

NEED FOR IMPROVED TELEVISION SIGNAL AND MOBILE PHONE RECEPTION IN CROOKWELL

James Harker-Mortlock, independent candidate for the seat of Hume, commented today upon the need for improved mobile phone and television reception in Crookwell :

“I note with interest a story in *‘The Crookwell Gazette’* of today’s date regarding the problem of poor television reception in Crookwell .

I have been involved in the telecommunications and information services industries for over thirty years. I have consulted to Telstra on digital publishing and to the Seven Network on databroadcasting. Databroadcasting is a means of transmitting data via a television signal. For databroadcasting to work you need a clear television signal. So I understand very well the problems in Crookwell and how to work to get those problems fixed.

Upper Lachlan Council is taking steps to rectify the problem of poor television reception by seeking to have Crookwell re-zoned for television signal purposes and by obtaining costings for the building of a re-transmission tower.

Upper Lachlan Council has pointed out also that the Federal Government’s VAST system – designed to provide access to digital television via a satellite signal – is less effective and more expensive to install than would have been hoped. Without a subsidy, the minimum cost of installing a VAST receiver is estimated to be about \$650, with a separate receiver being required for every television or recorder in a house.

With digital television being rolled out across Australia, making digital television available to the residents of Crookwell, and other residents of Hume, at a reasonable price is a matter of urgency.

As the federal government is compelling viewers to take-up digital television, it has a responsibility to subsidise the equipment needed to receive the signal.

The Liberal candidate for the seat of Hume talks about being in contact with his friend Malcolm Turnbull about the issue, but where is the clear commitment from the Liberal Party to Upper Lachlan Council and to the people of Crookwell to provide the funding necessary to solve the problem?

If elected to represent Hume, I will do three things to improve television reception in Crookwell. First, make representations to the relevant Minister to rezone Crookwell for television reception purposes if this has not already been done. Second, seek funding for the costs of building the re-transmission tower including re-imburement of any costs incurred by Upper Lachlan Council in regard to building the tower. Third, seek funding for the provision of a subsidy for the supply and installation of the equipment necessary to receive a digital television signal. Without these three elements, there is not a complete solution to the problem.”

For more information, please contact :

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