
From: Tony Cantwell [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, 17 June 2022 8:10 PM
To: Koh, Soo Sian
Cc: Merger Authorisations; Martin, Jaime; Li, Janet
Subject: RE: extension request [SEC=OFFICIAL] [ACCC-ACCCANDAER.FID3169713]

About Committee for Gippsland

Committee for Gippsland is a positive and influential voice for Gippsland helping to create a thriving and sustainable future for the region.

As the region's lead representative voice to government, the Committee for Gippsland brings together groups representing various business and industry views and interests to collaborate on regional priorities and outcomes that bring broader benefit to Gippsland communities.

Membership of the Committee for Gippsland includes a diversity of members from across the region including well established industry sectors such as energy, agriculture and health, through to new and emerging businesses as well as those organisations that provide support services, education and professional advice.

About Gippsland

Gippsland is a diverse and resource driven region. It is 4.2 million hectares in size, with a population of 283,039 people. By 2026, this is forecast to grow to over 300,000 people. With an average travel time of around 90 minutes from Melbourne, Gippsland is serviced by freeway and V/Line rail. It is one of Victoria's eight key regional growth areas, along with Ballarat, Geelong and Bendigo.

The region produces 60 per cent of Victoria's electricity, 70 per cent of Victoria's gas (40 per cent of Eastern Australia's domestic gas), around 23 per cent of Australia's milk output, and about 26 per cent of Victoria's beef production.

Mining and agriculture are key industries and drivers of a vibrant supply chain however, historically energy production has been a large driver of economic activity in Gippsland due to the high concentration of power generators in the region.

The region is positioning itself to transition away from coal-based power production and embracing new clean energy technologies. Local investment continues in solar and battery storage and the region's wind competitive advantage is likely to secure Australia's first offshore windfarm.

Gippsland has a reasonably well diversified economy with health care and social assistance, education, tourism, and public administration being the largest emerging areas of economic activity which may be an outcome of government spending in response to power generation closures.

The region also has a vibrant tourism industry, from small bed and breakfasts and wineries to the largest inland lakes system in the southern hemisphere. It also includes Phillip Island and the Phillip Island Nature Park, which are not only a national icon, but an international draw card attracting millions of international visitors to Victoria each year.

About connectivity in Gippsland

Reliable connectivity in regional areas such as Gippsland is important not only to enable rural communities to communicate with family and friends but also enhance education and employment opportunities, improve access to health services, enable business and industry access to markets and technology, as well as provide vital information during times of emergency.

Improving the digital divide between urban and regional areas is a key priority for the Committee for Gippsland. Amongst other priorities the Committee for Gippsland seeks to advocate for connectivity improvements, whether through increased infrastructure or government policy that ensures regional areas are able to maximise social and commercial opportunities.

While I understand that the Telstra-TPG MOCN proposal can improve coverage, it will not solve all coverage issues, but will also provide greater choice to regional consumers and visitors.

Regional areas are also home to farming families and businesses central to the local and national economy. Having reliable connectivity and access to the latest digital technology will ensure Australia's agricultural sector can access markets, remain competitive and thrive.

This proposal seeks to improve access to reliable communications platforms through increasing capacity and opportunity for TPG in regional areas while helping address the demand on access to data, where customers in areas with existing coverage sometimes face congestion, resulting in patchy service or slow speeds.

In relation to the choice of service provider, I understand that this proposal will also increase the choice of providers for regional residential and commercial customers. Many regional and rural areas will go from having, in effect, a choice of two 4G/5G networks to a choice of three networks, bringing them in greater alignment with customers in metropolitan areas.

I appreciate the opportunity to provide this submission and would be pleased to discuss further if required.

Kind regards

Tony

Tony Cantwell | Chief Executive Officer

P: [REDACTED] M: [REDACTED]

E: [REDACTED]

PO Box 3135, Gippsland MC Victoria 3841

www.committeeforgippsland.com.au



The Committee for Gippsland acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of Country and recognise their continuing connection to the land, water, air and sky; culture and community. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present.

