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MEDIA RELEASE

Last answers calls for better phone service at Mount Coolon

Dial tones in a regional area west of Collinsville could soon be a little clearer after Member for Burdekin Dale Last raised the issue with the Federal Minister for Communications.

Mr Last said the concerns of graziers and road users around poor phone reception at Mount Coolon were brought to the fore recently when a single vehicle traffic accident occurred in that area and neighbouring landholders struggled to reach emergency services.

“This incident could have had disastrous consequences if emergency services were not able to be reached due to poor phone reception,” Mr Last said.

“It is a disgrace that in a day and age when telecommunications are only becoming more vital to everyday life, people are still struggling with poor phone reception during times of an emergency, let alone being unable to reliably connect to school of the air services.”

“That is why, following that incident, I again wrote to the Federal Minister for Communications to demand real action on the matter and I am pleased to say there has been positive steps made.”

Mr Last said Telstra was expecting to update a nearby mobile base station at Pasha from 3G to 4G, something the mobile network operator has stated would improve customer experience in the Mt Coolon area.

“The Minister has also assured me that Mount Coolon has also been added to a centralised list of locations provided to potential applicants of the Mobile Black Spot funding program,” Mr Last said.

“This is a small step in ensuring regional Queenslanders are treated to the same reliable phone and internet service as their city cousins, but there is still a long way to go.”

“The Minister has advised that community members contacting their local council and mobile network operators and making their coverage issues known, has in the past increased the potential for an application for a mobile base station to be put forward under the funding program.”

“I would encourage anyone who is having trouble with their phone reception to contact their local council and mobile network operator so that we, as a community, can work together to ensure the days of reliable phone service for emergencies and everyday needs, arrive sooner.”

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