

FOI

From: s47F <s47F@optus.com.au>
Sent: Thursday, 18 September 2025 2:45 PM
To: cialerts
Cc: s22(1)(a)(ii) s47F; Optus Government Affairs
Subject: NOTIFICATION | Issue with calls to Triple Zero in SA and WA

Good afternoon team,

I have just been informed that Optus has received reports that some customers in SA and WA are experiencing impacts to Triple Zero calls.

Suspected cause has been indicated to stem from our Regency Park exchange (which services SA and WA), this matter is urgently being worked through.

I have no further details yet, but our Networks team have commenced the welfare check processes and relevant protocols.

As more information is made available, I will provide updates, and let you know when the issue is resolved.

Kind regards,

s47F
s47F, Government Affairs
1 Lyonpark Road, Macquarie Park, NSW 2113 Australia
s47F@optus.com.au | s47F

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FOI

From: s47F <s47F@optus.com.au>
Sent: Thursday, 18 September 2025 2:52 PM
To: cialerts
Cc: s22(1)(a)(ii) s47F; Optus Government Affairs
Subject: UPDATE | Issue with calls to Triple Zero in SA and WA

Good afternoon again,

I have been advised that the work to rectify the issue is complete and services have returned to normal.

The protocol reporting shows that 10 calls may have been impacted – each call is being worked through, and welfare checks will be made.

If any further information comes forward, I will provide another update – if you have any questions, please let me know.

Kind regards,

s47F
 , Government Affairs
 1 Lyonpark Road, Macquarie Park, NSW 2113 Australia
 s47F @optus.com.au | s47F

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From: s47F
Sent: Thursday, 18 September 2025 2:45 PM
To: cialerts <cialerts@communications.gov.au>
Cc: s22(1)(a)(ii) @mo.communications.gov.au; s47F <s47F@optus.com.au>; Optus Government Affairs <s47G(1)(a)@optus.com.au>
Subject: NOTIFICATION | Issue with calls to Triple Zero in SA and WA

s22(1)(a)(ii) (duplicate email)

FOI

From: s47F <s47F@optus.com.au>
Sent: Saturday, 20 September 2025 11:12 AM
To: Grunhard, Samuel; s47F CHISHOLM, James
Cc: s47F s47F Silleri, Kathleen; McMullan, Kate
Subject: RE: Contact points during this crisis [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Dear Sam and James

Thank you for your email – I will take those questions and revert as soon as I am able.

Please advise any further questions that may assist the Dept or Govt. I will also provide advance confirmation of the media conference (and any additional detail).

I can also confirm, just so you know, I am communicating directly with s22(1)(a)(ii) in PMO and s47F with Barnaby.

Thanks

s47F

From: Grunhard, Samuel <Samuel.Grunhard@COMMUNICATIONS.gov.au>
Sent: Saturday, 20 September 2025 10:45 AM
To: s47F <s47F@optus.com.au>; CHISHOLM, James <James.CHISHOLM@infrastructure.gov.au>
Cc: s47F <s47F@optus.com.au>; s47F <s47F@optus.com.au>; s47F <s47F@optus.com.au>; s47F <s47F@optus.com.au>; Silleri, Kathleen <Kathleen.Silleri@infrastructure.gov.au>; McMullan, Kate <kate.mcmullan@infrastructure.gov.au>
Subject: RE: Contact points during this crisis [SEC=OFFICIAL]

[External email] Please be cautious when clicking on any links or attachments.

OFFICIAL

OFFICIAL

Thanks s47F Is there any further information Optus can share now as to what went wrong, whether camp-on to other networks functioned correctly, and so on?

Kind regards
 Sam

Sam Grunhard

a/g Deputy Secretary

Communications and Media Group

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infrastructure.gov.au



*I would like to acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land on which we meet, work and live.
 I recognise and respect their continuing connection to the land, waters and communities.
 I pay my respects to Elders past and present and to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.*

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From: s47F <s47F@optus.com.au>
Sent: Saturday, 20 September 2025 10:43 AM
To: CHISHOLM, James <James.CHISHOLM@infrastructure.gov.au>; Grunhard, Samuel <Samuel.Grunhard@COMMUNICATIONS.gov.au>
Cc: s47F <s47F@optus.com.au>; s47F <s47F@optus.com.au>; s47F <s47F@optus.com.au>
Subject: Contact points during this crisis

Some people who received this message don't often get email from s47F@optus.com.au. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hi James and Sam

As we all know this will be a sustained crisis for Optus and we are mobilising to ensure we can manage this for a long period of time.

s47F, our new Head of Government and Regulatory Affairs, will be keeping you and other government stakeholders updated as we move through. s47F number is s47F and s47F email is above.

Of course, I am always here if you want to speak with me at any point, but I just wanted to be clear that s47F will be proactively keeping you updated when we have new information. We intend to do a press conference today at around 2pm, I have told Barnaby in the Minister's office this as well.

Thanks,
 s47F

s47F
 Mobile: s47F
 1 Lyonpark Road, Macquarie Park NSW 2113 Australia
 s47F@optus.com.au



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Optus acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the lands on which we live, work, and serve. We celebrate the oldest living culture and its unbroken history of storytelling and communication. We pay our respect to Elders – past, present, and future – and we strive together to embrace an optimistic outlook for our future in harmony, across all of Australia and for all of its people.

