by Telstra and TPG in relation to spectrum sharing and active mobile network infrastructure sharing in certain regional and urban fringe areas of Australia.

Dear ACCC,

My name is Alun Davies and I was

- A Member of the 2011/2012 Regional Telecommunications Review Committee
- During my career with Telstra, I organised for 80+ Telstra Mobile Sites to be installed in the New England North West
- The head of the NBN Lobby Group that successfully saw Armidale selected as one(1) of five(5) mainland sites to have Fibre To The Premises FTTP installed
- Lead of group consisting of NBN Co, Costa Tomatoes, RDANI and NSW Regional Development that successfully applied for \$550k funding through the Regional Connectivity Fund to have fibre installed to the two(2) Costa sites near Guyra
- Put forward Doughboy Mountain(Wongwibinda) and Mt Hourigan(Aberfoyle) through our Federal Member for New England Barnaby Joyce to be successfully placed on the Federal Governments Mobile Blackspot Program, with Vodafone now constructing/Commissioning. Expected cut-over end of December 2022

I would like to advise my strong support for merger authorisation lodged by Telstra and TPG in relation to spectrum sharing and active mobile network infrastructure sharing in certain regional and urban fringe areas of Australia.

- In fact I would like ACCC to take this matter further and facilitate shared connectivity for all RSP's to all Mobile Towers in Regional Australia, similar to situation with NBN Fixed Wireless
- This is a key role the ACCC can play in Nation Building for future generations

The future of Australia will be decided in Regional Areas with Water Efficiency, Food Production, Renewable Energy and Supply Chains, it is therefore absolutely critical Regional areas like New England have the best Telecommunications and Connectivity possible.

- The spectrum sharing and active mobile network infrastructure sharing in certain regional and urban fringe areas of Australia, is very much a step in the right direction to deliver this critical component of Nation building and Project Management
- And just to give you some evidence as to the revolution taking place in Regional Australia and locations like New England, see points below on Renewable Energy and Controlled Environmental Horticulture and SMART Farming

Common sense and Nation Building for our next generations of Australians needs to take precedence here!

Happy to discuss with anyone at anytime

Regards
Alun

Alun Davies

Member of New England Vision 2030

Regional Communications Advocate

Member of the Regional Telecommunications Review Committee 2011-2012

Armidale

Mobile

Renewable Energy

1. **Federal Minister for Industry the Honourable Chris Bowen put out the following plans which the Federal Government has in the Renewable Energy space**
 - **This is a massive program and most if it will happen in Regional Australia.**
 - **Armidale and New England will be a key area of this of this Nation**
Building exercise with Telecommunications and Connectivity being a key component to a well managed and successful rollout
 - The Government's comprehensive set of policies include: <https://www.minister.industry.gov.au/ministers/bowen/media-releases/stronger-action-climate-change>.
 - **\$20 billion** investment in Australia's electricity grid to accelerate the decarbonisation of the grid.
 - An additional **\$300 million** to deliver community batteries and solar banks across Australia.
 - **Up to \$3 billion** investment in the new National Reconstruction Fund to support renewables manufacturing and low emissions technologies.
 - Powering the Regions Fund to support the development of new clean energy industries and the decarbonisation priorities of existing industry.
 - A further \$100 million to train 10,000 New Energy Apprentices in the jobs of the future.
 - \$10 million New Energy Skills Program to provide additional training pathways.

- The introduction of declining emission baselines for Australia’s major emitters, under the existing Safeguard Mechanism.
- Australia’s first National Electric Vehicle Strategy, to reduce emissions and accelerate the uptake of electric vehicle.
- **Double existing** investment in electric vehicle charging and establish hydrogen refuelling infrastructure – to \$500 million.

New England is one of five(5) designated Renewable Energy Zones in NSW

- **Key facts for New England REZ**
 - The REZ has an intended network capacity of 8 gigawatts.
 - It is expected to deliver up to \$10.7 billion in private sector investment.
 - It is expected to support around 830 operational jobs and 1,250 construction jobs.
 - <https://www.energyco.nsw.gov.au/renewable-energy-zones/new-england-renewable-energy-zone>
- **Why the region was chosen**
 - New England has some of the best natural locations for energy resources, wind, solar batteries and also includes some of the State’s finest potential sites for pumped-hydro development. Eg.
 - Metz and Uralla Solar Farms
 - Eathorpe large Scale Battery
 - Interconnect from Grafton Road Sub Station to Queensland - Grid modernisation
 - Oven Mountain Pumped Hydro
- **Armidale has the added advantages of**
 - TAFE Digital Hub
 - NBN Fibre to the Premises – FTTP
 - University of New England – Which can dovetail into TAFE, with research projects and UNE courses
 - Smart Region Incubator SRI/Nova - <https://www.unesri.com.au/nova>

2. SMART Farming and Controlled Environmental Horticulture

- **Absolute growth area and future for Agriculture – Regional Australia and New England is and will be a key part of this revolution**
- **Australia surpassed \$70B for the first time in Agricultural Exports**
- **Costa Tomatoes 40 Ha of Controlled Environment Horticulture CEH (Glasshouses)** - located near the small town of Guyra in New England, just north of Armidale
 - The New England Region is naturally suited for this type of Agriculture – cold climate, good soil and water availability
 - Grows 16M+ of tomatoes per annum

- Provides 50%+ of tomatoes to NSW
 - Has a number of research projects with University of New England
 - Employs 900+ people
 - **Industrial Cannabis Farming CEH located in New England near Armidale**
 - A local medical cannabis farm is about to expand its manufacturing activities and create 30 new local jobs, making a total of 80+ jobs.
 - **SMART Farm Technology**
 - UNE <https://www.une.edu.au/research/research-centres-institutes/smart-farm>
 - At the new \$135M Armidale Secondary College <https://www.investarmidale.com.au/work-starts-on-3m-ag-hub-at-new-armidale-secondary-college>
 - Much of the Technology and Techniques required to build and operate both renewal energy and SMART Farm projects is common eg. Connectivity, Sensors, Data Loggers, IoT, Data Bases, Robotics and AI. **They all depend on Connectivity**
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