



WANTAIM PNG

THE DIRECTOR, NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY BROADCASTING
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATIONS AND THE ARTS, CANBERRA, ACT, AUSTRALIA

SUBMISSION TO THE REVIEW OF AUSTRALIAN BROADCASTING SERVICES IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC

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THIS SUBMISSION MAY BE MADE PUBLIC

I am mixed Manus-Australian and the founder of an INGO with an 11-year track record of grass root engagement in Manus Province.

I make this submission as a Manusian.

I trace my PNG roots to the second largest island in Manus Province lying 50Kms south east of mainland Manus.

My people are sea-faring people: the sea is their highway. Having access to up to date weather information is critical. It saves lives. This is true for the large percentage of PNG people who live in the region known as the NGI (New Guinea Islands) or on PNGs long coastal areas.

In my community wantoks on the mainland share weather reports by posting updates on Facebook that are then accessed and shared by those in the village with smart phones.

Broadcasts from NBC Radio Manus are not broad enough or reliable enough to be a substitute. Indeed, the NBC Radio service has been completely off air for several months awaiting funding of critical equipment.

Unfortunately, the available mobile telecommunications network (Digicel) has always been erratic and for the past several months has been non-existent.

Today I hold great fears for family and friends in Manus who no longer access weather information ahead of travelling. For my family and the other 3000 people of Rambutso it's 2.5 hr boat trip across the open sea to town. They are not alone.

Roughly 55,000 of Manus' 62,000 people rely on the sea for transport with many travelling further than my family.

Across the Pacific is not uncommon for lives to be lost this way.

Australia: restore the ABC short wave service and get life saving information to isolated communities across PNG and the Pacific.

If building goodwill with Pacific people is a worthwhile goal, doing this will give you an excellent start.

Lynne Shori

Founder

Wantaim PNG - *Working together to build thriving communities for all!*

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