

The Television Improved Communication Scheme Inc.
Howqua Inlet Victoria 3723

30th July 2007

B6/q
The General Manager
Digital Broadcasting
Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts
GPO Box 2154
Canberra ACT 2601

Dear Sir

We, the committee of T.I.C.S. Inc. hereby submit the following opinions and information regarding the digital conversion of our self help retransmission site No. 63 located at Howqua.

For the past twenty years, our translator has serviced the households of Macs Cove, Howqua Inlet and parts of Goughs Bay. There are approximately 250 households who use our translator. We have a subscribed membership base of 170 households who pay a minimum of \$10.00 annually to support our costs. This number is gradually growing and we have support from the Mansfield Shire with a Small Towns Community Grant of \$2,000 per annum for the past three years. We are responsible for the payment of repairs and maintenance, insurance premiums, licence fees and general administrative costs. WIN TV covers the cost of power to the site.

The option most favourable to our situation as supplied in your discussion paper is to convert our existing analogue transmitters to digital. The installation of individual satellite delivered television is not favoured at all. The most important issue is that of keeping our "local content".

We have no mobile phone reception, no broadband service and poor radio reception. We depend on our local TV stations for reliable information. As demonstrated in the bush fires of last summer we found the local reporting invaluable. News services from Melbourne and other areas proved to be unreliable and inaccurate. We do not want to relinquish the option to view our local stations who also supply us with weather warnings and other important information relevant to the area in which we live. We are only just over 200 kilometres from Melbourne, but we are regarded as a remote area, which seems quite inappropriate for the twenty first century.

The timing of the conversion depends on what decisions are made for the type of conversion and what funding is to be available. Our members are aware that is to be a costly exercise to convert our site and we are willing to support this cost with the aid of subsidised funding. Whether it be regarded as not being cost effective by the Department, it seems unfair that our current service be affected by this decision.

We look forward to your response.

Yours Faithfully



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Lauren Eades
Secretary
T.I.C.S.Inc.