

Good afternoon,

Please find below the NSWTA responses to questions on notice arising from James Pickens' appearance at the public hearing on 23 July 2024:

Subject: Who initiated contact with the Commonwealth Government on 3G shutdown

And you reached out to the federal government? It wasn't something that the federal government initiated with the state government?

- NSWTA raised the 3G network shutdown as part of its regular engagement (executive meetings) with Mobile Network Operators in quarter four 2023 and has continued to liaise with them on this matter throughout 2024.
- NSW Telco Authority does not necessarily have visibility on all communication and engagements between state and commonwealth ministers (including current and former ministers).
- However, NSW Telco Authority understands the Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government wrote to the Federal Minister for Communications on 19 March 2024 about the 3G network shutdown and subsequently met with Minister Rowland to discuss this matter on 27 March 2024.

Subject: Government and ministerial forums where the decommissioning of the 3G network may have been discussed

Is there a ministerial council involving telecommunications issues per se?

- The Regional Connectivity Ministers Roundtable Meetings is a forum to discuss key issues impacting connectivity across regional and rural NSW including telecommunications.
NSW Telco Authority understands the 3G network shutdown was an agenda item at Regional Connectivity Ministers Roundtable Meeting on 24 April 2024 and the subject of a briefing paper distributed on 17 April 2024 for RCMR Ministers to note.
- The National Emergency Management Agency oversees the National Emergency Management Ministers Meetings. NSW Telco Authority has not been made aware if the 3G Shutdown has been included as an agenda or discussion item at this forum.

Subject: Costs to NSW Government Agencies to transition off 3G and upgrade devices and equipment to be 4G compatible

Was the conversion work by Transport for NSW to transition all those services off 3G a significant cost?

- In its contribution to the All of NSW Government Submission, Transport for NSW advised NSW Telco Authority that they spent around \$20 million on their upgrade program to ensure 4G compatibility.
- NSW Telco Authority did not receive any other costings from NSW Government agencies who contributed to the All of NSW Government submission. NSW Telco Authority does not have visibility of the transition costs for NSW Government agencies.

Some of those emergency services, like fire services, have sensors and equipment out in the network. Are they likewise in a situation to manage the process pending the equivalence of coverage? What was the budget for that?

- NSW Telco Authority does not have oversight of individual Emergency Services Organisations budgets for replacing their non-4G compatible devices including sensors.

Subject: Commencement of engagement with MNPs around network decommissioning

Was there a reason for it taking so long to start conversations with them, given that Telstra at least, I think, announced the 30 June date in 2019?

- NSW Telco Authority understands Mobile Network Operators are providing direct notification to all customers with an impacted device and advising them of the actions needed to ensure they are able to remain fully connected following the 3G network shutdown. The Australian Government are the lead agency as the regulator for telecommunications.
- NSW Telco Authority raised the 3G network shutdown as part of its regular engagement (executive meetings) with Mobile Network Operators in quarter four 2023 and continued to liaise with them on this matter throughout 2024.
- Telstra provided NSWTA a list of impacted 3G devices held by Emergency Services Organisations and other NSW Government agencies in April 2024 and updated this in June 2024. Optus shared a list of impacted 3G devices held by Emergency Services Organisations and other NSW Government agencies in May 2024. TPG discussed the impact of its post-3G network shutdown with NSWTA in April 2024.

Please advise if you require anything further.

Warm regards,