



MEDIA RELEASE

David Littleproud MP

FEDERAL LNP MEMBER FOR MARANOA

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Major optic fibre project ahead of schedule in the Central West: Maranoa MP

Federal Member for Maranoa David Littleproud said the installation of optic fibre in the Central West of his electorate was currently ahead of schedule with the cable now snaking its way into the Barcoo Shire Council region.

“Yesterday I received word that Telstra’s optic fibre team had reached the Barcoo region. This project is ahead of schedule with at least 43% now completed,” Mr Littleproud said.

For more than a decade, the Barcoo and Diamantina communities lobbied for telecommunication infrastructure – often taken for granted in the city.

The Coalition Government recognised the significance of the project and invested \$5.95 million through the National Stronger Regions Fund, to promote economic development in the bush.

“This construction of telecommunications infrastructure will provide high-speed internet access in the townships of Windorah, Birdsville, Bedourie, Jundah and Stonehenge,” Mr Littleproud said.

“These towns previously relied on microwave and radio links – installed in the 1980s – which often failed, leaving these towns without a landline phone connection for days, even weeks. The ageing infrastructure couldn’t even support mobile phone coverage.

“Without this infrastructure investment, the Central West of my electorate was in danger of being left behind. Reliable telecommunications is the basis for everything from telehealth, tourism, education, business growth, community safety and enhances the liveability in the Central West.”

The Construction of Telecommunications Infrastructure in Central West Queensland project commenced in March 2016 and is expected to be completed in December 2017.

Total project cost: \$16.5 million. Contributions include: Federal Government (\$5.95m), Queensland Government (\$6.25m), Barcoo Shire Council (\$2.15m), Diamantina Shire Council (\$2.15m). Telstra is providing more than \$4.88m in-kind contribution.

FACT BOX:

Mr Littleproud said the project involved:

- 552km of optic fibre network and the construction of five 4G mobile base stations.
- Replacement of the ageing low capacity radio network, enabling mobile phone coverage, broadband services and real-time applications.
- Building digital infrastructure that can be adaptable for new technologies as it evolves.

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