



Speech By  
**Hon. Leanne Enoch**

**MEMBER FOR ALGESTER**

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## **MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

### **Mobile Black Spot Program**

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algeester—ALP) (Minister for Innovation, Science and the Digital Economy and Minister for Small Business) (10.47 am): In the 2016-17 state budget, the Palaszczuk government committed \$15 million to further improve mobile coverage throughout Queensland. I am pleased to be able to announce today that, under a joint Commonwealth-state government funding arrangement, communities around the state can look forward to improved mobile phone coverage through 76 new or upgraded mobile phone base stations.

The Queensland government will co-fund 72 of these tower locations with the Commonwealth government, Telstra, Optus and councils as part of round 2 of the national Mobile Black Spot Program. A further four locations were successful in being awarded funding under the program for Optus satellite small cells. From the original \$15 million allocation, \$13.67 million has been committed to the second round of the program, with the remaining funds to be allocated to future mobile coverage improvement projects to be determined in the coming months.

Across the first two rounds of the program, the state government has committed just under \$24 million to deliver 144 new and improved mobile base stations to communities across Queensland. Mobile phone coverage can be a matter of life or death for people dealing with natural disasters, but it is equally important for everyday life—from business and tourism to education and social connection.

Providing mobile coverage at key points along remote roads is critical for locals and tourists alike. In this round of funding, for example, the Burke and Wills Roadhouse located in the Cloncurry shire will have improved mobile coverage, with co-funding by the state government in partnership with three separate councils. The latest funding will also benefit townships such as Injinoo, Ayton and Cape Tribulation in Far North Queensland and locations in South-East Queensland such as Kholo and Wongawallan. Townships such as Clarke Creek are now receiving mobile coverage to households, businesses and government services, and the local school and residents in the Jambin area now have improved mobile coverage which was identified as critical for improved public safety in the wake of Cyclone Marcia in 2015.

The Mobile Black Spot Program is a three-year program, with construction of Queensland's first round of towers currently underway throughout the state. To date, 19 towers announced in round 1 have been installed, with round 2 tower construction to occur over the next two years. In addition to the 144 mobile base stations awarded to Queensland, at least 80 Telstra 4G small cells will also be deployed throughout the state. The Palaszczuk government is committed to ensuring communities around the state can connect with and participate in the digital economy, and we will continue to put in place infrastructure to ensure these aims.