



David Littleproud MP

Federal Member for Maranoa

Media statement

April 4, 2017

Turn on our towers: Maranoa MP questions Telstra's mobile phone black spot delay

MARANOA MP David Littleproud has called on Telstra to stop dragging its feet and switch on towers set to target mobile phone black spots as part of government funding announced more than one year ago.

The call came after Telstra last Thursday switched on the long-awaited base station – atop of Mt Slocombe – which has now given Yaraka regional residents and Outback travellers mobile phone coverage for the first time.

“I congratulate and thank Telstra for expediting the Yaraka tower after many months of discussions with them but, let's face it, this tower was announced back in 2015 under Round One of the Coalition Government's Mobile Phone Black Spot Program,” Mr Littleproud said.

“It's amazing to see people talking on their phone or their mobile buzzing as it received texts for the first time at the pub in Yaraka but who knows how long Telstra would've taken to switch on this tower without my constant intervention.”

The Coalition Government's Mobile Phone Black Spot Program is a major win for rural communities as the former Labor government didn't invest \$1 to address black spots and the switch on delay has Mr Littleproud seething.

“Breaks in our communications hinder emergency services, tourism and business – that's why this program is so important for Maranoa and why I've been advocating so hard on this issue to get these towers rolled out,” he said.

“Under Round One, 13 new base stations were announced to be constructed by Telstra. From June 2015 to April 2017, only six base stations have been switched on but seven towers are not yet operational.

“Of the seven which haven't yet been switched on, it's disappointing to note that Telstra expects four of these base stations – at Jackson, Moonie, Capricorn Highway and on the Landsborough Highway between Blackall and Tambo – won't be completed until 2018.”

A map of locations to receive new or upgraded coverage under Round One and Two of the Mobile Black Spot Program is available at: www.nationalmap.gov.au and, for more program information, check out www.communications.gov.au/mbsp

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Fact box: Mobile Phone Black Spot Program joint-funded with Telstra

- **Base stations announced in Round One which have been switched on:**
 - Adavale (Quilpie Council region)
 - Eukey (Southern Downs Council region)
 - Eulo (Paroo Council region)
 - Quilpie-Diamantina Development Rd, near Cooladdi (Quilpie Council region)
 - Toobeah (Goondiwindi Council region)
 - Yaraka (Longreach Council region)

- **Base stations announced in Round One and have not been completed:**
 - Capricorn Highway between Alpha and Willows (Barcaldine Council area). Estimated to be switched on in 2018.
 - Crows Nest (Toowoomba Council area). Estimated to be switched on during the second-quarter of 2017.
 - Jackson (Maranoa Council area). Estimated to be switched on in 2018.
 - Landsborough Highway between Blackall and Tambo (Blackall-Tambo Council area). Estimated to be switched on in 2018.
 - Landsborough Highway between Winton and Cloncurry (Winton Council area). Estimated to be switched on by the end of 2017.
 - Moonie (Western Downs Council area). Estimated to be switched on in 2018.
 - Wattle Camp (South Burnett Council area). Estimated to be switched on during the second-quarter of 2017.

- **The Coalition Government has invested \$220 million to address mobile phone black spots around Australia through three rounds of funding.**

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