

Question on Notice
No. 985
Asked on 1 September 2021

MR N DAMETTO ASKED THE MINISTER FOR POLICE AND CORRECTIVE SERVICES AND MINISTER FOR FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES (HON M RYAN)—

QUESTION:

With reference to reports that, to date, not a single eligible recidivist youth offender in Townsville has been fitted with an Electronic Monitoring Device (EMD) due to 4G connectivity issues in the region—

Will the Minister explain what discussions have been had between the state and Telstra, or any other relevant network service providers, to rectify this fundamental technical policy?

ANSWER:

I am advised that the Member's question contains a number of factual inaccuracies.

Electronic monitoring has worked successfully in Queensland's judicial system for over a decade.

The Queensland Police Service (QPS) and Queensland Corrective Services (QCS) are very experienced in using this technology and the systems used are among world's best practice. I am advised that the electronic monitoring devices used in Queensland are continuously monitored 24/7.

I have been advised by QCS that the majority of the populated areas of Queensland, including regional cities like Townsville, for example, have sufficient network coverage for 24/7 electronic monitoring.

In fact, I am advised that since electronic monitoring was introduced over a decade ago, thousands of offenders or alleged offenders from all parts of Queensland have been the subject of an electronic monitoring condition, including now a youth offender in Townsville.

As is the case across Australia (and the world for that matter), there will always be a few examples of limited network coverage in some geographical areas which may mean that electronic monitoring is not practical as an exclusive supervision strategy for an offender or alleged offender. In those circumstances, other alternatives are sought by the authorities, which could include remanding the individual in custody or requiring the individual to live or undertake daily activities in another location, for example.

It is important to note that telecommunications is a constitutional responsibility of the Federal Government.