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Shire of **Ngaanyatjarraku**
ON A JOURNEY

Tjulyuru Cultural and Civic Centre
Warburton Community

PMB 87 via Kalgoorlie
Western Australia 6431

Telephone: (08) 8956 7966
Facsimile: (08) 8956 7959

Email: mail@ngaanyatjarraku.wa.gov.au
Website: www.ngaanyatjarraku.wa.gov.au

Shire advocates for improve telecommunications in region

The Shire of Ngaanyatjarraku, as part of the Goldfields Voluntary Regional Organisation of Council (GVROC) recently made a submission to the 2021 Regional Telecommunications Review to highlight and advocate for improved telecommunications services in the Goldfields region.

The Regional Telecommunications Review is held every three years and provides an opportunity for people living and working in regional, rural, and remote areas of Australia to share their experiences with the everchanging landscape of telecommunication services.

More than 650 submissions were received as part of the review this year and the Shire of Ngaanyatjarraku participated in the GVROC submission by providing insights into the telecommunications challenges faced by the lands.

In its submission, the Shire of Ngaanyatjarraku outlined several key concerns faced by the remote communities due to the limited access to reliable and high-speed telecommunications services, including service reliability, remote road safety, mobile coverage, and business connectivity.

Shire President, Damian McLean said telecommunications and connectivity are critical to ensure the community's wellbeing.

"In between townsites there is no services, which is very difficult given the vast distances and remoteness of the area," said Cr McLean.

"The Shire is extremely remote, the need for robust telecommunications is vital for health and safety."

Cr McLean also highlighted the lack of options in the remote communities and what is currently available is not suited to their needs.

"Currently consumers in remote communities don't have a choice and can only get what is available," he said.

"New investment and new technology will create greater competition and better solutions for remote communities. Currently the major players do not do enough for remote communities and therefore we are always behind in service provision."

The lack of mobile connectivity on roads is also affecting tourism in the Shire and surrounding areas.

“The Shire is connected to the Great Central Road, and improvements in telecommunication services and the road network would make the travel more safer for locals and attractive to tourists,” said Cr McLean.

“The current service level is poor, so it discourages tourists from making the journey as they do not feel safe without access to broadband and mobile services which are accessible to other major highways.”

“Improved telecommunications in our region will also help us offer enhanced community services such as telemedicine and improve access to existing service providers such as Centrelink.”

The Shire’s response was forwarded to GVROC who in turn provided an overarching response from the 9 Local Governments in the Region to the Regional Telecommunications Independent Review Committee.

The Committee will provide a report to Government by the end of the year on the findings of the Review which will include recommendation on how to further improve the provision of telecommunications services in regional, rural, and remote areas.

To see GVROC’s submission as well as other non-confidential submissions to the 2021 Regional Telecommunications Review, visit the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications’ Have Your Say page:
www.infrastructure.gov.au/have-your-say/2021-regional-telecommunications-review

For media enquiries, please contact:

Damian McLean

Shire President

P: (08) 8956 7966

E: mail@ngaanyatjarraku.wa.gov.au