



MEDIA RELEASE

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TONY PASIN MP
MEMBER FOR BARKER

Improved mobile coverage for Kalangadoo and Kybybolite

Outcomes of the tender process for the Priority Locations round of the Coalition Government's \$220 million Mobile Black Spot Program in Barker have been announced today, clearing the way for improved coverage for Kybybolite and Kalangadoo said Member for Barker Tony Pasin.

This announcement delivers on the Coalition's commitment to address the coverage issues identified at Kybybolite and Kalangadoo which will receive improved coverage with Telstra being successful in the Government's tender process for these locations.

106 priority locations across Australia will benefit from improved mobile phone coverage. Optus, Telstra and Vodafone will build 102 new base stations under the Priority Location round. In addition, the carriers have commercial plans for new base stations that will further address mobile black spot issues in a number of the identified locations.

Tony Pasin said the new coverage would open new doors for local businesses and the community, enabling them to access the same mobile services as those in major cities.

"The Coalition's Mobile Black Spot program is already delivering new or improved coverage to seven sites across Barker through the first two rounds of the program, which will see local businesses and residents in the area benefit from access to 21st century communications.

Mr Pasin said that the Priority Round process had been held up since being announced in 2016 while the ACCC undertook an inquiry into domestic mobile roaming. The final report was handed down in late October 2017, removing uncertainty for the telecommunications companies and clearing the way to proceed with the Priority Location round of the Government program.

"I understand that that the communities in Kalangadoo and Kybybolite are frustrated with the time this is taking. It was certainly not anticipated to take this long, but I can assure them these towers will be built, with construction to begin soon and expected to be complete by the end of this year.

"The 'priority round' is different to the other rounds of the blackspot program because it identifies locations that would have not attracted private investment from telecommunications companies on their own.

"The Coalition Government has identified these locations and will ensure improved mobile coverage in these areas that would otherwise have missed out," Mr Pasin said

"We've committed \$220 million to improve mobile black spots across the country. \$60 million of this funding is targeting priority black spot areas with poor or no mobile coverage, like in Kybybolite and Kalangadoo,"

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The Coalition Government's Mobile Black Spot Program is improving mobile coverage across Australia including along major regional transport routes, in small communities and at identified priority locations.

"More than 456 locations across Australia have already received new or improved coverage through rounds one and two of the program. The announcement today that Telstra will build towers at Kalangadoo and Kybybolite through the Priority Round is adding to this achievement," Mr Pasin said.

Telstra's Area General Manager for South Australia, Mark Bolton, says the announcement today will help deliver improved coverage to regional Australia.

"Under the Priority Locations round of this program, Telstra will be constructing an additional six mobile base station sites in South Australia, including Kybybolite and Kalangadoo, and improving coverage at 89 sites across Australia," he said.

"We know the important role mobile technology plays in helping people stay in contact with friends and family, and run businesses effectively.

"Nationally this program has already helped Telstra expand regional mobile coverage by 160,000 square kilometres. We look forward to providing improved coverage to these locations in the near future," said Mark Bolton.

The rollout sequence will be determined based on various factors, including obtaining local government planning approval, landowner agreement where necessary, and access to existing infrastructure, power and backhaul.

The base station rollout schedules for all three rounds of the program will be available on the Telstra website at www.telstra.com.au/coverage-networks/mobile-black-spot-program and will be regularly updated as the rollout progresses.

More information about the program and a full list of the priority locations across the country is available at: communications.gov.au/mbsp