



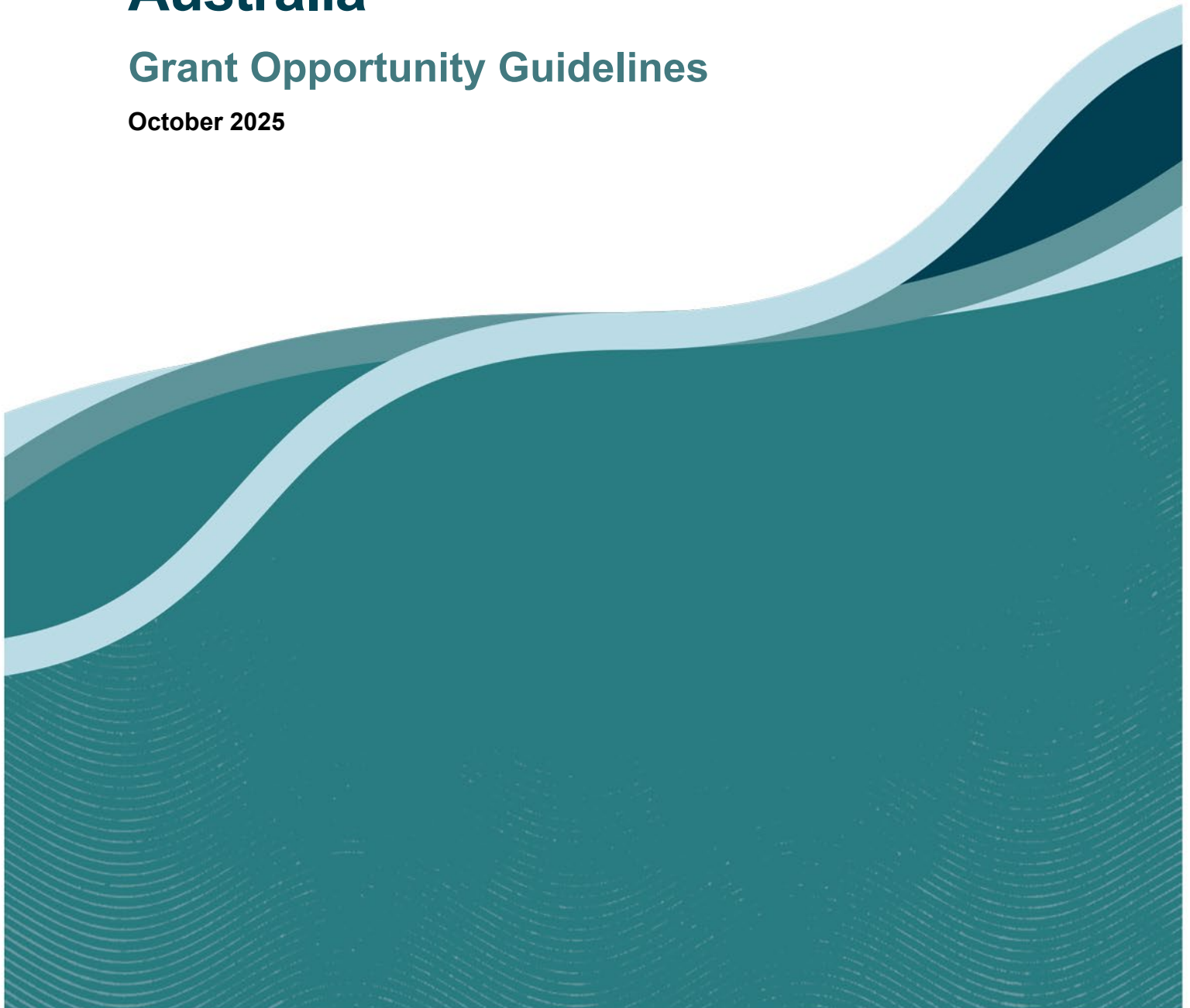
Department of
Primary Industries and
Regional Development

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Regional Roads Australia Mobile Program – Pilot Program in Western Australia

Grant Opportunity Guidelines

October 2025



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1. Introduction

The Regional Roads Australia Mobile Program Pilot (RRAMP Pilot) is an Australian Government initiative to improve multi-carrier coverage on highways and major roads in regional and remote Australia.

