

Greg Lehey
47 Kleins Road
Dereel VIC 3352
Australia
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Sarah Henderson
PO Box 20
Belmont VIC 3216

Dear Mrs Henderson,

I have received multiple mailings from you regarding your candidature for the coming Federal Elections. I find it unworthy of an elected representative that you devote so much time to denigrating your opponent and his party. More importantly, though, you describe the things that you intend to do in the case of your election, but none of them match any of my serious concerns.

I have lived in Dereel for 3 years, during which time I have discovered that the infrastructure is comparable to that of a developing nation. In particular:

- Despite the devastating bushfires in February 2009, there are inadequate provisions to protect us against bushfire. The authorities leave combustible material on the roadside, we don't have mobile phone coverage, and there is not even a designated place of last refuge in the area, as the CFA map (<http://tinyurl.com/dereel-cfa-map>) shows.

This isn't because of lack of bushfire risk. Last year the ABC identified Dereel as one of the 53 localities in Victoria most likely to be destroyed by bushfire: <http://tinyurl.com/dereel-fire-danger>, and the CFA has also identified Dereel as being high risk.

- Mobile phone coverage is not the only modern technology that is missing. There is also no acceptable broadband Internet service. The telephone exchange is in Corindhap, too far away for ADSL, and the lack of mobile telephone coverage eliminates wireless networks. The only alternative to dial-up is satellite, and it's only marginally better. Anybody who believes that satellite connections can compete with ADSL has clearly never used them. The quality of service is worse than dial-up. I have recorded over 1000 outages since installing a satellite service in December 2007, on average one every 21 hours. More details at <http://www.lemis.com/grog/satstats.php>. In addition, the high latency means that many services are not functional at all, and greatly slows down many other functions. For example, it takes me 27 seconds to access your web site <http://sarabhenderson.com.au/>, although my connection is the fastest available (2000 kb/s downstream). Friends with ADSL tell me that it takes them much less than a second. Your party's decision to scrap the current plans for the national broadband network will find no friends in Dereel.

- Radio and television reception is also more good luck than good management. According to the ACMA, we are not in the coverage area of our local transmitters (see the coverage map at <http://tinyurl.com/dereel-tv>), and reception is marginal.
- The electricity supply is also very unreliable. On average we have one power outage every 6 days. Powercor, the responsible supplier, seems to consider this acceptable “for a rural area” and have admitted to having multiple single points of failure in their distribution network. Many of these failures, particularly the longer ones—in my experience up to 16 hours—affect a corridor 30 km long, from Ballarat to here, and about 15 km wide, an area of 450 km². I know of no other civilized country with a service anywhere near this bad. Even in Australia it seems to be an exception.

I would greatly appreciate it if you would address these issues before the election. You can contact me via the email address in the accompanying mail message, or by telephone. I would also appreciate an acknowledgement of receipt of this message.

Sincerely
Greg Lehey