

Satellite to Mobile Quick Facts



Connectivity help guide

Satellite-to-Mobile or STM (also called Direct-to-Handset) lets ordinary mobile phones send and receive SMS messages via satellites, even when there's no mobile tower coverage.

Why it matters

- Stay connected in black spots - when you're beyond tower range.
- Extra resilience - useful during bushfires, floods, or power outages.
- No extra gear needed - works with compatible smartphones.
- Delivers another layer of connectivity protection.

Telstra and Starlink STM announcement

- In early 2025, Telstra announced a partnership with Starlink (SpaceX) to launch STM in Australia.
- Requires either a Consumer or Small Business Telstra Upfront Mobile Plan (i.e. not pre-paid). This does not include plans on-sold by retailers such as JB Hi-Fi, The Good Guys or Apple retailers etc.

Things to be aware of

- Clear line of sight to sky is required- trees, buildings, or extreme weather may block signals.
- No data (e.g. photos, videos, web browsing) or voice calls supported. (At this stage)
- SMS messages may take several minutes to send or receive.
- You must have no mobile signal coverage at all, any level of mobile reception, no matter how faint, will prevent STM being activated on your phone.
- Coverage gaps still occur and will require waiting for another satellite to align overhead. This is expected to improve when more satellites are launched by the operator.
- Only a select few mobile handset models are currently supported (iPhone 13+, Galaxy S25 & 7 series), and required correctly configured settings.
- There is no way to 'force' the device into satellite mode.



STM is not a replacement for emergency devices. You cannot use it to text 000.



For genuine safety in the bush or at sea:

- Carry a PLB (on land) or EPIRB (on water) registered with AMSA - these directly alert search and rescue satellites.
- Consider a satellite phone, two-way satellite messenger (e.g. AirAgri, inReach, ZOLEO) or Starlink Mini.
- Think of STM as a convenient backup for texts, not your primary emergency lifeline.