



Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport: Inquiry into the Shutdown of the 3G Network

Telstra Response: Questions on Notice

5 August 2024



Executive Summary

Telstra welcomes the opportunity to provide more information in response to questions taken on notice, and additional information sought by the committee. responding to those questions taken on notice. Please note, this document contains answers to questions 2, 8, 13-14, 16.

Question 2: Can Telstra provide all copies of the emails between Telstra and the government on the VoLTE/000 issue before March 2024.

No	Date	To	From	Text of email subject field
1	1 March 24	Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts (DITRDCA)	Telstra	Thanks for the VoLTE briefing
2	21 Feb 24	Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts (DITRDCA)	Telstra	Dept inviting Minister's office to VoLTE briefing
3	21 Feb 24	Telstra	Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts (DITRDCA)	Confirm the date and send invites for VoLTE 000 briefing
4	14 Feb 24	Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts (DITRDCA)	Telstra	Suggest Feb 26 for VoLTE 000 briefing



5	13 Feb 24	Telstra	Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts (DITRDCA)	Confirm VoLTE 000 information and confirm the offer of a briefing
6	12 Feb 24	Telstra	Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts (DITRDCA)	Overview of VoLTE 000 slide
7	12 Feb 24	Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts (DITRDCA)	Telstra	Request more information re VoLTE 000 slide in Q3/FY24 quarterly report
8	20 Dec 23	Telstra	Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts (DITRDCA) and Office of Minister for Communications.	Delivery of Telstra Q3/FY24 Quarterly Ministerial Report
9	24 Nov 23	Telstra	Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts (DITRDCA)	Reference to AMTA's information campaign in preparation for 3G network closures.



Question 8: The NSW Government wrote in its submission: *It is understood that some 3G sites could remain temporarily operational beyond the formal network shutdown timetables to ensure there are no critical coverage gaps until 4G/5G coverage is achieved. Can you please outline the plans in place to address these temporary coverage gaps? Where are these sites located, and how do you determine what constitutes a ‘critical coverage gap’.*

Telstra’s coverage equivalence program is on track for 31st August completion. Given our commitment, we will not operate any 3G sites after this time as we will have achieved equivalence.

Telstra has already verified coverage equivalence at 99% of the total sites on our national network as of the end of July, supporting our commitment.

As of the end July, Telstra can confirm there are 8 x 3G only sites remaining to be upgraded. Of the 8, 5 are on track for completion before closure. To fulfill our commitment to not reduce the 3G coverage footprint before closure. The remaining three sites will be upgraded once closure occurs as the sites cannot accommodate both 3G and 4G technologies. This is due to structural limitations and Electromagnetic Emissions (EME) regulations at each of these sites. Aligned with this build activity, 3G will be shut down.

Question 13: What targeted industry outreach to small business, family enterprises, as outlined by both the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Australian Small Business and Family Enterprise Ombudsman in their evidence on 24 July 2024 has and will continue to occur to address reported knowledge gaps in equipment reliance on 3G.

All identified customers will have received direct communication from Telstra about 3G closure, informing them of their impact, and, the action that they need to take and by when. In addition to our national one-on-one awareness campaigns, where every impacted customer has received direct communications, we have also undertaken extensive outreach to industry and community groups, with a particular focus on regional areas. Our efforts have included attending field days, conferences, and community outreach programs to ensure a broad and inclusive approach. A comprehensive rundown of all our activities is detailed in the attached document.

We understand the importance of clear and consistent communication, especially for small businesses and family enterprises that rely on our network for their operations. We are committed to continuing our outreach and support to these customers to mitigate any impact from the 3G network closure.

We will continue to communicate with customers until the network is closed.

Question 14: Will you undertake a targeted education scheme by using billing of your current 3G business customers to identify areas of vulnerability, particularly for small business where impact as suggested in evidence provided by the Australian Small Business and Family Enterprise Ombudsman has highlighted, to identify as many devices that are vulnerable where possible?

Telstra sent bill inserts for small business customers from 16th April to 6th May. We are not proposing using billing further at this stage of the process as we determined that our one-to-one comms and other initiatives (e.g. preamble) are sufficient in notifying customers of the 3G closure. Post-closure, customers who have not yet taken action to upgrade devices - excluding those software update/network settings/non-VoLTE, and non-Band 28 customers - will not be billed for their service.



Please also refer to Question 13 regarding the comprehensive steps we've taken.

Question 16: Can Telstra outline what outreach to indigenous media organisations to educate remote communities has occurred; and have the MNO's reached out to all Remote Indigenous Media Organisations that are serviced by 3G routers offering assistance to upgrade their routers.

All identified customers were sent direct communication from Telstra about 3G closure, informing them of the action that they need to take. This has included direct emails, post and SMS to identified impacted customers.

In addition to this, we have attended over 20 regional communities, festivals, and shows in the Northern Territory in the past three months alone. These interactions included one on one support for customers who needed extra assistance transitioning off 3G. Where required, we have also provided complimentary devices to support customers in need.

To further spread the message within the communities we have paid for bespoke radio ads on 33 indigenous radio stations nationally from June to September.

Additionally, we have also sent out an A5 flyer and A3 posters to community hubs, financial literacy community service programs, and financial councillors to further spread the message and offer our support and assistance to customers in need.