

## **ATAC Submission, Julie Brown**

I wanted to share my teleworking story, as it has had a profoundly positive impact on my life.

In 2000 my career took me from Brisbane to Longreach. In 2004 I married a local and made the choice to resign from work to move out onto my husband's property. Despite being busy helping my husband on the property I missed applying my professional skills, I missed a regular income and felt a pressing loss of financial independence, I felt as though I was not making a worthwhile contribution, and I lost a considerable amount of self confidence.

In February I was offered a project officer position, working up to three days per week from home, with the Remote Area Planning and Development Board, based in Longreach. I gladly accepted this position and despite struggling initially with time management, balancing the demands of the property work with my RAPAD work, it has been my God sent. There are so many positive reasons for rural and remote people to take on teleworking positions. I have several friends who would also like to telework, but there are not the opportunities at present.

### **SOCIAL & ECONOMIC BENEFITS**

- taps into local talent /expertise
- fosters a feeling of personal empowerment
- enable people to contribute to local economy
- keeps money local (or if employer is from away then it's an injection of additional money to local economy)
- keeps families together (I would have to stay in town if I my position was not a teleworking position)
- supplementary income (off farm income for property based families)
- often more economical for employer in terms of less office space and equipment required

### **DISADVANTAGES**

- I have discovered to avoid a feeling of isolation I need to maintain two-way communication, seek feedback from colleagues and have some face to face time at least once per fortnight
- I struggled with my time management for the first two months, but have now developed a routine

### **FACTORS ENABLING**

- technology (we have broadband satellite)
- attitudes and perceptions (thankfully I have a forward thinking and supportive employer who is flexible and trusts his staff)

### **FACTORS PREVENTING**

- there are still some properties in Central Western Queensland that do not have power
- attitudes and perceptions, more employers need to consider the benefits of teleworking

### **GOVN. POLICIES TO ENCOURAGE TELEWORKING**

Where appropriate consider all government positions as potential teleworking positions  
develop criteria for selection of appropriate staff for teleworking positions

I hope this input is helpful.

Kind regards,

Julie Brown  
**Project Officer**  
**RAPAD Board**

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Outback Queensland"*