



THE HON MICHAEL McCORMACK MP

Deputy Prime Minister
Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development

THE HON PAUL FLETCHER MP

Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts

THE HON MARK COULTON MP

Minister for Regional Services, Decentralisation and Local Government

DR ANNE WEBSTER MP

Member for Mallee

JOINT MEDIA RELEASE

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Mobile Black Spot Program hits 750 base stations

Mobile coverage continues to expand across regional Australia thanks to the Coalition Government's \$380 million Mobile Black Spot Program, with 750 mobile base stations now providing connectivity to regional and rural Australian communities.

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development Michael McCormack said the Liberal and Nationals Government is delivering more reliable services for regional communities through improved network infrastructure.

"Regional communities rely on high quality mobile services to conduct their businesses and better connect with loved ones and this program is ensuring more people have efficient mobile phone access," Mr McCormack said.

"Programs such as this make a real difference for families, businesses and emergency services, living and working in remote communities have better connectivity where and when they need."

Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts, the Hon Paul Fletcher MP, and Minister for Regional Services, Decentralisation and Local Government, the Hon Mark Coulton MP, and Member for Mallee, Dr Anne Webster MP, today welcomed the milestone under the highly successful Program.

Minister Fletcher said more than 70 per cent of the 1047 base stations funded through the first four rounds of the Program are now complete, reflecting the Government's unwavering commitment to providing reliable connectivity in the regions.

"Thanks to our significant investment, people living, working and travelling in Nullawil in the Mallee – the location of our 750th base station – will now have better mobile coverage. This is great news for local grain farmers and their families who can enjoy the benefits of improved mobile coverage," Minister Fletcher said.

Minister Coulton said the Mobile Black Spot Program is an example of what can be achieved when the mobile

industry, state and local governments, local businesses and communities work together.

“Each new mobile tower is connecting regional communities to online services, increasing productivity and generating economic growth, which is why we are continuing to invest in additional program rounds,” Minister Coulton said.

“Communities across Mallee continue to benefit from the Federal Government’s Mobile Blackspot Program, enabling them to connect to family, friends and markets more reliably than ever before,” said Dr Webster.

“It’s great that the people of Nullawil now have access to better mobile coverage, and I look forward to the continuing roll out of the project across Mallee.”

Under the first four rounds of the program, the Government’s commitment has generated a total investment of more than \$760 million in new mobile telecommunications infrastructure, with an additional \$160 million in new Commonwealth funding for a fifth and sixth round of the program announced earlier this year.

The application process for the Round 5 closed on 26 September 2019, with the outcomes of this process expected to be announced in early 2020.

For more information about the program visit: www.communications.gov.au/mbsp

Quotes attributable to Nikos Katinakis, Group Executive, Networks & IT, Telstra

“Reaching 750 sites in the Federal Government’s Mobile Black Spot Program is a fantastic achievement, and a huge milestone in bringing connectivity to regional Australia.”

“Under the Program Telstra has delivered connectivity stretching from Monkey Mia in Western Australia to Weipa in the Queensland Cape York Peninsula which has added another 185,000 square kilometres of new coverage to Australian communities.”

“Telstra has a long and proud history of investing in regional Australia – which includes more than \$280 million dollars as part of the Program by the time Round Four of the program is complete.”

Quotes attributable to Andrew Sheridan, Vice President of Regulatory and Public Affairs, Optus

"Optus is a strong supporter of the Commonwealth's Mobile Black Spot Program, which is bringing coverage and competition to regional Australia, in many places for the first time."

"We congratulate the Government on the success of the program and look forward to working closely together in current and future rounds to meet the needs of all regional Australians."

Quote attributable to Kevin Millroy, Chief Technology Officer, Vodafone

“We’re pleased to be working as part of the Federal Government’s Mobile Black Spot Program to deliver new mobile sites for communities in regional and remote areas.”

“To date, Vodafone has delivered approximately 36,600 square kilometres of new external coverage to our customers; extended 4G services to more than 16,000 additional homes; and added more than 1,400 kilometres of 4G connectivity along major transport routes across the country.”

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