The Australian Government is providing \$50 million nationally to state and territory governments to deliver RRAMP Pilot which tests innovative and novel solutions to increase mobile telecommunications coverage on regional highways and major roads. The RRAMP Pilot allows each state and territory to tailor solutions that meet their own needs and priorities.

In April 2025, the Western Australian and Australian Governments committed \$16 million for a RRAMP Pilot in Western Australia (WA). This investment is funded under the WA Regional Digital Connectivity Program (WARDCP) and the Australian Government's *Better Connectivity Plan for Regional and Rural Australia*.

The Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) is responsible for administering the RRAMP Pilot in WA on behalf of the WA Government.

This document aligns with the Australian Government's Principles and Guidance for Pilot Programs, which outline the national objectives and expectations for improving mobile coverage and connectivity across rural, regional and remote Australia. The RRAMP Pilot incorporates these principles to support consistency across jurisdictions and ensure value for public investment.

The Grant Opportunity Guidelines (the guidelines) contain information on the RRAMP Pilot in WA. This document sets out:

- the eligibility and assessment criteria
- how we consider and assess grant applications
- how we notify applicants and enter into grant agreements with grantees
- how we monitor and evaluate grantees' performance
- responsibilities and expectations in relation to this opportunity

Refer to the Glossary (Section 14) for definitions of key terms.

2. Program Overview

2.1. Objectives

The objectives of the RRAMP Pilot in WA (the program) is to increase in-vehicle handheld mobile coverage and multi-carrier outcomes on two priority regional WA highways to improve safety, strengthen economic growth, improve social connectivity, and support regional development.

The program supports the Australian Government's Outcome 5: promoting an innovative and competitive communications sector through policy development, advice, and program delivery, enabling all Australians to realise the full potential of digital technologies and communications services.

2.2. Outcomes

The intended outcomes of the program are to:

- invest in construction of new or upgraded infrastructure to increase in-vehicle handheld mobile coverage and multi-carrier solutions on two priority regional WA highways.
- increase handheld mobile connectivity and coverage in regional areas, along the two priority regional WA highways and at strategic locations.
- improve road safety, liveability and equality for regions
- test new thinking and innovative solutions to deliver mobile coverage on regional highways and roads, including technologies, energy sources, backhaul options, delivery and partnership models and active sharing integration costs
- demonstrate proof-of-concept of a multi-carrier approach on regional highways and roads
- progress the integration of multi-carrier solutions into telecommunications company's normal business model
- improve communication and connectivity in regions.

2.3. Funding

Total funding of \$16 million (GST exclusive) is available through co-contributions from:

- The WA Government's WA Regional Digital Connectivity Program (WARDCP) – \$8 million
- The Australian Government's Better Connectivity Plan – \$8 million

3. Program Requirements

3.1. Focus Areas

The program targets two high priority highway corridors, as shown in the map at **Appendix A**:

- Albany Highway (Bedfordale to Albany Airport – approximately 380 kilometres)
- Great Eastern Highway (Meckering to Bullabulling – approximately 430 kilometres)

These key regional transport routes are vital for freight, tourism, and emergency services but are experiencing ongoing safety risks and mobile coverage gaps.

The Australian Government is currently conducting a National Audit of Mobile Coverage, which includes both Western Australian pilot corridors. This audit, supported by a [visualisation tool](#) showing current mobile coverage and roads scheduled for review through to 2027, may help inform and strengthen proposals under the RRAMP Pilot. For more information, visit: [National Audit of Mobile Coverage | Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts](#)

3.2. Requirements

As a minimum, funded solutions are expected to enable consumers to perform a range of functions using handheld mobile devices, such as making and receiving phone calls, sending emails and text messages, browsing the internet, accessing online services, downloading files, using mobile apps, and accessing emergency communications services. To meet this expectation, all solutions must deliver 4G and/or 5G mobile broadband data services and a voice service.

Applicants must:

- Provide evidence of a 10-year operational commitment from at least one national MNO at the time of application.
- Design infrastructure to support co-location and future operator expansion.
- Be a Mobile Network Operator (MNO) or Mobile Network Infrastructure Provider (MNIP).
- Deliver improved handheld mobile connectivity and coverage in regional WA.

