

Dear Sir

I enclose a copy of my letter I submitted to The Hon Fran Bailey, the Hon Ben Hardman and the Weekly Times paper (published 4th June 2008). I have had replies from Fran saying she has written to Sol Trujillo, CEO of Telstra (no response) and from Ben, who has on forwarded my letter to Minister (again no response).

My letter has attracted the attention of a great many of similarly effected persons. They too also are similarly unable to get true broad band and are forced to accept, at 3 times the price, an inferior 'broadband' product to just remain on-line after December 2008.

I live well within ADSL or ADSL2 range but Telstra has taken the 'business viability' view of providing Wireless "Broadband" in lieu of equipping our local exchange (Devlins Bridge) with ADSL. I should also mention that the exchange is on the main optic fibre route and no cost would have to be expended on that aspect.

ISDN, the poor mans 'broadband', has been our life line, and having it withdrawn and replaced with a product at three times the cost is justly unfair to say the least for those that live in the country that rely on the existing ISDN Service for their business, educational and social needs.

Yours sincerely
Doug McArthur

My Letter follows

Telstra shafts Country people (again).

In another grab for profits before Service, Telstra has announced the closure of ISDN as from December this year. We in the Country, who do not have ADSL have been reliant upon ISDN for our Internet connection. Telstra is promoting Wireless Broadband (now there is an oxymoron for a start) as the replacement for ISDN, but at what cost? Currently ISDN customers pay \$44.40 for unlimited data down load and the Wireless alternative is \$109.95 for only 3GB, but there is more! You are then required to accept a 36 month Contract under which you receive a \$249 modem for free, 6 months rental at half price and Telstra will waiver the \$128 charge of restoring your phone Service back to normal. Wow, that's good of them to restore your phone for free for a Service that they are discontinuing and then forcing you to pay 3 times more for less service!

The Rudd Government announced in the last Budget that they are providing funds to allow Country people to have comparable telecommunication

Services to their City cousins. If this takes place can you be assured Telstra will waive your 36 month Contract for a better and likely cheaper alternative?

'Blind Freddie' can see that Telstra wants to maximize the use of their copper network and force us to Wireless Broadband which has the most dubious coverage. Equipping Exchanges with ADSL for those within 5kMs is not a financial alternative to Telstra. They, by forcing us to pay three times as much for their replacement alternative, must be highlighted as totally unfair. The Satellite alternative is another joke, given the charges too! Oh for competition!

We are not all operating out of a Combie van and roaming our properties. We just want simple Telephone connections that are maintained within a reasonable time frame and access to the Internet at speeds and prices commensurate with our City dwellers.

Doug McArthur

Dear Alison [Committee Secretary]

Yes I would very much like it [the letter above] to be published as we in the Country are being ignored, isolated, and forced to pay exorbitant prices for services of a less standard than our City cousins. The Government and Telcos are ignoring us completely.

Yours Sincerely

Doug McArthur