



NORTHERN TERRITORY CATTLEMEN'S ASSOCIATION INC.

Advancing and protecting the interests of cattle producers in the Northern Territory

Member - National Farmers' Federation & Cattle Council of Australia

Media Release

NTCA Join New Coalition formed to tackle the data drought

The Northern Territory Cattlemen's Association (NTCA) have joined a group of like-minded advocacy groups that have come together to end the data drought by forming the Regional, Rural and Remote Communications Coalition to champion better communications services for producers and small businesses living in rural, remote or regional areas.

The Coalition will see the NTCA join forces with the Australian Communications Consumer Action Network (ACCAN), the National Farmers' Federation (NFF), the Country Women's Association of NSW, the Isolated Children's Parents' Association and AgForce Queensland.

"The Coalition was formed to highlight the collective concerns of families, businesses and communities in rural and regional Australia about the lack of equitable access to reliable and quality telecommunications services in regional, rural and remote Australia," ACCAN CEO, Teresa Corbin said.

"2017 must be the year of delivering real improvements to digital connectivity in the bush."

The Coalition has developed five fundamental outcomes as measures of equitable connectivity for regional and remote consumers. They are ambitious and achievable, and they reflect the pressing need for change.

The five outcomes are:

- A universal service obligation that is technology neutral and provides access to both voice and data;
- Customer service guarantees and reliability measures to underpin the provision of voice and data services and deliver more accountability from providers and nbn;
- Long term public funding for open access mobile network expansion in rural and regional Australia;
- Fair and equitable access to Sky Muster satellite services for those with a genuine need for the service, and access which reflects the residential, educational and business needs of rural and regional Australia; and
- Fully resourced capacity building programs that build digital ability, and provide learning and effective problem solving support for regional, rural and remote businesses and consumers.

NTCA CEO, Tracey Hayes, said that the role out of the Interim Satellite Solution program and the transition to Sky Muster has proven incredibly difficult for many remote Territory businesses. "This has resulted in prolonged periods without any connectivity with no alternative. Many of our producers live in areas where satellite is their only option. In order to trade effectively and competitively in a global market, third world communication settings are not acceptable. We welcome the opportunity to be part of the coalition ensuring positive change".

Suite 9, 1st Floor, Raffles Plaza, 1 Buffalo Court, Darwin NT 0800 | GPO Box 4845, Darwin NT 0801

T: (08) 8981 5976 | F: (08) 8981 9527 | E: office.darwin@ntca.org.au | W: www.ntca.org.au



NORTHERN TERRITORY CATTLEMEN'S ASSOCIATION INC.

Advancing and protecting the interests of cattle producers in the Northern Territory

NFF CEO, Tony Mahar, said that the organisation is pleased to be a member of the Coalition. "Our members include some of the most innovative businesses and individuals in Australia. Yet we remain locked out of future economic growth and prosperity through the digital divide which is undermining Australia's productivity.

"Without leadership and change, Australia risks growing and entrenching the digital divide between urban and rural telecommunications users. We risk undermining the opportunities presented by digital innovation to the farming community and rural Australia as a whole."

President of Northern Territory Isolated Children's Parents' Association, Tiani Cook of Supplejack Downs said telecommunications are of paramount importance to the education of our children and their health, safety and wellbeing. "We are solely reliant on communications for the delivery of Private Lesson Time and internet connectivity for the delivery of electronic Interactive Distance Learning. In the past we have gone without a telephone for a period in excess of 50 days. We have members that are up to 700km from their nearest town and unreliable services are placing these rural families and businesses at significant disadvantage."

For more information please see:

www.farmers.org.au/datadrought

<http://www.ntca.org.au/>

Hashtag: #datadrought

Media Contacts

office.darwin@ntca.org.au or 08 8981 5976

Tracey Hayes 0419845024 NTCA

Tiani Cook 0429826054 ICPA



NTCA Background

The Northern Territory Cattlemen's Association (NTCA) is the peak body for the NT cattle industry, providing leadership at the Territory, national and international level on industry, trade, resource management, and economic and social policy. Representing over 90% of the Territory industry the NTCA maintains a unique position as Australia's most representative producer body and single conduit for engagement.

The NTCA has been a leader in driving positive change while also defending the position and integrity of the cattle sector, its producers and connected supply chains operating into domestic and international markets.

NTCA's membership ranges from small family and indigenous operations, to large corporate organisations. The NTCA exists to advance and protect the interests of Northern Territory cattle producers.

Our Northern Territory members are environmental stewards responsible for a landmass in excess of 680,000 square kilometres (45% of the NT landmass), producing 600,000 high quality cattle per year and providing policy leadership across the primary industry sector including pastoral land conservation, market development and trade, regional development, Indigenous employment and international engagement.

The pastoral industry is the Northern Territory's third largest GDP earner, equating to more than 80% of primary production in the NT. With an investment of \$4.5 billion in the NT, our industry generates over \$1billion directly into the Northern Territory's economy.

The industry directly provides in excess of 1800 jobs and has contributed to the growth of the Territory for over 150 years. It continues to increase in size, productivity and efficiency.

NT producers supply cattle to all mainland states and produce quality animals suited for the live export trade to South East Asia, including, on average up to 400,000 head exported to Indonesia and Vietnam annually.