

Greg Lehey  
47 Kleins Road  
Dereel VIC 3352  
Australia  
5 July 2011

Mr. Darren Cheeseman  
PO Box 635  
Belmont VIC 3216

Dear Darren,

I have just received your “Budget News”, which seems to indicate a coming election, since I don’t hear from you otherwise, not even in reply to my last letter to you, which I have attached for your convenience.

As you should know, the benefits you mention there are of no help to me as a self-funded retiree with no children under 3 years old. On the other hand I see nothing to address the concerns I mentioned to you last year, which affect the majority of the community; on the contrary, some things seem to have become worse. While none of my four points have been addressed, one stands out: there is still no acceptable broadband Internet service. Recent actions have made things considerably worse.

The previous government implemented a Broadband Guarantee for people without “metro-comparable” services. This at least opened the opportunity for dedicated technologies such as WiMAX. But now the NBN has scrapped the Broadband Guarantee and opted for the worst possible choice, satellite. This will certainly mean a stop to further deployment of WiMAX. As I said in my previous letter,

Anybody who believes that satellite connections can compete with ADSL has clearly never used them. The high latency means that many services are not functional at all, and greatly slows down many other functions. For example, it takes me 45 seconds to access your web site <http://www.alp.org.au/federal-government/labor-people/darren-cheeseman/>, although my connection is the fastest available (2000 kb/s downstream). Friends with ADSL tell me that it takes them much less than a second.

Apart from this issue, there is the issue of cost. In Corindhap, only 10 km away, I could get an ADSL 2+ connection with a downlink speed of 24 Mb/s and with a traffic limit of 250 GB for \$70 a month. We can’t get this service in Dereel. The best that the new NBN can offer us is 6 Mb/s and a traffic limit of 20 GB, for \$100 a month. There is currently no provision at all for traffic limits of more than 20 GB. This is not “metro-comparable”.

If you really believe that satellite Internet is a viable alternative to real networks, I invite you to move all your communications to satellite for a month. You won’t need any longer to be convinced. In the meantime, I should make it very clear that not only I, but many other frustrated users in Dereel and other parts of the Corangamite electorate will not vote for a candidate for a government that treats them like second-class citizens. The lack of other complaints on this matter (if

there is one) would be due to lack of confidence that it would change anything.

There's a clear solution to this problem that would not require a change of government: appoint a Minister for Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy who has a real understanding of the issues involved, rather than one who goes tilting at windmills. You have such a person in your party (the opposition has none): Kate Lundy. I have never understood why she didn't get the job as soon as your government came to power.

Sincerely

Greg Lehey