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FOI

From: s47F <s47F@optus.com.au>
Sent: Saturday, 20 September 2025 3:14 PM
To: Grunhard, Samuel; s47F; CHISHOLM, James; s22(1)(a)(ii)
Cc: Silleri, Kathleen
Subject: RE: Contact points during this crisis [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Dear Sam and James, Kate and s22(1)(a)(ii)

Please see below. New information has come to light which Stephen will address in media. I have shared this with Barnaby and spoken with him also. Please note this is draft and subject to change:

- As I confirmed yesterday, Optus conducted a network upgrade on Thursday 18 September and within this process a technical failure impacted Triple Zero calls.
- As has been reported, this was in relation to a firewall upgrade.
- This resulted in the failure of a number of Triple Zero calls in South Australia, the Northern Territory and Western Australia.
- The loss of the lives of three people, two in South Australia and one in Western Australia, is absolutely tragic.
- I would like to once again extend my deepest condolences to their families and friends and I promise that we will fully cooperate with any and all investigations in relation to this.
- In terms of our own investigation into the technical failures I can confirm that this is ongoing, and I will be fully transparent as we establish the facts of the matter.
- In this regard, I have some new information to share with you.

Length of outage and alerts, commencement checks

- I would like to address the rightful question around the length of the outage and how we were alerted to this.
- The system upgrade that took place in the early hours of Thursday morning, around 12:30am, was a regular upgrade.
- When the upgrades and changes were implemented, initial testing and monitoring did not indicate there were any issues with calls connecting – normal calls were connecting as they should and call volumes at a national level did not raise any red flags.
- There was a technical failure in the system, and further, there were no alarms to alert us that some emergency calls were not making it through to emergency services.
- We became aware of the severity of the incident when a customer contacted us directly at around 1.30pm.
- We were further notified by South Australia Police shortly thereafter (1:50pm).
- Once notified we began to confirm with relevant stakeholders such as police and other regulatory and government agencies and departments that we had experienced an outage impacting 000 and that we would be commencing welfare checks.
- Welfare checks commenced later that evening and into the following day, Friday. (delay due to complexity of pulling records from the network)
- During the course of those welfare checks we were advised by three households that there had been loss of life and that they could not reach 000.
- While I am not able to comment in more detail regarding these individual situations as it is more appropriate for other agencies, you have my commitment that Optus will share any new information that is appropriate for us to share as we know more.
-

Confirmation with Agencies, SA Government and WA Government

- I now would like to comment on our notifications to regulatory and government agencies and departments.

- While communication with regulatory and government agencies including police commenced in relation to the outage on Thursday, the communication of fatalities confirmed through welfare checks was not possible until yesterday.
- Once we had this information and were confident of its accuracy we shared this with our Board, ACMA, the Federal Government and other bodies.
- What I have asked my team to look into is what operational notifications could and should exist between retailers and the emergency services when there is a welfare check that determines a death has occurred. I will update further on this as I am able to establish the facts.
- I am sorry that the lack of this process led to the late notification of the Premiers and Chief Ministers, and while there was an intention was to ensure an earlier awareness of our intention to speak to the media, my team did end up making contact at roughly the same time.
- That said, I reiterate my belief that there should be a formal notification process in these instances, and I have asked my team to look into that urgently.
- This was a complex situation where Optus was keen to be sure of the facts that were emerging and believed to be true, and at the same time we did not push out public notification any further.
- I also want to reiterate that we take full accountability for the technical failure and due to the absence of alarms, we were unaware of this for a period of time which is an unacceptable gap in time I will ensure is fully investigated.

TIO Referrals

- I now want to make you aware of the fact that we have had two complaints referred to us by the Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman.
- Both surround two individuals calls to the Optus contact centre made on Thursday morning where they complained that the 000 service was not working.
- Early review suggests that we have not handled these calls as would be expected. I will be able to say more about these in due course but I do want to be transparent that we now know we were notified by two individuals that they could not connect into triple zero and this information was not surfaced with the relevant escalation at the time.
- We will be working with the TIO on these complaints and I will provide more details in due course. We are also conducting a review of all calls to our contact centres during the time of the outage.

Independent Review

- I would like to conclude this update with my confirmation that Optus will be appointing an independent person to lead a review into this entire incident from every aspect. I hope to confirm that person in the coming days but need to speak with relevant stakeholders both internally and externally to confirm prior to my announcement.

s47F

1 Lyonpark Road, Macquarie Park, NSW 2113 Australia

s47F [@optus.com.au](mailto:s47F@optus.com.au)




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From: Grunhard, Samuel <Samuel.Grunhard@COMMUNICATIONS.gov.au>
Sent: Saturday, 20 September 2025 10:45 AM
To: s47F <s47F@optus.com.au>; CHISHOLM, James <James.CHISHOLM@infrastructure.gov.au>
Cc: s47F <s47F@optus.com.au>; s47F <s47F@optus.com.au>; s47F <s47F@optus.com.au>; Silleri, Kathleen <Kathleen.Silleri@infrastructure.gov.au>; McMullan, Kate <kate.mcmullan@infrastructure.gov.au>
Subject: RE: Contact points during this crisis [SEC=OFFICIAL]

s22(1)(a)(ii) (duplicate email)