3.3. Infrastructure Ownership and Responsibility

Grantees retain ownership and are responsible for maintenance and operations for a minimum of 10 years, including compliance, outages, and upgrades. Projects must not duplicate existing commitments or be already listed in a Grantee's forward work program.

4. Grant Amount, Period and Activities

4.1. Available Grants

Up to \$16 million (GST exclusive) is available for the program. Grant funding will be up to 100 per cent for eligible activities as outlined in Section 4.4.

4.2. Grant Duration and Operational Period

Projects must commence upon execution of a Grant Agreement with DPIRD and be completed in accordance with its terms.

Funded infrastructure must be operated and maintained for at least 10 years after the last infrastructure built/commissioning is accepted by DPIRD.

4.3. Funding Co-Contributions

Applicants are encouraged to seek co-contribution funding from local governments, industry, businesses, and community organisations. Contributions must be clearly itemised in applications and included in the RRAMP Pilot Proposed Solution Assessment Tool (PSAT) to avoid double-funding.

4.4. Eligible Activities

Grant funding must be used for infrastructure activities that directly improve mobile connectivity along WA's Albany Highway or Great Eastern Highway, as described in Section 3.1 of the guidelines. Eligible activities include:

- Site acquisition and environmental approvals
- Design and construction of mobile base stations
- Equipment procurement, installation and commissioning
- Backhaul and power infrastructure provision
- Integration costs associated with active sharing where relevant
- Additional resilience and site hardening measures
- the capitalised net present value (using a discount rate equivalent to the 10-year Treasury Bond Rate applied at the date of the application) of the estimated Operational Costs over the minimum Operational Period.

4.5. Ineligible Activities

Funding under this program cannot be used for the following activities or costs:

- Routine maintenance or minor upgrades to existing infrastructure
- Projects or activities already funded through any State or Australian Government programs
- Business-as-usual operations or expenses not directly contributing to improved mobile connectivity and coverage outcomes
- Application, negotiation and agreement drafting costs.

5. Eligibility Criteria

5.1. Who Can Apply?

To be eligible for funding, applicants must:

- have a valid Australian Business Number (ABN); and
- be registered for the purposes of the Goods and Service Tax (GST)

and are one of the following entity types:

- a Mobile Network Operator (MNO), or
- a Mobile Network Infrastructure Provider (MNIP) with written evidence of intent from at least one MNO to use the infrastructure for a 10-year period.

Eligible applicants must demonstrate the capacity and experience to deliver mobile connectivity and coverage infrastructure, including technical and commercial readiness.

This competitive grant opportunity targets applicants with proven experience in mobile infrastructure delivery.

5.1.1 Definition of a Mobile Network Operator (MNO)

For the purposes of this program, an **MNO** is an entity that:

- Supplies a *public mobile telecommunications service* within the meaning of the *Telecommunications Act 1997 (Cth)*
- Holds an *apparatus licence*, a *spectrum licence*, or both, under the *Radiocommunications Act 1992 (Cth)* for the supply of such services
- Operates a mobile network that provides coverage to at least 80% of the Australian population

5.1.2 Definition of a Mobile Network Infrastructure Provider (MNIP)

For the purposes of this program, an MNIP is an entity other than an MNO that:

- Provides communications infrastructure in Australia or overseas, including installing and operating infrastructure used by one or more MNO to deliver public mobile telecommunications services.

5.1.3 MNIP Applications

MNIP applications must be accompanied by written evidence of intent from at least one MNO to enter a commercially binding commitment to use the proposed infrastructure for the Operational Period (minimum 10 years). Funding may be awarded on the condition that a binding agreement is executed prior to finalisation of the Grant Agreement.

5.1.4 Joint Applications

MNOs and MNIPs may submit joint applications, provided these are supported by a:

- Commercially binding arrangements or
- Clear intention to enter into such arrangements if the application is successful

Only one entity may be nominated as the Lead Applicant, and the WA Government will enter into a single Grant Agreement with that entity. Asset ownership arrangements between joint applicants are the responsibility of the parties involved and must be documented in their commercial agreement.

5.2. Minimum Technical and Service Requirements

All proposed solutions must comply with the minimum standards set out below. Applications that fail to meet these requirements may be excluded from assessment at DPIRD's discretion.

