



MEDIA RELEASE

Extra funding to fix mobile phone black spots

22 Mar 2019

Reliable mobile coverage will reach more regional communities across Australia thanks to the Liberal National Government's announcement of an additional \$160 million for two new funding rounds of the Mobile Black Spot Program.

This new \$160 million commitment will bring the Liberal National Government total commitment to addressing regional and remote mobile coverage issues to \$380 million.

Minister for Regional Services Senator Bridget McKenzie, and Member for New England, Barnaby Joyce, welcomed the announcement of a fifth and sixth round of funding for the highly successful program, which will deliver new base stations and better coverage to those areas that need it most.

"This will benefit thousands of people across regional and remote areas, and it's great this additional investment will provide more communities like Urbenville and Moonbi - where increased mobile coverage has gone live recently - with better access to online services and confidence to run their businesses here in the New England," Mr Joyce said.

Minister McKenzie said the new investment in regional mobile phone infrastructure reaffirms the Government's commitment to connecting all Australians and ensuring that distance is not a disadvantage.

"I strongly encourage all stakeholders to take advantage of the new rounds under this terrific program and submit an application when we open the competitive assessment process in the coming months," Minister McKenzie said.

Rounds 5 and 6 will have a strong focus on improving mobile coverage at public interest premises in regional areas, such as medical centres, schools and tourism facilities.

The new rounds follow the announcement of successful locations under Round 4 of the program this week. Under Round 4, 180 new base stations will be deployed across Australia, including 73 base stations specifically targeting coverage issues at public interest sites.

Over the first four rounds, the Mobile Black Spot Program is already delivering 1047 new base stations nationally from \$220 million in Commonwealth funding. This has generated a total new investment of over \$760 million of regional and remote mobile infrastructure including contributions from state and local governments, mobile network operators, businesses and community

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Hon **Barnaby Joyce** MP

FEDERAL MEMBER FOR NEW ENGLAND

organisations.

Base stations under the first three rounds are expected to be operational by 30 June 2019. Round 4 base stations are expected to roll out shortly with the first new base stations being activated by the second half of the year. The New England secured five new base stations under Round 4 including Moonan Flat, Legume, Torrington, Wellingrove Creek and Weabonga.

(ENDS)

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