From: s47F <s47F@optus.com.au>
Sent: Saturday, 20 September 2025 10:43 AM
To: CHISHOLM, James <James.CHISHOLM@infrastructure.gov.au>; Grunhard, Samuel <Samuel.Grunhard@COMMUNICATIONS.gov.au>
Cc: s47F <s47F@optus.com.au>; s47F <s47F@optus.com.au>; s47F <s47F@optus.com.au>;

FOI

From: s47F <s47F@optus.com.au>
Sent: Saturday, 20 September 2025 5:29 PM
To: Grunhard, Samuel; s47F; CHISHOLM, James; s22(1)(a)(ii)
Cc: Silleri, Kathleen
Subject: Fourth fatality - Optus Stmt [SEC=OFFICIAL]

All, I wanted to share our media statement regarding the sad news of a fourth fatality.

We are saddened to learn of a new fatality in Western Australia which appears to have occurred during the outage period, and we have been advised by WA Police that they believe the individual likely attempted to contact triple zero for assistance. We will continue to work with WA Police and other agencies to understand more of what has occurred.

CEO Stephen Rue said:

"I am deeply saddened by this further news and extend my heartfelt condolences to the person's family and friends.

As stated earlier today I have asked for a full review into the circumstances relating to the failed network upgrade and impact on the triple zero network. I will also be working with my Board and executive team to enable a full independent review of the entire incident including all the impacts and related information. This includes working closely with relevant agencies to establish the full facts."

FOI

From: s47F <s47F@optus.com.au>
Sent: Sunday, 21 September 2025 5:07 PM
To: Grunhard, Samuel; s47F; CHISHOLM, James; s22(1)(a)(ii)
Cc: Silleri, Kathleen; s47F
Subject: Optus Statement - 21 September [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Attachments: 21.09.2025 Media Statement - Stephen Rue 21 September 2025 1.pdf

Dear s22(1)(a)(ii) James, Sam and Kathleen

Please find attached Stephen's media statement.

Thanks
s47F

21 September 2025

Optus CEO Stephen Rue Statement

I would like to provide an update today and to provide further clarity on a few elements of this situation.

I want to reiterate how sorry I am about the very sad loss of the lives of four people, who could not reach emergency services in their time of need.

Further, I acknowledge that the connection failures created immense additional distress for some of our other customers who attempted to contact the Triple Zero service on Thursday, and the news has understandably created concerns for the wider community who rightly want to know that when they need this service it will be available to them.

I would like to apologise to everyone impacted.

I was asked yesterday for additional details in relation to the cause of the upgrade failure.

Early investigations show that it appears that established processes were not followed.

In order to establish why this occurred, we are speaking with the individuals involved.

As to the full technical detail of the network failure we will need to leave that for the investigation.

What I can assure you is that actions are and will be taken to ensure this does not happen in future.

In the short term, I have put in place an immediate halt to further changes in our network system until we have a broader understanding of the events that have occurred so we can also introduce greater monitoring, testing and compliance and reviews of our change processes.

Further, our technical teams are monitoring Triple Zero call volumes and failure rates state by state 24 hours, seven days a week.

I have committed to providing updates where I am aware of new information.

Yesterday I confirmed that two customers contacted our call centre early on Thursday morning to report that they could not contact Triple Zero.

Our review of our call logs is continuing and so far as part of that process, they have found three further calls in relation to this.

As we had not detected the Triple Zero failures in our network at the time of these calls, there were no red flags for the contact centre to alert them to any live issues.

This is not clearly good enough, and we are implementing a new compulsory escalation process following any customer reports of Triple Zero failures through our customer call centre.

**MEDIA RELEASE**

As stated, these outages impacted calls in South Australia, Western Australia and Northern Territory.

The new information that I want to share is that I have been made aware that there were two callers from NSW who were unable to connect to emergency services. This is because they are based near the South Australian border and their calls were connected to South Australian towers.

Welfare checks on these callers have been progressed by Optus and the NSW Police and we are not aware of any further issues.

I would now like to provide some clarity on the welfare check process as there have been some reports that we may have missed the fourth person confirmed by police as having died while a call to Triple Zero was unsuccessfully attempted.

The welfare check process is made as follows:

- Optus attempts to call impacted households two times.
- When we are unable to make contact, we hand it over to police and police make further contact attempts.

It was during these further enquiries that the new information became known.

ENDS

Media contact:

Optus Corporate Affairs
02 9037 8179
media@optus.com.au

FOI

From: cialerts
Sent: Monday, 22 September 2025 11:09 AM
To: s47F; cialerts
Cc: s22(1)(a)(ii); s47F; Optus Government Affairs; OutageNotifications
Subject: RE: UPDATE | Issue with calls to Triple Zero in SA and WA [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

OFFICIAL

Good morning s47F

Could you please ensure in future notifications sent to the department regarding network outages are sent to OutageNotifications@infrastructure.gov.au

We have previously advised via s47F of this new email address.

