



Senator the Hon Richard Colbeck

Assistant Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources

Liberal Senator for Tasmania

MEDIA RELEASE

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The Future of Better Regional Telecommunications

The release of the 2018 Regional Telecommunications Review reinforces the Liberal National Government's strategy to invest in telecommunications to build a stronger regional economy and help create jobs.

The *2018 Regional Telecommunications Review: Getting it right out there* puts forward 10 recommendations to improve access to telecommunications infrastructure, ensure modern and appropriate consumer protections and promote digital inclusion.

Liberal Senator for Tasmania Richard Colbeck said that the Review provides a pathway for the Liberal National Government to improve regional telecommunications that will support local small businesses, keep friends and family in contact and provide reliable communications in times of emergency.

Senator Colbeck: "We are seeing the benefits already of our investment in regional telecommunications in Tasmania, through more reliable services and strong uptake by business but we can't afford to slow down."

"With better telecommunications, small business owners can grow their enterprise without being held back by the tyranny of distance as they know customers are only a click away.

"The Liberal National Government has funded 867 new mobile black spot base stations, compared to 0 from Labor, including at Temma, Gawler, Rocky Cape, Sisters Beach, Elliot, Melrose, South Riana, Loyetea, Gunns Plains, Devonport and two at Yolla.

"The NBN is also rolled out right across the state with more than 99% completed, including delivering fibre down the West Coast.

"The Review shows there are many benefits flowing from increased digital connectivity, with economic modelling showing that digital agriculture could increase the value of the industry by \$20.3 billion.

"Better telecommunication also drives a more successful tourism industry that creates jobs in our regions. Tourists being able to share their images and stories in real time from Cradle Mountain or the wild West Coast is showcasing our region to the world."

The Committee was the most consultative ever held, with 22 public sessions across the country, including in Devonport and Circular Head. More than 380 submissions were received from a range of individuals and organisations.

The Government will respond to the Committee's recommendations in early 2019.

The final report is available at: www.communications.gov.au/regional-telecommunications-review

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