



AgForce Queensland Industrial Union of Employers
ABN 21 241 679 171

AGFORCE NORTH
33 Duck Street PO Box 188 Longreach Q 4730
Ph: (07) 4658 2244
Fax: (07) 4658 1916
Email: agforce@tpg.com.au
Web: www.agforceqld.org.au

Janet Holmes
House of Representatives Standing Committee on Communications
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

February 7, 2001

Dear Janet,

I was present at the inquiry into radio services held in Longreach last Friday (2/2/01), and was asked to write a submission to your Standing Committee.

I work for Agforce Queensland, an agripolitical organisation representing graziers in the sheep and wool, cattle and grain industries. I cover an area from Blackall in the central-west to Cape York (approximately half of Queensland).

I travel this area in a car and therefore rely heavily on the road reports broadcast over the radio. I rely on the radio broadcast for two main reasons:

1. A lot of my travel is in the early morning or late afternoon, so Shire councils, police stations and RACQ offices are not open to get the latest report.
2. When I do phone the Shire Councils and police stations for a road report, the majority of staff in the office have absolutely no idea on the condition of the road, and ask me to phone the council involved at the other end of the road (of which I get the same response).

I therefore wish to express my concerns over the quality of the RACQ road report broadcast over the radio. After rain, the road report provides a critical service to those of us who spend our lives travelling on the roads of north and western Queensland.

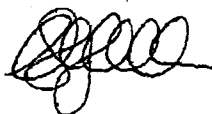
In many instances I have heard on the radio that a certain road was closed (example Aramac-Torrens Creek) only to find that it has been open for several days, and also where roads have been said to be open (example Winton-Hughenden) only to find it impassable. This has meant in certain circumstances

extra travelling of anywhere between 500 and 700km to get to where I am supposed to be going.

While for me this is certainly an inconvenience when I am travelling to meetings, it can mean life or death for people who are inexperienced to conditions in the north of the state. With the increasing amount of tourists on the roads, it is only a matter of time before someone gets caught out after listening to incorrect and out of date road reports broadcast over the radio.

This is a very serious matter, and I hope that the Standing Committee can help in improving the road report service in western and northern Queensland.

Regards,



Liz Allen
Member Service Officer AgForce North