Kind regards

s22(1)(a)(ii)

Assistant Director • Emergency Communications and Resilience Branch

s22(1)(a)(ii) @infrastructure.gov.au

P +61 2 s22(1)(a)

GPO Box 594 Canberra, ACT 2601

Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts
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From: s47F <s47F@optus.com.au>
Sent: Thursday, 18 September 2025 2:52 PM
To: cialerts <cialerts@communications.gov.au>
Cc: s22(1)(a)(ii); s22(1)(a)(ii)@mo.communications.gov.au; s47F
 <s47F@optus.com.au>; Optus Government Affairs <s47G(1)(a)@optus.com.au>
Subject: UPDATE | Issue with calls to Triple Zero in SA and WA

s22(1)(a)(ii) (duplicate email)

FOI

From: Optus Government Affairs <s47G(1)(a)@optus.com.au>
Sent: Monday, 22 September 2025 11:09 AM
To: cialerts
Subject: Automatic reply: UPDATE | Issue with calls to Triple Zero in SA and WA [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Thank you for contacting the Optus Government Affairs Dropbox.

This inbox is monitored to ensure all escalations are managed promptly. This is an automated response to ensure you that your escalation has been received.

If the matter is regarding a customer escalation a member of our Customer Resolutions Team will contact the customer directly, to help resolve any issues unless otherwise indicated.

Whilst we aim to resolve all matters as quickly as possible we appreciate your patience during this process and will keep you updated on any progress and ultimate resolutions.

If you have any additional information or questions, please feel free to reply to this email, and we will be happy to assist you.

Best regards,

Optus Government Affairs Team

OFFICIAL

FOI

From: s47F <s47F@optus.com.au>
Sent: Monday, 22 September 2025 11:14 AM
To: cialerts
Cc: s22(1)(a)(ii) s47F; Optus Government Affairs; OutageNotifications
Subject: RE: UPDATE | Issue with calls to Triple Zero in SA and WA [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Thank you s22(1)(a)(ii) –I will add this email to our database.

s47F
 1 Lyonpark Road, Macquarie Park, NSW 2113 Australia
 s47F @optus.com.au | s47F

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Sent: Monday, 22 September 2025 11:09 AM
To: s47F <s47F@optus.com.au>; cialerts <cialerts@communications.gov.au>
Cc: s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)@mo.communications.gov.au>; s47F
 <s47F@optus.com.au>; Optus Government Affairs <s47G(1)(a)@optus.com.au>;
 OutageNotifications <OutageNotifications@infrastructure.gov.au>
Subject: RE: UPDATE | Issue with calls to Triple Zero in SA and WA [SEC=OFFICIAL]

s22(1)(a)(ii) (duplicate email)

FOI

From: s47F <s47F@optus.com.au>
Sent: Monday, 22 September 2025 3:44 PM
To: barnaby.kerdel@aph.gov.au; s22(1)(a)(ii)@pm.gov.au; Grunhard, Samuel; CHISHOLM, James; s22(1)(a)(ii)@pm.gov.au; s22(1)(a)(ii)@pmc.gov.au; Silleri, Kathleen; s22(1)(a)(ii)
Subject: Optus Media Statement - 22 September

Please see below media statement which will go live on our website shortly - Thanks

MEDIA UPDATE:

In reviewing our call logs of customers who could not contact triple zero on Thursday, we have identified an additional seven customers.

Our investigations have revealed there was a period from 12.17am to 12.30am, as the upgrade was being readied for deployment, during which the ability of these customers to get through to emergency services was affected.

We have completed welfare checks and can confirm that three of the households have confirmed they require no further assistance. Two customers have been referred to SA Police and two to WA Police as we have been unable to make contact. This is in line with standard welfare check protocol.

s47F

1 Lyonpark Road, Macquarie Park, NSW 2113 Australia
 s47F@optus.com.au



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FOI

From: Grunhard, Samuel
Sent: Friday, 19 September 2025 4:17 PM
To: barnaby.kerdel@aph.gov.au; s22(1)(a)(ii)
Cc: Media; s22(1)(a)(ii) McMullan, Kate; s22(1)(a)(ii) s22(1)(a)(ii) CHISHOLM, James; French, Angela
Subject: Optus incident - suggested talking points [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

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Barnaby, s22(1)(a)(ii) as promised some responsive TPs if asked about the Optus outage. Optus has not yet issued a statement but evidently will do so some time this afternoon/evening.

- The Department is aware that Optus experienced an outage impacting Triple Zero calls on 18 September.
- While details are still emerging, no Triple Zero outage is acceptable.
- Telecommunications carriers have obligations to ensure they successfully carry Triple Zero calls.
- The ACMA will look at this incident as the regulator for the Triple Zero obligations.
- The Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts will also look into the matter to determine if there are further lessons to be learned for the Triple Zero ecosystem.

Sam

Sam Grunhard

a/g Deputy Secretary

Communications and Media Group

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EA: s22(1)(a)(ii) • E: s22(1)(a)(ii) [communications.gov.au](mailto:s22(1)(a)(ii)@communications.gov.au) • P +61 2 s22(1)(a)(ii)

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I would like to acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land on which we meet, work and live.

I recognise and respect their continuing connection to the land, waters and communities.

I pay my respects to Elders past and present and to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.

