



Internet and phone? So work from home

THE Government should promote teleworking if they want to assist women in rural areas develop professional careers according to a report by the Foundation for Australian Agricultural Women (FAAW).

FAAW Director Chris Capel said teleworkers work from home, for an employer or for themselves, using telecommunications such as the phone and the internet to do their job.

A non-profit organisation, FAWW recently undertook a Government funded research project and found highly skilled and educated women in rural areas were an unused teleworking labour force.

"There is a large pool of very qualified women out there who are interested in teleworking, but there is no clear path to get involved," Ms Capel said.

"Our study has recommended the governments provide funding for a telework employment agency and offer employer incentives to encourage teleworking as a viable employment option."

"Linking employers with skilled women will help revitalise rural areas by providing additional income for drought affected families, skilled labour for employers and bring social and economic benefits to local communities."

Ms Capel has been a teleworker for the past 10 years and currently works for the Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries from her home office on 'Evesham', 90 kilometres north-west of Longreach.

"It's completely changed my life," she said.

"I've managed to have a successful career and lived on my property with my family.

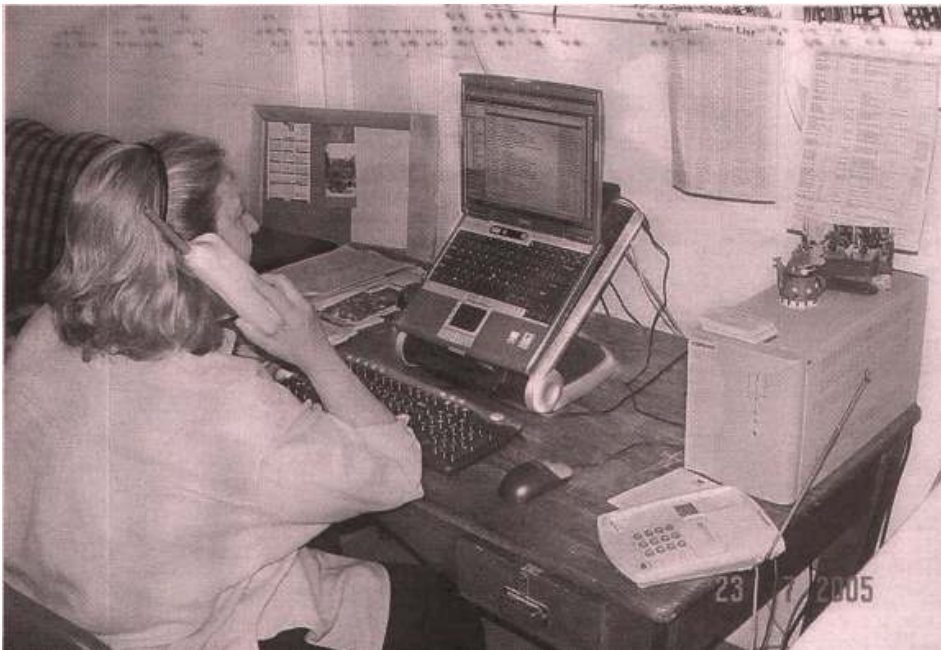
"I think teleworkers are less stressed and happier workers, which just means they put more time into their work."

Two years ago the Remote Area and Planning and Development Board (RAPAD) employed two teleworkers and RAPAD Manager David Arnold is very happy with the arrangement.

"I'm very pleased because I found the two employees that I wanted and I simply wouldn't have had them if they had to come into the office every day," he said.

"They do project work which is based on outcomes so I don't have to be over their shoulder to make sure they're working - there are no headaches and it's very easily managed.

"Logistically there are less overhead costs and I don't have the physical office space for them here, so that's another advantage."



Foundation for Australian Agricultural Women director, Chris Capel in her home office