5.2.1. Service Capability

Each proposed solution must deliver in-vehicle handheld mobile coverage in the eligible project corridors and must:

- Enable consumers to make and receive phone calls, send text messages and emails, browse the internet, access online services, download files, use mobile apps, and access emergency communications services
- Provide 4G broadband data services and voice services as a minimum, with 5G preferred where feasible
- Include coverage modelling demonstrating signal strength to at least the following Reference Signal Received Power (RSRP) thresholds:
 - -85 dBm
 - -95 dBm
 - -105 dBm
 at a 90% confidence level across the intended coverage area

If the applicant already provides 5G handheld coverage adjacent to the target area, the solution is expected to include 5G. Where this is not feasible, applicants must provide a clear justification.

5.2.2.Backup Power

All macrocell base stations must include auxiliary backup power capable of sustaining operations for at least 12 hours in the event of external power loss.

For other base station types (e.g., small cells), a 12-hour backup power supply is also expected unless the applicant demonstrates why this is not technically or commercially feasible.

5.2.3.Multi-MNO Solutions, Active Sharing, and Co-location

Applicants are strongly encouraged to:

- Develop multi-MNO solutions incorporating active sharing (including mobile roaming)
- Offer co-location (passive sharing) capacity to other MNOs

Co-location Requirements:

- Each proposed solution must offer co-location to additional MNOs unless it is demonstrably unfeasible
- If a proposed solution cannot technically support an additional MNO, the applicant must submit a detailed explanation. This will be independently reviewed by DPIRD's technical advisor. If DPIRD determines co-location is feasible, the applicant must offer it on commercially reasonable terms.
- Each proposed solution must reserve capacity for use by Emergency Service Organisations (ESOs) under a peppercorn rental agreement. The proposed solution must be able to accommodate the engineering/load of the ESO equipment.

Design Participation:

- Applicants must allow other MNOs interested in co-location to participate in the detailed design phase to ensure their requirements are accommodated
- Incremental costs associated with co-location must be transparently shared with participating MNOs
- Applicants are responsible for engaging with interested MNOs, gathering specifications, and ensuring these are integrated into the project design

5.2.4. Backhaul Access and Pricing

Where feasible, applicants must:

- Offer backhaul access to co-locating MNOs.
- Provide backhaul pricing more favourable than the regulated ACCC Domestic Transmission Capacity Service Final Access Determination (DTCS FAD) prices, such as through rent-free periods or other discounts.

If the applicant owns or controls backhaul infrastructure (fibre or microwave), they must ensure sufficient capacity and interfacing equipment to meet the requirements of co-locating MNOs.

If microwave backhaul is used, applicants must:

- Provide services over that connection, or
- Enable co-locating MNOs to install and operate their own microwave backhaul equipment.

Terms must be negotiated in good faith and comply with these principles.

5.2.5. Dispute Resolution

Any disputes between applicants and co-locating MNOs over co-location or backhaul will be resolved by an independent third-party expert, with costs shared equally between the parties. All parties will be bound by the determination.

6. Assessment Criteria**6.1. Merit Criterion**

Each application will be assessed against two criteria for a score out of 100.

Criterion	Weighting
Criterion 1: New in-vehicle handheld road coverage and value for money	50 points
Criterion 2: Alignment with the program objectives	50 points
Total	100 points

Criterion 1: New in-vehicle handheld road coverage and value for money (up to 50 points)

Applications will be assessed through the **New Road Coverage Assessment Formula** to derive the grant cost per kilometre of *Length of New Road Coverage (km)*. All other factors being equal, proposed solutions with a lower cost per kilometre will rank higher than solutions with a higher cost per kilometre.

The New Road Coverage Assessment Formula is:

$$\frac{\text{Total grant cost (\$)}}{\text{Length of new in-vehicle handheld road coverage (km)}}$$

This criterion assesses the extent of new in-vehicle handheld mobile coverage proposed for Eligible Locations where no such coverage currently exists at required signal strengths. New in-vehicle handheld road coverage means the total length of coverage (in kilometres) within the applicant's network footprint where coverage will be delivered at the required signal levels to provide in-vehicle handheld coverage.

Where a proposed solution provides New Road Coverage from more than one participating MNO, each participating MNO's New Road Coverage will be counted cumulatively in calculating the Length of new in-vehicle handheld road coverage (km), regardless of whether the New Road Coverage areas overlap one another.