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From: s22(1)(a)(ii)
Sent: Friday, 19 September 2025 6:51 PM
To: Grunhard, Samuel; barnaby.kerdel@aph.gov.au
Cc: Media; s22(1)(a)(ii) McMullan, Kate; s22(1)(a)(ii) s22(1)(a)(ii) CHISHOLM, James; French, Angela
Subject: RE: Optus incident - suggested talking points [SEC=OFFICIAL]

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Thanks Sam – I will update the 2 x documents provided by the media team with the additional background.

REgards

s22(1)(a)(ii)

Advisor • Office of the Hon Anika Wells MP

Minister for Communications • Minister for Sport • Member for Lilley

s22(1)(a)(ii) mo.communications.gov.au • s22(1)(a)(ii)

Suite M1.19, Parliament House, Canberra ACT 2600, Australia • 1176 Sandgate Rd, Nundah QLD 4012

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From: Grunhard, Samuel <Samuel.Grunhard@COMMUNICATIONS.gov.au>
Sent: Friday, 19 September 2025 6:45 PM
To: s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii) mo.communications.gov.au>; barnaby.kerdel@aph.gov.au
Cc: Media <media@infrastructure.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii) infrastructure.gov.au>; McMullan, Kate <kate.mcmullan@infrastructure.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii) infrastructure.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii) mo.communications.gov.au>; CHISHOLM, James <James.CHISHOLM@infrastructure.gov.au>; French, Angela <Angela.French@infrastructure.gov.au>
Subject: RE: Optus incident - suggested talking points [SEC=OFFICIAL]

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Sorry ^{s22(1)(a)}_(ii) answers in line below.

Sam

Sam Grunhard

a/g Deputy Secretary

Communications and Media Group

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From: ^{s22(1)(a)}_(ii) <^{s22(1)(a)}_(ii) mo.communications.gov.au>

Sent: Friday, 19 September 2025 6:32 PM

To: Grunhard, Samuel <Samuel.Grunhard@COMMUNICATIONS.gov.au>; barnaby.kerdel@aph.gov.au

Cc: Media <media@infrastructure.gov.au>; ^{s22(1)(a)}_(ii) <^{s22(1)(a)}_(ii) infrastructure.gov.au>; McMullan,

Kate <kate.mcmullan@infrastructure.gov.au>; ^{s22(1)(a)}_(ii) <^{s22(1)(a)}_(ii) infrastructure.gov.au>; ^{s22(1)(a)}_(ii)

<^{s22(1)(a)}_(ii) mo.communications.gov.au>; CHISHOLM, James <James.CHISHOLM@infrastructure.gov.au>; French,

Angela <Angela.French@infrastructure.gov.au>

Subject: RE: Optus incident - suggested talking points [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

OFFICIAL

Thanks Sam – there are a couple of areas I need the department to fill in – now highlighted in yellow

^{s22(1)(a)}_(ii)

Advisor • Office of the Hon Anika Wells MP

Minister for Communications • Minister for Sport • Member for Lilley

^{s22(1)(a)}_(ii) mo.communications.gov.au • ^{s22(1)(a)}_(ii)

Suite M1.19, Parliament House, Canberra ACT 2600, Australia • 1176 Sandgate Rd, Nundah QLD 4012

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OFFICIAL

From: Grunhard, Samuel <Samuel.Grunhard@COMMUNICATIONS.gov.au>
Sent: Friday, 19 September 2025 6:28 PM
To: s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)@mo.communications.gov.au>; barnaby.kerdel@aph.gov.au
Cc: Media <media@infrastructure.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)@infrastructure.gov.au>; McMullan, Kate <kate.mcmullan@infrastructure.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)@infrastructure.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)@mo.communications.gov.au>; CHISHOLM, James <James.CHISHOLM@infrastructure.gov.au>; French, Angela <Angela.French@infrastructure.gov.au>
Subject: RE: Optus incident - suggested talking points [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

OFFICIAL

Thanks s22(1)(a)(ii) All of the below is correct (I assume the ACMA investigation info is from their website). One suggestion in red regarding the ACMA's regulatory role.

Sam Grunhard

a/g Deputy Secretary

Communications and Media Group

E: samuel.grunhard@communications.gov.au

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OFFICIAL

OFFICIAL

From: s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)@mo.communications.gov.au>
Sent: Friday, 19 September 2025 6:24 PM
To: Grunhard, Samuel <Samuel.Grunhard@COMMUNICATIONS.gov.au>; barnaby.kerdel@aph.gov.au
Cc: Media <media@infrastructure.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)@infrastructure.gov.au>; McMullan,

Kate <kate.mcmullan@infrastructure.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii) infrastructure.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii) mo.communications.gov.au>; CHISHOLM, James <James.CHISHOLM@infrastructure.gov.au>; French, Angela <Angela.French@infrastructure.gov.au>

Subject: RE: Optus incident - suggested talking points [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

OFFICIAL

Sam

Can the department the below check these and fill in the gaps.

