



Committee Secretary
Joint Standing Committee on the National Broadband Network
Department of the Senate
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600
AUSTRALIA

31 March 2017

To the National Broadband Network Submission,

My name is Matthew Tasker and I work for Premium Grain Handlers (PGH). We are a grain handling and export company located in the Rous Head Industrial Area of North Fremantle. We buy grain direct from farmers, have it delivered to Fremantle and then pack it into shipping containers and export it overseas. Currently the only internet available in our area is ADSL 1 and mobile broadband.

The lack of quality, reliable, high speed internet in our area is restricting our ability to do business and to grow our business. The quality of internet available to us affects all areas of our business both in Fremantle and throughout the wheatbelt.

Empty containers need to be booked out from the empty container parks in Fremantle. This booking system is online and web based. Full containers that need to be sent to the wharf also need to be booked into one of the stevedores and this also done online. Both are done on time slots. Each morning at 8.30am Patricks Stevedore releases the next day's timeslots. The competition for those slots is so high that if you log in at 8.35am you will often have missed any opportunity to get a slot within the hours of 6.00am and 5.00pm. An internet connection that drops out or isn't fast enough to book slots in that window is the difference between us getting slots and missing out. If we can't book the slots we need the vessel sails without our containers on board.

It is not just the container side of our business that is affected by poor internet. Our company has and is continuing to embrace new technologies and software that allow us to work more effectively, productively and enables better communication and collaboration across departments and the world. As such our accounting, contracting and inventory systems are all cloud based. This allows our marketing manager in Singapore to be updated and to update us as soon as product is bought or sold. This communication is vital to ensure that the business is run efficiently and profitably. Poor internet slows the entering of information into our systems and places an increased burden on staff especially during busy periods such as harvest.

PGH also has two receival sites in the wheatbelt at Wandering and Kellerberrin. We buy grain from growers across the state and we are attempting to upgrade our systems so that farmers can see their delivered loads through an online portal instead of waiting for paperwork that is easily lost or destroyed. But we are considerably weighed down in this progress by the lack of internet



infrastructure both in Fremantle and throughout regional Western Australia.

I am making this submission to the National Broadband Network Joint Standing Committee because I want to draw attention to the lack of infrastructure in key areas of Australia. It baffles me that the Port of Fremantle and the businesses working within it do not have quality, reliable and high quality internet. It concerns me that it is taking so long for the NBN to be rolled out into the port. Given the recent coverage and spotlight on Australian agriculture and the economic benefits that it is bringing to Australia and to Western Australia I am concerned that more is not being done to support and grow this industry. Australian producers are the most productive and efficient in the world and they are being left behind by failing infrastructure and a lack of prioritisation. PGH is proud to be supplying the world with quality Western Australian grains but our ability to expand and grow is significantly impacted by the lack of quality internet access in North Fremantle and throughout the wheatbelt.

Yours sincerely,

Matthew Tasker

Management Assistant
Special Projects Manager

