

From: Robert Reed N6HGG [psn@tidepool.com]
Sent: 30 March 2002 7:36
To: radiocomms@pc.gov.au
Cc: support@aussiewinlink.org; pacseanet@topica.com;
a70stingray@hotmail.com
Subject: Comments on the Draft Report on Radio Communications

This should be my last posting and email on this subject. To the Winlink administrators on this email list, I included you just as a heads-up that this has been posted.

I copied Pages 236 and 237 from the Australian "Radiocommunications Draft Report" and posted it at the following URL. It is amazing in it's lack of understanding of what Winlink is and it's capabilities:

<http://www.tidepool.com/~psn/ruling.html>

Also copied from the draft is the following:

-Opportunity for further comment-

"You are invited to examine this draft report and comment on it in writing and/or by attending a public hearing. The public hearings will be held in April 2002. The dates and venues will be advised in our circulars and national newspapers. Anyone interested in attending a hearing should complete a registration form or contact the Productivity Commission. The final report will be prepared after submissions have been received and will be forwarded to the Commonwealth Government on 16 July 2002."

To send comments to the commission, just click on the very long link below:

<mailto:radiocomms@pc.gov.au?cc=support@aussiewinlink.org&subject=Comments%20on%20the%20Draft%20Report%20on%20Radio%20Communications>

Robert Reed
The Pacific Seafarer's Net
Amateur Radio Station N6HGG
Humboldt Bay, California

ROBERT REED N6HGG COMMENT ON WINLINK 2000 PROHIBITION IN AUSTRALIA

Yesterday I submitted my comments to the Commission on their myopic policy concerning Winlink 2000. If it was filtered out by any filtering process anywhere on any server, it can be viewed at the following url

<http://www.tidepool.com/~psn/wl.html>

I have also placed a "headline" at the forefront of the Pacific Seafarer's Net website with a link to the above url as follows:
"WINLINK 2000 OUTLAWED IN AUSTRALIA!"

That site can be accessed at <http://www.14313.cjb.net>

A paper hard copy will be mailed to Dr. David Robertson, Presiding Commissioner of the Australian Productivity Commission on Monday.

In my opinion, this is a safety of life and property issue in which a

commission has made a tragic mistake in their final ruling. It is just plain wrong.

Robert Reed
The Pacific Seafarer's Net
Amateur Radio Station N6HGG
Humboldt Bay, California

ROBERT REED N6HGG COMMENT ON WINLINK 2000 PROHIBITION IN AUSTRALIA

Dr. David Robertson
Presiding Commissioner
Australian Productivity Commission
LB2 Collins St. East
Melbourne VIC 8003
Australia

Friday 29 March, 2002

Dear Mr. Robertson,

My name is Robert Reed, of Amateur Radio Station N6HGG and I am a control operator for the Pacific Seafarer's Net which is dedicated to the communications needs of cruisers at sea. The views expressed in this document are mine and not those of the Net or anyone else.

I read with amazing surprise about the prohibition of Winlink 2000 in Australia. It is unthinkable to anyone raised in a free society and in today's communications technology environment that legislation and laws as archaic as this could exist in a free society such as is supposed to exist in Australia.

As I read the Productivity Commission's draft report, I couldn't help but be reminded of third world communist repressory tactics in thwarting the abilities of the population to communicate. Communications capabilities of the type possible on the internet represent a prime threat to these dictatorial regimes, such as those who rule Mainland China and Cuba.

What is Australia afraid of, Dr. Robertson? In the eyes of the expert communicators of the world, namely the ham operators dedicated to serving the communications needs of isolated people, thanks to your commission's ruling, Australia is now a tiny island third world nation, afraid and cowering in a bold world full of wonderful communications possibilities. I wonder why much smaller nations that are far less capable of militarily defending themselves would allow Winlink 2000 to operate in their countries? Are they braver than your country's legislators Dr. Robertson? Australia must really be afraid of something bad happening. The entire world lets Winlink help isolated people, but Australia is afraid and isolates itself. Either your commission is hiding something or you have lost that great Australian sense of adventure and your commission represents an outfit run by politically motivated cowering wimps. We have a saying here in the states, Dr. Robertson. It goes like this: "Fear sucks". I am really sorry to witness this. It's pathetic.

SAFETY FEATURES OF WINLINK

As an administrator of information and a control operator for the Pacific Seafarer's Net, I can vouch for the safety features of Winlink. With a Pactor II interface modem, reliable error-free messages are regularly sent when conditions for voice communications are not

possible. In addition, our net has maintained reliable safety and health position reporting information on vessels at-sea when their microphone audio systems failed. To facilitate the possibility of saving several lives in your outback areas, Winlink would be a reliable tool. Land based Winlink-to-internet fixed stations in Australia are a must if the maximum safety of life and property interest you, Dr. Roberston. It must weigh heavily in your heart that as the months will pass, several people could die out there in the outback or at sea who would not have otherwise because of the commission's decision. It probably won't happen, but it could.

Winlink users regularly post position reports to the APRS and PANGOLIN COMMUNICATIONS databases over HF radio-to-internet networking. I have thousands of them in my computer and APRS and PANGOLIN have many more. We use the Winlink system information in search and rescue efforts for accurate position estimates at sea based on past reporting of the Winlink maritime stations. The United States Coast Guard is briefed and ready to use Winlink for their search and rescue efforts. The weather information is cached and used by New Zealand MET Service and NOAA meteorological high seas forecasters.

Our search and rescue efforts always include attempts to reach a vessel using it's Winlink email address, and it has produced results. Just yesterday I did just that with a missing vessel at-sea. Additionally, vessels at sea regularly on a daily basis use Winlink to access weather data files for their own safety. Australian land based stations would greatly assist vessels 2-5 thousand miles out at sea if your commission would allow it. More possibilities for lives saved, Dr. Robertson. We regularly warn our vessels at sea of hazardous weather in their paths using Winlink email, allowing the high seas Winlink station to prepare for weather emergencies when normal voice radio schedules don't allow it to be done in a timely manner. An email can be sent any time any day without schedule restraints.

I find it interesting that your commission is "afraid" of congestion on the HF radio spectrum. If a country the size of the States and the rest of the world and it's ham radio population hasn't done that yet in the digital sub-portion of the bands, then Australia will not be able to finish the job of congesting the bands. It's not going to happen.

I don't need to go on. What I see are a load of lame and antiquated political excuses to disallow a life-saving safety technology to be incorporated into your society, and it is sad to see. Dr. Roberston, if you are being led by your commission members and the stance by the commission is not yours, you need to replace these antiquated thinkers. They will be your undoing. If the stance of the commission is yours, then you are 180 degrees out of step with the free world, and you need to go. Winlink is awesome, we use it to prevent emergencies, save lives, and we think you would be wise to reconsider your stance on this matter.

Robert Reed
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