Regards

Policy Background

The legislation

- Optus is a carrier and carriage service provider
- Carriers and carriage service providers have legal obligations under:
 - Telecommunications (Emergency Call Service) Determination 2019 (the Determination)
 - Telecommunications Act 1997 (the Act)
 - Telecommunications (Consumer Protection and Service Standards) Act 1999 (the TCPSS Act)
- These laws required carriers/CPS and emergency call persons to ensure access, carriage, handling and transfer emergency calls. They must comply with the Determination, carrier licence conditions, and service provider rules.
- **ACMA regulates compliance with these laws.**
- ACMA can investigate suspected breaches of any of these legislative instruments.
- Triggers for an investigation include
 - a network outage (disrupts access to Triple Zero or emergency services),
 - failure to notify Telstra (the emergency call person for triple zero) or the government in a timely way.
 - Complaints or referrals
 - Self referral from an entity.

The ACMA investigation process

1. Preliminary Assessment

- ACMA reviews incident reports, outage data, carrier notifications
- It checks whether reporting timelines and procedures in the determination were met.

2. Formal investigation

- ACMA can compel information under the Telecommunications Act (e.g. outage logs, internal comms, risk assessment)
- Technical analysis is undertaken to see whether call routing, carriage and transfer obligations were met.

3. Engagement with the Carrier

- ACMA seeks explanations from the carrier on what has occurred,

4. Findings and Enforcement

- If ACMA finds a breach/es it can
 - Issue a warning or direction to comply
 - **Impose a penalties – per infringement (up to \$19,000)? Correct**

- Impose a civil penalty of a breach of a service provider determination (currently up to \$250,000 per breach??, but being amended through the TECS Bill before the House) **Correct – noting I don't believe the increase would have retrospective effect if passed by Parliament**
- Accept a court enforceable undertaking from the carrier
- In serious cases, recommend changes to conditions or refer to the Minister.

Other outages of this type

- 30 June 2025 - [TPG warned for failure to comply with Triple Zero rules | ACMA](#)
 - ACMA issued a formal warning for failure to notify Telstra in a timely manner that an outage had affected emergency calls from its network.
 - ACMA found the TPG network was between 12:40am and 2am on 15 August 2024.
 - The investigation found TPG did not notify Telstra until 9:07am.
 - The majority of Triple Zero calls made during the outage were able to camp-on to other networks.
- 4 June 2025 - [Telstra penalised for disruption to emergency call support service | ACMA](#)
 - ACMA fined Telstra \$18,780 for accidentally disabling connect to 106 emergency call relay service for 12 hours and 46 minutes between 5-6 July 2024.
 - It was the maximum amount ACMA could fine them (why?)
- 11 December 2024 - [Telstra pays \\$3 million penalty for Triple Zero outage | ACMA](#)
 - ACMA fined Telstra just over \$3M for a technical disruption to Telstra's 000 emergency call centre, lasting 90 mins.
 - During the disruption, calls to 000 needed to be transferred to relevant emergency service organisations were hampered
 - ACMA found 473 separate breaches of the rules governing 000
- 8 November 2024 - [Optus pays \\$12 million penalty for Triple Zero outage | ACMA](#)
 - ACMA fined Optus experienced a whole-of-network outage causing significant disruption to millions of Australians, leaving many without the ability to call Triple Zero.
 - **What for and why>** The ACMA found Optus failed to provide access to the emergency call service for 2,145 people during the course of the outage. Optus then failed to conduct 369 welfare checks on people who had tried to make an emergency call during the outage (welfare checks are a requirement under the Emergency Call Services Determination).
- The government appointed Mr Richard Bean to undertake an independent review of the outage. The government accepted all 18 recommendations in the final report.
 - The Australian Government has fully implemented 12 of the 18 recommendations in the Optus Outage Review, with the remaining 6 underway
 - Status of the remaining 6 are:
 - Rec 3: Mandatory Testing Code: Six-monthly end-to-end Triple Zero ecosystem tests.
 - The University of Technology Sydney has been procured to facilitate testing with Telstra, Optus and TPG.
 - Testing commences from November 2025.
 - Rec 4: Customer Device Information Code: requiring disclosure to customers of potential device limitations in accessing Triple Zero
 - The Department is working with the mobile network operators and the University of Technology Sydney to consider how this

recommendation can best be implemented in response to the upcoming testing.

- Rec 8: ECS Contract Review: review of Telstra's Emergency Call Service contract to strengthen governance and separate the Emergency Call person role from broader business functions.
 - The Department and Telstra are reviewing the contract and is expected to finalise changes in the near future (what does this mean? – when?) I can't expand upon 'in the near future'. It will be very soon – we are in final contract negotiations with Telstra.
- Rec 14: Temporary Outage Roaming – explores roaming outside of natural disasters
 - Industry is developing TDR (what is TDR) (Apologies: Temporary Disaster Roaming) capability and drafting an MoU to support its development.
 - Broader roaming work now partly overtaken by the Universal Outdoor Mobile Obligation.
 - This recommendation has no set deadline.
- Rec 18: Joint Regularly and Legislative Review: Review of all legislation and regulation relating to Triple Zero,
 - To commence after other recommendations are fully implemented.

s22(1)(a)(ii)

Advisor • Office of the Hon Anika Wells MP

Minister for Communications • Minister for Sport • Member for Lilley

s22(1)(a)(ii) mo.communications.gov.au • s22(1)(a)(ii)