This is in recognition of the benefits of multi-carrier solutions, and to ensure that multi-carrier applications are not disadvantaged in the assessment process due to the higher costs that may be incurred for these solutions.

Given the desired outcome of this program to address coverage gaps along major highways, solutions providing targeted highway coverage will rank higher in this criterion.

Criterion 2: Alignment with program objectives (50 points)

Multi-Carrier Outcomes (10 points)

- Supports access to multiple mobile carriers to ensure redundancy and user choice.
- Indicators:
 - Agreements or partnerships with multiple carriers.
 - Infrastructure compatibility with multi-carrier technologies.
 - Projected user access across different networks.

Safety Improvements (10 points)

- Contributes to enhanced safety for highway users.
- Indicators:
 - Reduction in mobile black spots in high-risk areas.
 - Integration with emergency services or roadside assistance.
 - Community or stakeholder feedback on safety concerns.

Support Economic Growth (10 points)

- Strengthens regional economic activity through improved connectivity.
- Indicators:
 - Impact on local businesses, logistics, and tourism.
 - Support letters from regional economic stakeholders.
 - Economic modelling or projections.

Social Connectivity (10 points)

- Improves social inclusion and access to digital services.
- Indicators:
 - Benefits to remote communities, travellers, and residents.
 - Support for education, health, and social services.
 - Community engagement and consultation outcomes.

Alignment with Australian Government Outcome 5 (10 points)

- Promotes innovation and competitiveness in the communications sector.
- Indicators:
 - Use of innovative technologies or delivery models.
 - Contribution to policy development or sector advancement.
 - Evidence of enabling Australians to access digital technologies.

6.2. Evaluation Approach

Applications will be assessed against the above criteria to determine an overall score for each proposal.

6.3. Coverage Merit Considerations

The strength and value of each proposal's coverage solution will be assessed based on the abovementioned New Road Coverage Assessment Formula. Additional points may be awarded for:

- Total square kilometres of new or upgraded handheld mobile connectivity in addition to new in-vehicle handheld mobile coverage along the two priority Highway corridors, including coverage to adjacent businesses and communities (if applicable) or safety-relevant blackspots.
- Coverage delivery at strategic or priority locations, such as rest stops, electric vehicle charging and fuel stations.
- Ability to maintain a call connection while travelling along WA's two high priority highway corridors.
- Contribution to emergency response, public safety or regional development outcomes.

6.4. Multi-Carrier Approach Preference

While the WA program does not mandate multi-carrier delivery, it strongly preferences solutions that demonstrate a genuine intent to enable and encourage multi-carrier outcomes.

This includes:

- Infrastructure that is technically capable of supporting multiple Mobile Network Operators (MNOs), through either active or passive sharing
- Evidence of engagement with additional MNOs, including letters of support or expressions of interest
- Infrastructure design that is scalable and cost-effective for additional operators to utilise in future
- Open access approaches, such as memoranda of understanding (MOUs), transparent co-location policies, or third-party infrastructure management models

Higher scores will be awarded to projects that:

- Include at least two MNOs at the time of application, or demonstrate formalised interest from multiple operators
- Incorporate features enabling active sharing or low-barrier entry for other service providers

7. How to apply

7.1. Application Requirements:

Applicants must:

- Review these guidelines and the application pack
- Provide all requested information and documentation
- Submit applications by the published closing date via the method outlined in Section 7.5

7.2. Application Attachments

Required documents include:

- Detailed scope, project plan and budget
- Letters of support
- Confirmation of co-contributions (if applicable)
- Confirmation of commitment from at least one MNO (if applicable)
- Geo-spatial data files (TAB, MIF, SHP, KML, etc.)
- Proposed Solution Assessment Tool (PSAT)

