



Hon **Barnaby Joyce** MP

FEDERAL MEMBER FOR NEW ENGLAND

## MEDIA RELEASE

# Barnaby calls on New England to get involved in the discussion for improved mobile reception

30 Jan 2014

Federal Member for New England Barnaby Joyce has called on residents and organisations across the region to get involved in the Federal Government's programme to address mobile phone 'black spots.'

The Coalition made an election commitment to invest \$100 million to improve mobile phone coverage in outer metropolitan, regional and remote communities.

As part of this process, a discussion paper has been released that seeks feedback on how to structure the \$100 million regional mobile coverage programme to improve mobile coverage across areas of Australia.

The Federal Government is now seeking submissions from the public on the proposed funding models for the project.

The funding has two elements. The \$80 million Mobile Network Expansion Project will improve mobile coverage along major transport routes, in small communities and in areas that are prone to experiencing natural disasters and the \$20 million Mobile Black Spot Project will improve mobile coverage in locations with unique coverage problems such as areas with high demand for services during seasonal holiday periods.

The discussion paper mentions strategies to maximise the impact of this funding, including co-investment from other levels of government (both state and local) and from businesses and other proponents, as well as from mobile phone carriers and other industry participants and leveraging the towers and backhaul connections of NBN Co's fixed wireless network.

The discussion paper is available from the Department of Communications' website at: [http://www.communications.gov.au/mobile\\_services/mobile\\_coverage\\_programme](http://www.communications.gov.au/mobile_services/mobile_coverage_programme)

Submissions are due by 5pm, 28 February, 2014.

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“I would like to see funding provided to New England under this initiative to address ongoing concerns over mobile phone coverage and I would encourage as many people and organisations as possible to get involved in making a submission to this discussion paper process,” Mr Joyce said.

“Having a number of submissions from the general community shows the decision makers in Canberra that there is a widespread desire to address mobile reception black spots in New England.

“Improving the mobile services across regional Australia is a long term project, but it is important we continue to lobby because better access to technology promotes safety and economic growth.”

Email submissions can be sent to the Department of Communications to [mobilecoverage@communications.gov.au](mailto:mobilecoverage@communications.gov.au)

Submissions can also be sent via post to:

The Manager  
Mobile Coverage Programme  
Department of Communications  
GPO Box 2154  
CANBERRA ACT 2615

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