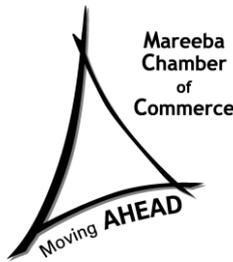


# Mareeba Chamber of Commerce Media Release



11 December, 2018

*For immediate release*

## **Mareeba calls for mobile black spot funding**

The Mareeba Chamber of Commerce is calling for a slice of the mobile black spot pie when the Federal Government serves up round four funding early next year.

Up to \$25 million will be made available to applications which extend or improve mobile phone coverage and competition in rural and remote Australia, under the government's \$220 million Mobile Black Spot Program.

Successful applicants will be advised in early 2019 and chamber president Joe Moro hopes Mareeba Shire applicants secure some of the funding.

He said Mareeba boasted a strong, robust economy, largely driven by a multi-million-dollar horticulture industry, industrial and transport hub, solid retail and business community and flourishing tourism industry.

"However, the presence of mobile blackspots can hamper the most innovative, successful businesses from delivering their services and products to their customers, regardless of where they are located," Mr Moro said.

"An efficient telecommunications network, in particular, reliable mobile coverage, is critical for our businesses and communities to operate.

"Business in today's world extends beyond the central business district, with opportunities available world-wide for homegrown businesses."

Mr Moro said the chamber was aware of mobile coverage issues being experienced particularly during June and July, when the region receives an influx of visitors.

"While there are various mobile black spots littered throughout the shire, the large influx of visitors we receive during the winter months puts enormous pressure on our existing telecommunications infrastructure," Mr Moro said.

"The 4G network is unreliable on most days which has serious impacts on our business community."

Mr Moro said connectivity was also a concern on the shire's road network.

"The road between Mareeba and Cairns has a number of mobile black spots," Mr Moro said.

"This section has more than 9000 vehicle movements per day (rising at 3 per cent per annum) and, therefore, reliable telecommunications is critical for the safety of motorists.

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“Connectivity delivers real benefits to more than just a business community. It has the ability to positively impact the entire community, economically and socially.”

Ends

*For further comment or interview opportunities, please call Joe Moro on 0418 966 960 or Lea Coghlan, Lea Coghlan Communications, 0447 874 394.*