Suite M1.19, Parliament House, Canberra ACT 2600, Australia • 1176 Sandgate Rd, Nundah QLD 4012

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OFFICIAL

From: Grunhard, Samuel <Samuel.Grunhard@COMMUNICATIONS.gov.au>

Sent: Friday, 19 September 2025 5:10 PM

To: barnaby.kerdel@aph.gov.au; s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)> mo.communications.gov.au

Cc: Media <media@infrastructure.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)> infrastructure.gov.au; McMullan,

Kate <kate.mcmullan@infrastructure.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)> infrastructure.gov.au; s22(1)(a)(ii)

<s22(1)(a)(ii)> mo.communications.gov.au; CHISHOLM, James <James.CHISHOLM@infrastructure.gov.au>; French,

Angela <Angela.French@infrastructure.gov.au>

Subject: RE: Optus incident - suggested talking points [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

OFFICIAL

Some further TPs as requested. Also reproviding below the recent fines and investigations so you have them in one string, as requested.

Bean review

- The Australian Government has fully implemented 12 of the 18 recommendations in the Optus Outage Review (the Bean Review), with the remaining 6 underway.
- Work is underway to improve industry accountability and end-to-end oversight of the emergency calling ecosystem.
- The government is committed to ensuring Triple Zero is readily available for all people in Australia, and that consumers and businesses have certainty of access to telecommunications.
- The Optus Outage Review recommendations implemented to date include:
 - o Amendments to the Emergency Call Service regulations to strengthen obligations on telcos for outage reporting, tower wilting (mobile towers resetting during an outage to stop mobile phones connecting to them, to allow them to call Triple Zero on other networks) and real-time information sharing.
 - o New rules for telcos to communicate specific information about outages to customers.
 - o Updates to the Complaints Handling Standard to ensure the effects of outages are appropriately accounted for.
 - o Updated Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman (TIO) guidance to enable a standardised approach to mass complaints resolution.
 - o Updated guidance to help the community prepare for and recover from outages.
- The government is continuing to work with industry to:
 - o Establishing a Triple Zero Custodian, with oversight of the functioning and performance of the broader Triple Zero system.
 - o Review the Triple Zero contract with Telstra.
 - o The development of Mutual Assistance arrangements between carriers.

Recent investigations and fines

- 30 June 2025 - [TPG warned for failure to comply with Triple Zero rules | ACMA](#)
- 4 June 2025 - [Telstra penalised for disruption to emergency call support service | ACMA](#)
- 11 December 2024 - [Telstra pays \\$3 million penalty for Triple Zero outage | ACMA](#)
- 8 November 2024 - [Optus pays \\$12 million penalty for Triple Zero outage | ACMA](#)

Kind regards

Sam

Sam Grunhard

a/g Deputy Secretary

Communications and Media Group

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From: Grunhard, Samuel
Sent: Friday, 19 September 2025 4:17 PM
To: 'barnaby.kerdel@aph.gov.au' <barnaby.kerdel@aph.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)@mo.communications.gov.au>
Cc: Media <media@infrastructure.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)@infrastructure.gov.au>; McMullan, Kate <kate.mcmullan@infrastructure.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)@infrastructure.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)@mo.communications.gov.au>; CHISHOLM, James <James.CHISHOLM@infrastructure.gov.au>; French, Angela <Angela.French@infrastructure.gov.au>
Subject: Optus incident - suggested talking points [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

s22(1)(a)(ii) (duplicate email)

From: Grunhard, Samuel
Sent: Friday, 19 September 2025 9:49 PM
To: s22(1)(a)(ii)
Cc: s22(1)(a)(ii) Media; barnaby.kerdel@aph.gov.au; s22(1)(a)(ii) McMullan, Kate; s22(1)(a)(ii) CHISHOLM, James; French, Angela; Silleri, Kathleen
Subject: RE: Optus incident - suggested talking points [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Hi s22(1)(a)(ii)

Let me know if this provides what you need.

- The Bean Review into the Optus Outage of November 2023 recommended the establishment of “a Triple Zero custodian, with oversight of and overarching responsibility for the efficient functioning of the Triple Zero ecosystem, including monitoring the end-to-end performance of the ecosystem.”
- The Government accepted the recommendation, and tasked the Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman (TIO) with leading a Steering Committee to examine how the Custodian should be implemented.
- The TIO finalised a report outlining the committee’s recommendations.
- The then Minister considered the report and chose to establish the Triple Zero Custodian within the Department. The Custodian function will be performed by senior staff within the Department.
- Legislation is now being developed to provide the Custodian with formal powers.
- In advance of legislation, the Department has consulted with stakeholders, including telcos and the states and territories, on appropriate arrangements to ensure better visibility of activity across the Triple Zero system. However, legislative powers are needed to enable the Custodian to require telcos to provide information to Government.

Background

- The Triple Zero call centre service is operated by Telstra. However, all carriers and carriage service providers are required to ensure that calls from their customers are carried from their networks to the Telstra Triple Zero call centre.
- The Bean Review found that no one entity in the telecommunications ecosystem had end-to-end visibility of the proper functioning of Triple Zero. Carriers, including Telstra, can only see into their own networks. The Review considered that Government needed to have better visibility and proactive management of the proper functioning of the Triple Zero ecosystem.

