THE HON MICHAEL MCCORMACK MP
Deputy Prime Minister
Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development

THE HON PAUL FLETCHER MP
Minister for Communications, Urban Infrastructure, Cities and the Arts

THE HON MARK COULTON MP
Minister for Regional Health, Regional Communications and Local Government

MEDIA RELEASE

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New projects improving digital connectivity in rural Australia

More than 80 rural communities across Australia will soon benefit from better digital connectivity with the Morrison McCormack Government today announcing the successful projects funded under the Regional Connectivity Program (RCP).

The $90 million program is delivering 81 place-based solutions to digital connectivity issues in the regions through a range of mobile and broadband services, including a wireless network for the Gundagai, Cootamundra and Snowy Valleys areas in NSW.

Together with co-contributions from funding recipients, state, territory and local governments, regional businesses and community development organisations, these projects will deliver new investment through improved connectivity totalling more than $180 million.

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development, Michael McCormack said digital connectivity is a core element of the Morrison and McCormack Government's regional development agenda.

"As the last year has shown, digital connectivity has become an essential part of how we work, learn, stay healthy and remain in contact with loved ones, and it is particularly critical to sustaining productivity growth and innovation in our regional communities," the Deputy Prime Minister said.

Federal Regional Communications Minister, Mark Coulton, who joined the Deputy Prime Minister in Wagga Wagga to make the announcement, said the Government is listening to the digital needs of regional communities and businesses, and has used the RCP to design and deliver place-based solutions that solve rural connectivity issues.

"The Government has taken a collaborative approach in delivering the RCP and has engaged with the telecommunications industry and regional communities to make sure the funded projects are tailored to the needs and priorities of each region and are supported by the local community," Minister Coulton said.

Minister for Communications, Urban Infrastructure, Cities and the Arts, the Hon Paul Fletcher MP, said that the RCP is part of the Government's ongoing commitment to bring the digital economy to the regions, complementing the National Broadband Network and the Mobile Black Spot Program.

"From Gippsland to the WA Grainbelt, the Regional Connectivity Program will provide targeted upgrades to connectivity in regional areas that need it the most, ensuring that more Australians can access high-speed, reliable broadband and mobile services," Minister Fletcher said.

Grants have been allocated on a competitive basis, with the value of successful projects ranging from $80,500 for targeted mobile capacity upgrades in small towns to $8,750,000 for the deployment of large-scale fixed wireless broadband networks across entire regions.

The Regional Connectivity Program is a key component of the Government's response to the 2018 Regional Telecommunications Review. More detail on individual projects will be announced over coming weeks.

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