



Newsletter

November 2006

Farm Writers' Association of NSW Inc
GPO Box 1108 Sydney NSW 2001
Internet: www.nswfarmwriters.org

Telstra and regulation – bridging the great divide

WITH telecommunications critical to overcoming the tyranny of distance for any rural and regional business, Farm Writers' members and guests are urged to attend the 24 November lunch with guest speaker, one of Telstra's controversial three Amigos, Dr Phil Burgess. The lunch will provide a great opportunity to get first hand answers from a Telstra executive about what Telstra's plans for the bush really are.

Dr Burgess will address the thorny issue of 'Regulation and its affect on the future of rural and regional telecommunications'. He will also talk about the equally intriguing issue of how – and whether - the new Next G network will benefit the bush.

In his role as Telstra Group Managing Director for Public Policy and Communications, Dr Burgess is responsible for public policy, regulatory affairs, government relations, media relations and corporate communications.

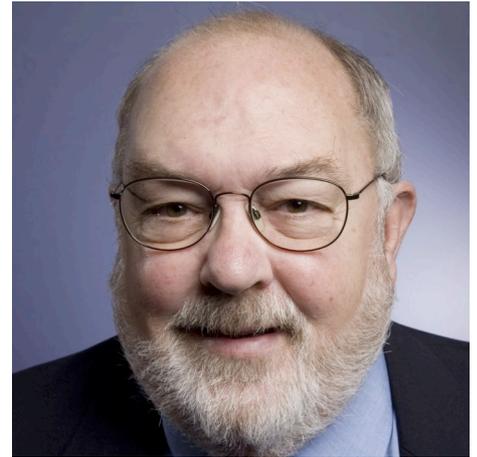
Given this, the lunch will provide Farm Writers' members and guests with the chance to ask Dr Burgess about any concerns, cynicisms and fears they may have about telecommunications, upon which so much of rural life and business depends.

Rural and regional-based journalists and communicators will again be able to participate in the lunch from afar thanks to a live webcast provided by Telstra Country Wide. (Please contact your local Telstra Area General Manager to attend.)

It's no secret that Dr Burgess is not afraid of stirring up controversy about that which he is passionate. And recently controversy has certainly been the theme surrounding the Federal Government's third and final privatisation of Telstra, which has already attracted \$9.8 billion from retail investors.

Dr Burgess started with Telstra last year when he was brought on board by then newly appointed CEO Sol Trujillo. Since then, he, and Telstra, have been lobbying the Federal Government to reform telecommunications regulations. Telstra has argued regulations threaten the growth and development of telecommunications in Australia.

Key issues expected to spark debate at the lunch include ensuring the Next G network is made available to as many people as possible in country areas and that until the 2008 completion of the roll out process, those without Next G



Dr Phil Burgess, Telstra

continue to have access to the existing CDMA network. Pricing parity for landline rental is another hot topic.

Interestingly, Dr Burgess has written extensively on emerging patterns of work in the United States, coining the term 'lone eagles' to describe the growing number of entrepreneurs and freelance professionals who can live and work anywhere, primarily because of telecommunications advances.

Join Farm Writers' Corporate Member of the Month Integrated Marketing Communications on Friday 24 November to hear Dr Burgess's address.

To book go to our website: www.nswfarmwriters.org/BOOKINGS.htm

Register early and online for the luncheon on Friday, 24 November with Dr Phil Burgess, Telstra

Corporate Member of the Month: Integrated Marketing Communications

Venue: The MENZIES HOTEL, 14 Carrington Street, Sydney

When: Friday, 24 November at 12pm for 12:30pm

Cost: \$60 per head, or voucher, for members. \$70 per head for all non-members

Register: BEFORE 5:00pm on Wednesday, 23 November

online: www.nswfarmwriters.org, email: bookings@nswfarmwriters.org, phone: Sarah Robson (02) 8204 3730

Reminder: If bookings are not cancelled by the deadline, the person making the booking will be invoiced. We will do our best to accommodate late bookings and cancellations – please phone Sarah Robson on (02) 8204 3730.

Integrating rural & Aboriginal communities

Contributed by Fiona Dewar, Cox Inall Communications

IN 1997 in the racially-divided town of Moree in north-west NSW, cotton growers Dick Estens and Alice Scott sought funding from the Federal Government to establish a strategy to place Aboriginal people in gainful employment.

Their efforts culminated in the creation of the Aboriginal Employment Strategy (AES), which today, almost 10 years later, has seven offices in regional and metropolitan NSW, including, of course, Moree. In the 2005 / 2006 financial year, the AES placed over 500 people in jobs and is about to embark on the third year of its increasingly successful School Based Trainee program.

Phil Lockyer, Communications Manager for the AES, addressed the Farm Writers' lunch on Friday, 27 October with a thought-provoking insight into the organisation and its success.

A recent addition to the team, Phil says one of the strengths of the AES and its many programs is that it is staffed entirely by Aboriginal people.

"All our staff are Aboriginal which creates a sense of empowerment and provides a good example to other people that Aboriginal organisations can be a success," Phil said.

"All our offices are located in each town's main street, which makes sure the AES has a highly visible profile in the community.

"We want to instil a sense of pride in the Aboriginal community, and negate the pull down effect that can happen."

While the AES has a number of successful programs, one of the newest is the School Based Trainee program. Started in 2004, the program places Aboriginal students from Year 10 into work one day per week with banks and councils. The students are required to complete 1300 hours with the employer over three years with the view to gaining full time employment once they leave school.

The program has a number of benefits, both for the employers and the students.

"The SBT program helps to fill positions in rural towns that are experiencing a skills shortage," Phil said.

"Additionally, the students provide extra support staff for the employers, particularly in school holidays when they can work more hours and full-time staff can then take time off to spend with their families. It is also important for the community to see staff in their local shops, which reflects racial diversity in the workplace."

The AES has a vision to extend to Western Australia, north Queensland and South Australia, but they will be careful to expand with the right support for their staff and the people they are placing in employment, as well as the right environment to make it work.

The AES is one of Australia's success stories, and luncheon attendees were fortunate to hear such a candid address.

Thanks to October Corporate Member of the Month Cox Inall Communications



Lucy Broad, Cox Inall Communications, Phil Lockyer, AES, & Bev Jordan, Farm Writers.

News In Brief

Mark your diary for the Farm Writers' Christmas Party

Farm Writers' members and guests are invited to attend the association's annual Christmas lunch function at NSW Parliament House on Wednesday, 13 December.

Farm Writers' patron, the NSW Minister for Primary Industries, Ian Macdonald MLC will be the guest speaker and will no doubt provide some insights on what the State Government has in store for agriculture for the coming year.

Corporate members are reminded to book early to reserve a table and all are invited to supply gifts for the festivities following lunch.

Visit www.nswfarmers.org to make a booking.

Special General Meeting

Prior to the Christmas lunch, there will be a Special General Meeting of Farm Writers' at 11am on Wednesday, 13 December at Strangers' Dining Room, Parliament House, Macquarie Street, Sydney, for the purpose of altering the constitution to reflect changes in current best practice for auditing accounts.

Full details of the proposed changes will be sent via email to each member prior to the meeting.

Making lunch easier

To make it more cost effective for members and their guests to attend the monthly Farm Writers' lunches, the association will now offer lunch vouchers in books of six as well as the traditional books of 12.

Visit www.nswfarmwriters.org for more information.

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Farm Writers' Association of NSW Inc

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