Sam Grunhard

a/g Deputy Secretary

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From: s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)@mo.communications.gov.au>
Sent: Friday, 19 September 2025 9:08 PM
To: Grunhard, Samuel <Samuel.Grunhard@COMMUNICATIONS.gov.au>
Subject: Re: Optus incident - suggested talking points [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

OFFICIAL

Asap would be good - and really just where it's at and if it's in place, and what it's supposed to do effectively

Thanks Sam

OFFICIAL

From: "Grunhard, Samuel" <Samuel.Grunhard@COMMUNICATIONS.gov.au>
Date: Friday, 19 September 2025 at 8:47:37 pm
To: s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)@mo.communications.gov.au>, "barnaby.kerdel@aph.gov.au" <barnaby.kerdel@aph.gov.au>
Cc: "Media" <media@infrastructure.gov.au>, s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)@infrastructure.gov.au>, "McMullan, Kate" <kate.mcmullan@infrastructure.gov.au>, s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)@infrastructure.gov.au>, s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)@mo.communications.gov.au>, "CHISHOLM, James" <James.CHISHOLM@infrastructure.gov.au>, "French, Angela" <Angela.French@infrastructure.gov.au>
Subject: Re: Optus incident - suggested talking points [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

OFFICIAL

Will do. s22(1)(a)(ii) please let me know if you have specific questions (will provide general background and current status), and when you need answers by.

Sam

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a/g Deputy Secretary

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From: "s22(1)(a)(ii)" <s22(1)(a)(ii)@mo.communications.gov.au>
Date: Friday, 19 September 2025 at 8:25:31 pm
To: "Grunhard, Samuel" <Samuel.Grunhard@COMMUNICATIONS.gov.au>, "barnaby.kerdel@aph.gov.au" <barnaby.kerdel@aph.gov.au>
Cc: "Media" <media@infrastructure.gov.au>, "s22(1)(a)(ii)" <s22(1)(a)(ii)@infrastructure.gov.au>, "McMullan, Kate" <kate.mcmullan@infrastructure.gov.au>, "s22(1)(a)(ii)" <s22(1)(a)(ii)@infrastructure.gov.au>, "s22(1)(a)(ii)" <s22(1)(a)(ii)@mo.communications.gov.au>, "CHISHOLM, James" <James.CHISHOLM@infrastructure.gov.au>, "French, Angela" <Angela.French@infrastructure.gov.au>
Subject: Re: Optus incident - suggested talking points [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

OFFICIAL

Hi Sam

Can you get some more detailed TPs and background (including policy background) on the triple zero custodian to help Chris with potential media tomorrow.

Many thanks

s22(1)
(a)(ii)

OFFICIAL

From: "Grunhard, Samuel" <Samuel.Grunhard@COMMUNICATIONS.gov.au>
Date: Friday, 19 September 2025 at 6:45:19 pm
To: "s22(1)(a)(ii)" <s22(1)(a)(ii)@mo.communications.gov.au>, "barnaby.kerdel@aph.gov.au" <barnaby.kerdel@aph.gov.au>
Cc: "Media" <media@infrastructure.gov.au>, "s22(1)(a)(ii)" <s22(1)(a)(ii)@infrastructure.gov.au>, "McMullan, Kate" <kate.mcmullan@infrastructure.gov.au>, "s22(1)(a)(ii)" <s22(1)(a)(ii)@infrastructure.gov.au>, "s22(1)(a)(ii)" <s22(1)(a)(ii)@mo.communications.gov.au>, "CHISHOLM, James" <James.CHISHOLM@infrastructure.gov.au>, "French, Angela" <Angela.French@infrastructure.gov.au>
Subject: RE: Optus incident - suggested talking points [SEC=OFFICIAL]

s22(1)(a)(ii) - duplicate email

From: Grunhard, Samuel
Sent: Saturday, 20 September 2025 3:17 PM
To: barnaby.kerdel@aph.gov.au; s22(1)(a)(ii) s22(1)(a)(ii)
Cc: CHISHOLM, James
Subject: FW: Contact points during this crisis [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Barnaby, s22(1)(a)(ii) s22(1)(a)(ii) FYI – presumably this is what Stephen Rue is about to say to the media.

Sam

Sam Grunhard

a/g Deputy Secretary

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OFFICIAL

From: s47F <s47F@optus.com.au>
Sent: Saturday, 20 September 2025 3:14 PM
To: Grunhard, Samuel <Samuel.Grunhard@COMMUNICATIONS.gov.au>; s47F <s47F@optus.com.au>; CHISHOLM, James <James.CHISHOLM@infrastructure.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)@pm.gov.au>
Cc: Silleri, Kathleen <Kathleen.Silleri@infrastructure.gov.au>
Subject: RE: Contact points during this crisis [SEC=OFFICIAL]

s22(1)(a)(ii) (duplicate email)

From: Grunhard, Samuel
Sent: Sunday, 21 September 2025 7:06 AM
To: s22(1)(a)(ii) s22(1)(a)(ii)
Cc: barnaby.kerdel@aph.gov.au; CHISHOLM, James; Silleri, Kathleen; McMullan, