

Your Reference:

Our Reference: AR:sjh 110314 (ET3.2)

Contact: Andrew Reid

14 March 2011

Committee Secretary
Senate Standing Committees on Environment and Communications
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Sir/Madam

Re: Broadcasting Legislation Amendment (Digital Dividend and Other Measures) Bill 2011

Council has been deferring the decision whether or not to convert its self-help retransmission sites to digital pending the outcome of feasibility tests which were to be carried out by N-Com. To date, Council has not been privy to any demonstrations.

In view of having received no previous advice of the due date, having seen no N-Com demonstrations and the pressure Council is now subjected to as a result of flood damage, it is felt that setting a deadline is totally unfair and unrealistic in the circumstances. Compounding the problem is the fact that to date, only conflicting advice has been available regarding viability of conversion of self-help sites which makes it very hard for Council to make an informed decision.

There has been distinct lack of consultation with our Shire over the last 12-18 months regarding digital television policy and the apparent lack of understanding/awareness of rural and remote area issues. In the absence of defined information the lack of time to investigate rebroadcast alternatives for self-help retransmission sites, even though the Senator invited rebroadcasters to consider alternatives if they choose in his 30 March 2010 letter. There are implications for not only households but businesses and government and council owned facilities.

Council has resolved that it seeks guarantees that no resident should be disadvantaged by the switchover. Council looks forward advice of that guarantee.

Should you require further assistance in relation to this matter, please do not hesitate to contact Andrew Reid, Director of Commercial Services,

Yours sincerely

Andrew Reid
DIRECTOR COMMERCIAL SERVICES