



MEDIA RELEASE

31 August 2021

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

\$3.5 million Digital Connectivity Project kicks off

The Smart Transformation Advisory Councils (STACs) in Moranbah and Dysart – along with partners BHP, Telstra and the Greater Whitsunday Alliance (GW3) - today announced a \$3.5 million project to provide enhanced digital connectivity to both towns to support current and new businesses and industry; schools and community groups.

With the support of major funders BHP and Telstra and assistance from the Federal Government, the project will allow both towns to enjoy faster and more reliable internet speeds, as well as capitalise on opportunities stemming from the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) and support the communities' ongoing pandemic recovery.

Smart Transformation aims to support these two towns transform and access the opportunities new technology provides, with Digital Connectivity identified through Smart Transformation and driven by the STACs themselves as their number one priority.

“This project has been led by the community, for the benefit of the community and the STAC members can't wait to see it come to fruition,” Dysart STAC member and Project Lead Sandy Moffat said.

“Improved digital connectivity will fundamentally change lives in our town – since the pandemic so much has moved online and our existing services were struggling to keep up.

“We are grateful to the funders for really listening to our community and supporting this project.”

Moranbah STAC member and Project Lead Brianna Baggow echoed these comments.

“This is a really exciting project that's got the potential to make sure our communities can fully embrace the technological change and opportunity coming our way through 4IR.

“Improved connectivity is vital for local businesses and organisations not only for their current operations but for future growth. The schools are also looking for improved wi-fi access to provide students with continued access to all of the latest online offerings.

Project Partners



BHP Mitsubishi Alliance (BMA) is a joint venture between BHP Group Limited and Mitsubishi Corporation Pty Ltd that was formed in 2007.



GREATER WHITSUNDAY ALLIANCE
MACKAY ► ISAAC ► WHITSUNDAY



MEDIA RELEASE

“The STACs are really proud to have played a role in bringing this project to life, and we look forward to keeping the community updated on progress,” she said.

Greater Whitsunday Alliance (GW3) CEO Kylie Porter said the project is a great example of collaboration resulting in collective impact.

“The world is evolving and now, more than ever, our regions need access to improved digital connectivity to drive their businesses and support community and education aspirations,” she said.

“This Digital Connectivity Project is a real-life demonstration of how we can all come together to create future opportunity.”

BMA Asset President James Palmer welcomed BHP’s support for this community-led project.

“This will deliver faster and more consistent connectivity for Moranbah and Dysart; strongly positioning the region for new economic opportunities,” he said.

“Along with driving new economic opportunities, reliable and fast digital connectivity will also improve community liveability.

“The 50 per cent funding contribution to the project comes from BHP’s Vital Resources Fund which is focused on supporting the economic recovery from the impacts of Covid-19.”

Telstra Regional General Manager Rachel Cliffe said Telstra was absolutely committed to the people, communities and businesses in regional Australia and had invested billions of dollars to extend and enhance its mobile network to the far reaches of our country.

“We know better than anyone the challenges of providing telecommunications services in regional and rural communities – and the huge benefits for Australia this brings,” Ms Cliffe said.

“This region is a powerhouse in Queensland’s economy and we’re pleased to be involved in this project that will boost coverage and future-proof the mobile network across the Moranbah and Dysart communities.

“It’s co-investment projects like this that are critical for ensuring our country becomes a leading digital economy and regional Australia doesn’t get left behind.”

Project Partners



BHP Mitsubishi Alliance (BMA) is a 50:50 joint venture between BHP Group Limited and Mitsubishi Corporation Pty Ltd that was formed in 2009.



GREATER WHITSUNDAY ALLIANCE
MACKAY ► ISAAC ► WHITSUNDAY



MEDIA RELEASE

The first stage in the project is design and site selection and Telstra will be visiting Moranbah and Dysart in the coming weeks to identify locations and meet with community members.

The project is expected to take up to 18 months to complete and is managed by GW3 and a Local Working Group involving STAC members; representatives from major funders Telstra and BHP, and Isaac Regional Council.

For further information or to arrange an interview, please contact:

SMART TRANSFORMATION

- Brianna Baggow, Smart Transformation Advisory Council (Moranbah) 0488 965716
- Sandy Moffatt, Smart Transformation Advisory Council (Dysart) 0418 184341

BHP

- Ben Dillaway, Principal Media Relations 0409 598102

TELSTRA

- Danita Goodwin, State Media Manager 0439 886652

GW3

- Kylie Porter, Chief Executive 0417 705245

Project Partners



BHP Mitsubishi Alliance (BMA) is a joint venture between BHP Group Limited and Mitsubishi Development Pty Ltd that was formed in 2009.