



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

**TONY WINDSOR MP**  
**INDEPENDENT**  
**FEDERAL MEMBER FOR NEW ENGLAND**

Shop 5  
259 Peel Street  
TAMWORTH NSW 2340

**All Mail:** PO Box 963  
TAMWORTH NSW 2340

**Ph:** (02) 6761 3080  
**Toll Free:** 1300 301 839  
**Fax:** (02) 6761 3380  
**e-mail:** [Tony.Windsor.MP@aph.gov.au](mailto:Tony.Windsor.MP@aph.gov.au)  
**Web Page:** [www.tonywindsor.com.au](http://www.tonywindsor.com.au)

## Media Release

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### **Local Councils will cop the blame for National Party Telstra strategy cop out!!**

Independent Member for New England, Tony Windsor has rejected a suggestion by the new Telstra Chief Executive Officer, Solomon Trujillo for Telstra and local councils to form partnerships to upgrade services in so called “unprofitable areas” in country Australia.

Mr Windsor has also criticised the National Party for agreeing with Solomon Trujillo in what can only be considered a monumental cop out.

“The suggestion by new Telstra CEO Solomon Trujillo of forming telecommunication partnerships with local councils in unprofitable areas is a cop out from delivering telecommunication services to country people that is the equivalent of services available to metropolitan based Australians at affordable prices.

It is admitting that essential telecommunication services will become a victim of corporate grab rather than a way of negating the tyranny of distance and used to create growth in country Australia.

This attitude shows that if Telstra is fully privatised in the future that if you are small, remote or challenged by distance from the major telecommunications markets, you will continue to be treated like a second class citizen in access to the latest technology and the price you will have to pay for that access.

The suggestion by Mr Trujillo is similar to that proposed by the National Party’s Page Research Centre Report which I would describe as a monumental cop out for the Nationals lack of fight to maintain Telstra in majority Government ownership and is designed to get the National Party off the hook on this issue.

The Nationals are giving up the fight after making much noise about their opposition to the full sale and as a result we will see two Australia’s in terms of access to telecommunications.

All country people want is fair and equitable treatment on their telecommunication services and all they keep getting are excuses,” Mr Windsor said.

Mr Windsor is also disappointed by comments in relation to Telstra partnering local councils attributed to the Australian Local Government Association Chairman Mr Paul Bell who is quoted as saying ‘To hear the new CEO of Telstra offering us a way forward I think has got to have merit.’

“I am disappointed at Mr Bell’s comments as he should be experienced enough to realise that if the scheme fails the blame will be sheeted home to local councils – not to Telstra.

Local Councils are under enough financial pressure to provide their existing core services as expected by the community without having to provide telecommunication services to their people.

Telstra is in the business of providing a telecommunication service – an essential service – to ALL Australians and that is what ALL Australians want Telstra to do regardless of where they live,” Mr Windsor said.