

**Submission regarding changes to the Acts and Codes regulating the
installation of telecommunications towers.**

November 2011

A Submission to protect the environment, landowner and community
rights and the health and wellbeing of the Australian People.

Prepared For:

The Committee Secretary
House of Representatives Standing Committee on
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As a member of the No Tower in Currumbin Valley committee I wish to say we wholeheartedly support the proposed amendments to the Telecommunications Act 1997.

In our case it was by sheer luck that we heard about the proposal by Telstra to build a communications tower near the Currumbin Valley Ecovillage. Telstra had first approached a local resident and by informing her of how allowing permission for a tower to be sited on her land she would be doing the local community a big favour she consented to give permission to allow a tower on her land. We were later informed by this resident that Telstra had told her that their tower would be of the same height as another microwave communication tower on our property, which we said in our submission was not correct.

When this resident found out how upset other local residents were regarding this proposal she was distraught and wondered how she could prevent the tower going ahead.

ONLY because Telstra needed to gain access to her property did we, the residents of the Ecovillage Currumbin Valley, know that there was a proposal for a tower. We

were then able and motivated to inform many other local residents. Your amendment to require owners and occupiers of land to be notified of a proposal will go some way to ensure that all owners will be notified if a tower is in 500 meters of their residence. In our case Telstra submitted a plan that did not include the subdivision in our community but said it was vacant land, whereas we put in our submission that there were about 20 residents of the Ecovillage who would have been within 300 meters of the tower but had not been notified of the proposal of a telecommunication tower within 300 metres of their property.

It was only because that Telstra had notified us of their intention to access the adjoining property by way of our land that we were aware of the tower proposal. Had this not be necessary we assume that we would not have been notified at all and our first inkling of the tower would have been when it was being built.

On discussion with other people who have objected to other tower proposals we have heard that some people were given no notification at all.

We were also lucky in the Telstra had not responded to the Gold Coast Council (GCCC) requests for further information so that we had a reasonable period of time to write our objections to the council, to have been required to do so within a period of 10 days would have been virtually impossible and would not have enabled us to put in the concentrated efforts required to address all the GCCC planning requirements

One of our responses was that we requested Telstra to co locate with an existing tower in the neighbourhood as, in our opinion, Telstra's commercial interest in owning the tower themselves and thus being able to create considerable revenue by hiring it out to other communications networks was not in the best interests of our community and should not be considered, an amendment that we believe you are proposing

We commend your actions in raising this bill and wish you every success

Helen Wainwright