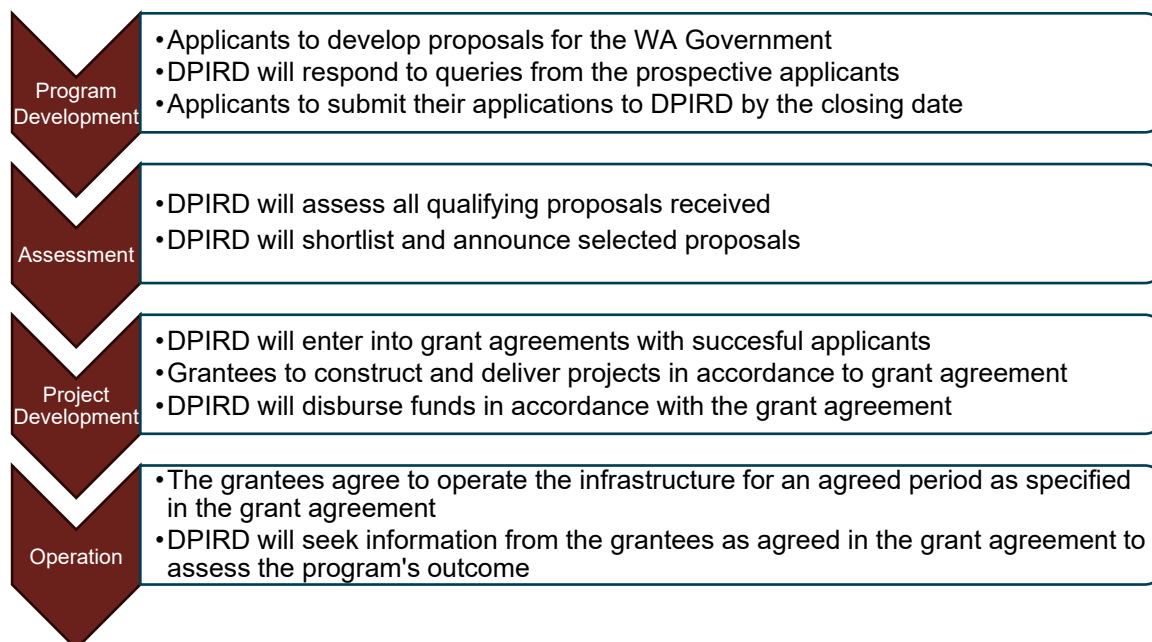
7.3. Key Dates

Activity	Timeframe
Guidelines released and applications open	2 October 2025
Applications close	28 November 2025
Assessment of applications	December 2025 / January 2026
Notification to unsuccessful applicants	January 2026
Commence negotiations and award of Grant Agreements	January 2026
Commencement date of Grant Activity	On Execution of Grant Agreement
End date of Grant Activity	As included in the Grant Agreement and by 30 June 2027

All dates are subject to change. Updated timeframes will be published on the DPIRD website.

7.4. Program Stages

The Program will be delivered in four stages shown below.



7.5. Submission Format

Applications must be submitted online via the [DPIRD Grant Management System SmartyGrants](#). The SmartyGrants system allows each uploaded document to be up to

25MB. If alternative submission methods are required for supporting documentation, contact DPIRD by email at RRAMPpilot@dpiird.wa.gov.au at least one week before applications close.

7.6. Questions during the application process

All requests for clarification to these guidelines should be referred to DPIRD by email at RRAMPpilot@dpiird.wa.gov.au. We will respond to emailed questions within two business days.

8. Grant Selection Process

8.1. Assessment of Grant Applications

Applications will be:

- Assessed for eligibility
- Evaluated against assessment criteria by a DPIRD-led panel (which may include other WA Government representatives)

8.2. Notification of application outcomes

All applicants will be informed of the outcome of their application in writing. Feedback will be available upon request within 28 days of notification.

There will not be an appeal process.

9. Successful grant applications

9.1. The Grant Agreement

Successful applicants must enter into a Grant Agreement with DPIRD before any funded activity begins. The Grant Agreement will include:

- Reporting and acquittal obligations
- Milestone-based payment arrangements
- Audit and compliance provisions
- Requirements for obtaining relevant approvals
- If agreement cannot be reached within a reasonable period, DPIRD may withdraw from negotiations at its sole discretion.

9.2. Specific legislation, policies and industry standards

Whilst the grantee is required to be compliant with all laws and regulations, DPIRD may request evidence of compliance with relevant legislation, policies or industry standards upon request. For example, grantees may be requested to demonstrate

compliance with health, safety or security related legislation, policies or industry standards that are applicable to the funded mobile connectivity and coverage.

9.3. Grant Payments

Payments will be made in accordance with the Grant Agreement and will include:

- The maximum grant amount
- The payment milestones and timeframes
- The process for reconciling actual costs against estimated costs, including in relation to balancing cost overspends and underspends
- Reconciliation procedures for over or under spends
- Details of third-party and in-kind contributions
- Initial payments may be made upon execution of the Grant Agreement, with subsequent payments tied to milestone achievements.

