

I live in a Retirement Village at [REDACTED]. At present we have 311 residents predominately aged 70 or above.

Telephone reception is very poor for both Telstra and Optus services. This results in calls where the voice signal drops in and out, as well as calls which fail following connection, and an inability on occasion to even be able to make or receive a call. Some people here are obliged to go outside their home to improve reception sufficiently to carry on a phone conversation.

Apart from the inconvenience there is also a safety aspect to this unreliable service given the age of many residents and the potential need for them to ring the ambulance or other emergency services, and the fact that a quite a number have emergency alarms which rely on a SIM as the means of connection to the monitoring service.

Furthermore, given the reduction in face-to-face service available from government departments and many essential businesses it is galling to have a call fail after waiting on-hold for 30 minutes or more and to have to repeat it all over again.

Data speeds are so slow as to be useless most of the time. As an example, earlier this afternoon I tested Telstra and Optus twice, using the ubiquitous 'Speedtest' utility with 30 minutes between the two tests and generating the following results.

Telstra test 1 – ping: 57 ms; upload: 0.34 Mbps; download: 0.16 Mbps

Telstra test 2 – ping: 74 ms; upload: 0.66 Mbps; download: 0.06 Mbps

Optus test 1 – ping: 64l ms; upload: 2.50 Mbps; download: 2.14 Mbps

Optus test 2 – ping: 33 ms; upload: 3.31 Mbps; download: 0.48 Mbps

On occasion the available signal is so weak that 'Speedtest' is unable to proceed and issues a prompt to check that you are connected to the internet.

The paucity of the service provided to us is highlighted a short distance from here where Telstra have installed a 'Telstra Street Cell' outside [REDACTED] in an area with only a few houses, a caravan park and an industrial site. Parked in [REDACTED] calls are faultless and a test of data speeds generated the following:

ping: 25 ms; download:135 Mbps; upload: 47.9 Mbps

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on our less-than-ideal situation and I sincerely hope an improved service can be provided.