



Australian Government

**Department of Infrastructure, Transport,
Regional Development, Communications and the Arts**

3G Switch Off Roundtable – Communique

17 December 2024

The Minister for Communications, the Hon Michelle Rowland MP, today convened a roundtable to reflect on Australia's 3G switch off. The Minister was joined by chief executive officers from each of Australia's mobile network operators: Vicki Brady (Telstra), Stephen Rue (Optus) and Iñaki Berroeta (TPG Telecom).

The roundtable discussion was also supported by contributions from the: Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts; Australian Communications and Media Authority; Australian Competition and Consumer Commission; Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman; Communications Alliance; Australian Mobile Telecommunications Association; Australian Communications Consumer Action Network; Regional Telecommunications Independent Review Committee; and First Nations Digital Inclusion Advisory Group.

The 3G switch off was important to enable technologies like 4G and 5G to be deployed, and that means better data capacity, better speed and better network capabilities. The Australian Government, the telecommunications industry and regulatory bodies know how important mobile services have become, especially in regional areas.

Participants reflected on lessons learned from the 3G switch off, and how these learnings could be taken forward as Australia prepares for future technology transitions. Discussions focused on public engagement and other measures to support consumers, as well as ongoing implementation work to protect public safety in the wake of the 3G switch off.

The mobile network operators agreed to continue to support the Australian Communications and Media Authority in its work to implement recent changes to the *Telecommunications (Emergency Call Service) Determination 2019* which came into effect in advance the switch off. This will deliver on the Government's

policy that Australians' mobile handsets are able to call Triple Zero on all networks provided they are in a mobile coverage area.

The mobile network operators also agreed to work with the Communications Alliance to develop a device testing regime to determine whether a device can access the emergency call service on all networks.

This work is important to make sure that Australians can access Triple Zero in an emergency whenever there is mobile coverage available, regardless of which mobile network provider they choose.

Government and industry representatives also acknowledged the importance of technical standards and regulatory frameworks in ensuring that devices sold in Australia are compatible with Australian networks — and the risks to consumers of purchasing devices that are not designed for use in Australia.

Technological changes are based on commercial decisions. However, they have wide-ranging impacts on individual consumers and businesses. Connectivity is particularly important during emergencies, and it enables critical infrastructure and services to operate. Therefore, changes in technology need to be well-managed. As Australia looks towards future technology transitions, it is clear that government and industry will need to continue to work in partnership to protect the public interest, particularly public safety, and ensure positive outcomes for all Australians.

Government and industry agreed to continue to work together to embed learnings in future processes, to deliver better outcomes for Australians.