9.4. Tax Information

Funding provided to recipients under the Grant is regarded as payment for a supply. GST-registered grant recipients will therefore be liable for GST in connection with the grant.

The grant will be increased by the amount of GST payable. Recipients must provide a tax invoice for the GST inclusive value of the grant.

Applicants are encouraged to seek tax advice on the potential implications of obtaining funding.

10. Announcement of grants

The successful grants will be listed on the DPIRD website within 21 days of Ministerial approval.

11. How grants are monitored

11.1. Keeping DPIRD informed

Grantees must inform DPIRD of any changes to:

- Business details
- Project delivery capability
- Breaches of the Grant Agreement

11.2. Reporting Requirements

Grantees must submit progress and final reports in line with the Grant Agreement, covering:

- Milestone completion

- Expenditure details
- Third-party contributions
- Performance of funded infrastructure

Final payment will be made only after satisfactory final reporting.

11.3. Variations

Grantees may request a variation to the Grant Agreement if circumstances change. Approval is not guaranteed and is subject to DPIRD's assessment.

11.4. Compliance visits

DPIRD may conduct site visits to review compliance. Reasonable notice will be provided.

11.5. Program Evaluation

DPIRD will evaluate the program's effectiveness and may request information for up to **10 years** after project completion. Participation in evaluation activities may be required.

11.6. Acknowledgement

When making public statements about funded projects, Grantees must acknowledge the grant using the following wording: "This project is funded by the WA Government and the Australian Government under the Regional Roads Australia Mobile Program Pilot".

12. Disclaimers

Applicants must undertake their own inquiries regarding risks, requirements, and circumstances relevant to their applications. DPIRD accepts no liability for any reliance on these guidelines or related materials.

12.1. Personal Information and disclosure of information

Applicants are informed that DPIRD is subject to the *Freedom of Information Act 1992* (WA), which provides a general right of access to records held by the State Government agencies and local governments.

12.2. Aboriginal heritage compliance

Applicants must ensure that all project activities comply with relevant Aboriginal cultural heritage legislation and protocols. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Legal compliance - Adhering to all applicable State and Commonwealth laws, such as the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972* (WA) (as applicable).

- Approvals and surveys - Obtaining necessary heritage clearances, permits or approvals before commencing works, and engaging with Traditional Owners where required.
- Discovery protocols - Implementing stop-work and notification procedures if Aboriginal heritage is uncovered during project delivery.
- Responsibility - Applicants are solely responsible for costs, approvals and compliance related to Aboriginal heritage matters.

13. Glossary

Term	Definition
Application pack	<u>SmartyGrants</u> application form and any supporting documents for applicants including templates and forms.
Active sharing	The sharing of electronic infrastructure of the network including the radio access network (consisting of antennas/transceivers, base station, backhaul networks and controllers) and in some cases core network elements (consisting of servers and core network functionalities) by two or more MNOs. Active sharing includes mobile roaming.
Assessment panel	An assessment panel is a group of individuals assembled to evaluate and make recommendations on applications, proposals under the RRAMP Pilot.
Co-location	Co-location refers to the placement of multiple operators' equipment at the same physical site.
DPIRD	Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development
Eligible applicant	The meaning given in section 5.1 of these Guidelines.
Grant agreement	Grant agreement which sets out the relationship between DPIRD and the Grantee and specifies the details of the grant and responsibilities of both parties in relation to the grant.
Grant activity	Refers to the project/tasks/services that the Grantee is required to undertake during the period specified in the grant agreement.
Grant opportunity	The specific grant round or process where a grant is made available to eligible applicants. Grant opportunities may be open or targeted and will reflect the relevant grant selection process.
Multi-carrier	Multi-carrier refers to mobile telecommunications infrastructure that supports more than one Mobile Network Operator (MNO) through a passive or active sharing arrangement.
Operational period	Minimum 10-year period of infrastructure operation
Passive sharing	Passive sharing refers to the sharing of space or physical supporting infrastructure which does not require active operation co-ordination between network operators.
SmartyGrants	The online grant management software tool used by DPIRD

Important Disclaimer

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14. APPENDIX A – Priority Highways Map

