



Hon. Ian Walker MP
Minister for Science, Information Technology, Innovation
and the Arts

Ref: AF/2013/785

28 MAR 2013

Mr Neil Laurie
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Dear Mr Laurie

Thank you for your letter of 20 March 2013 forwarding the paper petition 2076-13 as tabled in the Legislative Assembly on 19 March 2013.

The petition draws to the attention of the House that the residents of Lammermoor object to a proposed mobile phone base station at Lammermoor Water Reservoir, Yeppoon. The petitions have requested that the health implications for people living in the vicinity and the visual amenity and property valuations for this residential area are taken into consideration.

The Queensland Government does not have a role to play in the assessment and approval process for installation of mobile phone towers. The responsibility for the legislation and regulation of mobile telephony infrastructure is under the jurisdiction of the Australian Government and is administered by the Australian Government's Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy and the Australian Communications and Media Authority.

In this instance I note that the proposed mobile phone base station at Lammermoor is not subject to a development application and is applying under the Communications Alliance (formerly the Australian Communications Industry Forum) Industry Code ACIF C564:2004 *Deployment of Mobile Phone Network Infrastructure* (the Code).

The Code requires carriers to apply a precautionary approach to the design, operation and selection of sites for communication facilities. The Code also provides the community with an opportunity to give the carrier their comments on the proposed facility. I have noted, however, that the community consultation stage for this facility finished on 22 March 2013.

I understand that that under section 4.1 of the Code, Telstra was required to consider a number of factors when deciding on this site. These factors include:

- minimising public exposure to electromagnetic energy levels (EME)
- whether it could be a community-sensitive location
- the outcome of consultation with councils and communities
- service objectives
- physical characteristics of the site, such as height and terrain
- ability to connect with the rest of the network
- cost factors.

I have also noted that *The Rockhampton Regional Council Local Disaster Management Plan* (2010) states that the (former) Livingstone Shire does experience difficulties with mobile phone coverage across some parts of the Shire. The government further recognises that the reliability of communications during emergency situations, especially mobile communications, is a major concern for people in regional areas.

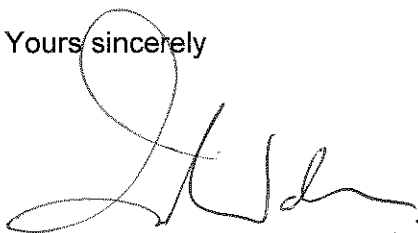
With respect to the concerns raised in the petition regarding the possible health impacts of mobile towers, the Australian Government, Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency is charged with responsibility for protecting the health and safety of people and the environment from the harmful effects of ionising and non-ionising radiation from telecommunications infrastructure.

The Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency have advised that current research indicates that no adverse health effects should be expected from exposure to the radiofrequency radiation from mobile phone base station antenna.

I encourage the petitioners to lodge a complaint with the Australian Communications and Media Authority if they believe that Telstra have failed to comply with the Code.

Any enquires regarding my advice to you, you can contact Mr Dallas Stower, General Manager, CITEC, Department of Science, Information Technology, Innovation and the Arts by email at dallas.stower@citec.com.au or on telephone 07 3224 4919.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'I Walker', written over the words 'Yours sincerely'.

The Hon. Ian Walker MP

Member for Mansfield

Minister for Science, Information Technology, Innovation and the Arts