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Telstra CountryWide®  
Geoff Booth  
No address

### **Your letter of 18 September attacking Senator Coonan**

Dear Geoff,

I have received this letter, and I take great exception to it. The fact that you don't even give a way to reply to it is indicative of Telstra's real interest in their customers.

Factually, you have either deliberately or accidentally missed the point. The fact that Senator Coonan may have delivered the letter to people who already have ADSL is in the nature of the action. You, as custodian of the copper for *all* ADSL lines in Australia, are in a position to know that I don't have ADSL, and that I can't get it. Senator Coonan does not have such information at her disposal.

The terminology "reckless attempt" looks more like politics than the professional conduct of a monopolist. Are you trying to improve Labor's chances in the upcoming election? Is that even in your interest?

Most importantly, though, you are masking Senator Coonan's statements:

to extend *fast, affordable broadband services* (my italics).

It is true that many places can get wireless broadband from Telstra, but in comparison with ADSL, they are neither fast nor affordable. For all your advertising of 14.4 Mb/s links, the fastest wireless connection you promise (and even then without a guarantee) is 550 kb/s downstream. The OPEL initiative is talking about 6 Mb/s, 12 times the speed of your offering.

Your Big Pond operation, not known for price cutting, charges \$99.95 for a 1500/256 ADSL line (as fast as anything you even claim for wireless) with 25 GB downstream data included. This much data on your fastest wireless connection would cost me about \$4,275, assuming a 4:1 ratio between downstream data and upstream data, which you charge for with wireless but not with ADSL. You can't call that affordable.

The solution is in your hands, of course: you are the only company who can control where the copper lies. If you are unwilling or unable to provide ADSL to specific parts of the country, provide comparable wireless connections *at the same price*. In the meantime, please stop insulting both our politicians and your customers by making incorrect claims.

Greg Lehey