



THE HON PAUL FLETCHER MP

Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts

THE HON MARK COULTON MP

Minister for Regional Services, Decentralisation and Local Government

JOINT MEDIA RELEASE

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Have your say on regional communications

The Liberal National Government is seeking input on a new program focused on improving digital connectivity for people living in regional and rural Australia.

Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts, the Hon Paul Fletcher, today released a discussion paper on the Regional Connectivity Program, with the Minister for Regional Services, Decentralisation and Local Government, the Hon Mark Coulton.

Minister Fletcher said that for this program to best meet the needs of regional and remote communities it is vital to get the views of those communities during the design phase.

“Fast and reliable telecommunications are vital for people living in the bush as they need the connections to go about almost every aspect of their lives,” Minister Coulton said.

This Regional Connectivity Program is an important component of the \$220 million Stronger Regional Digital Connectivity Package, announced as part of the Government’s response to the 2018 Regional Telecommunications Review. The program will include up to \$53 million in grant funding.

The rollout of the NBN and the Universal Service Guarantee provide a base level of telecommunications services across Australia. With the initial NBN rollout almost complete in regional Australia, there is a need for the network to be complemented in some areas with bespoke, place-based solutions.

Submissions are encouraged from the telecommunications industry, all levels of government and other interested stakeholders, to help inform the best design for the program.

Consultation is open for four weeks until 5pm on 9 September 2019 and submissions can be made through the Department of Communications and the Arts’ website:

<https://www.communications.gov.au/regionalconnectivity>

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