



The Hon Michelle Rowland MP

Minister for Communications

ALBANESE LABOR GOVERNMENT BUILDING AUSTRALIA'S MOBILE FUTURE

The Albanese Labor Government has today announced a major world first reform to provide basic universal outdoor mobile coverage across Australia.

Labor's Universal Outdoor Mobile Obligation (UOMO) will require mobile carriers to provide access to mobile voice and SMS almost everywhere across Australia.

UOMO will ensure up to 5 million square kilometres of new competitive outdoor mobile coverage across Australia, including over 37,000 kilometres on regional roads.

Whether it's in national parks, hiking trails or out on the farm, outdoor coverage will be accessible almost anywhere where Australians can see the sky.

The Albanese Government's policy objectives are to:

- expand Triple Zero access for Australians across the nation;
- expand outdoor voice and SMS coverage into existing mobile black spots; and
- improve the availability of mobile signals during disasters and power outages.

This reform is only possible due to the transformative global innovations in Low Earth Orbit Satellites (LEOSats), and the arrival of Direct to Device (D2D) technology, which enables signals from space direct to mobile devices.

The Government will consult and introduce legislation in 2025 to expand the universal service framework to incorporate mobile coverage for the first time.

Implementation of outdoor SMS and voice will be expected by late 2027, with many Australians likely to obtain access before then.

Basic mobile data will be considered in the future as technology roadmaps and capacity considerations develop.

The Government will work with stakeholders and industry to get the legislation right, including flexibility where warranted by supply, spectrum and other factors.

The Albanese Government will also engage with industry and examine incentives and removal of barriers to support public interest objectives and competition outcomes.

Only the Albanese Labor Government has a plan to build Australia's future, including delivering \$3 billion to complete the building of the fibre NBN.

With global industry expected to launch D2D messaging this year, the Government is moving to ensure this technology becomes an addition to a modernised and expanded voice Universal Service Obligation, including maintaining free access to Triple Zero.

To ensure consumers are informed about device compatibility and experience, the Government will work with industry and the University of Technology Sydney to expand handset testing.

The policy has been informed by engagement with the LEOSat working group, advice by the Australian Communications and Media Authority on radiocommunications spectrum, the findings of the Regional Telecommunications Review, and extensive feedback from regional and remote stakeholders and consumers about the need for multiple connectivity paths.

The Government remains committed and will continue to evolve its existing co-investment programs like the Mobile Black Spot Program and Mobile Network Hardening Program to expand terrestrial mobile coverage, resilience and capacity.

Further reforms to the longstanding universal services framework will be announced as the Government considers recommendations from the 2024 Regional Telecommunications Review.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Communications, the Hon Michelle Rowland MP:

"Labor governments have a proven record of expanding universal access to essential services, and the Albanese Government is forging another step forward."

"The Universal Outdoor Mobile Obligation will improve public safety, increase resilience during natural disasters, and provide an extra layer of coverage in areas previously thought too difficult or costly to reach."

"The experience will be different to land mobile networks, but the benefits transformative, particularly for a large continent such as ours."

"Building our mobile future with the latest technology is a vital element of Labor's plan to make Australia the most connected continent by 2030."

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BENEFITS BY STATE AND TERRITORY

State/Territory	Estimated new coverage*
New South Wales	Up to 347,000 km ² of new outdoor coverage Over 5,000 km of major regional and remote roads For example, addressing 150 km of black spots along the Barrier Highway
Northern Territory	Over 1 million km ² of new outdoor coverage Over 6,000km of major regional and remote roads
Queensland	Over 1 million km ² of new outdoor coverage Over 11,000km of major regional and remote roads For example, addressing 609 km of black spots along the Kennedy Developmental Road
South Australia	Up to 760,000 km ² of new outdoor coverage Over 3,000km of major regional and remote roads For example, addressing 247 km of black spots along the Eyre Highway
Tasmania	Up to 33,000 km ² of new outdoor coverage Over 1,000km of major regional and remote roads For example, addressing 100 km of black spots along the Murchison Highway
Victoria	Up to 45,000 km ² of new outdoor coverage Almost 1,000km of major regional and remote roads For example, addressing 83 km of black spots along the Omeo Highway
Western Australia	Up to 2 million km ² of new outdoor coverage (does not include Western Australia Radio Quiet Zone) Over 8,000km of major regional and remote roads For example, addressing 588 km of black spots along the Great Northern Highway
ACT	Up to 1,000 km ² of new outdoor coverage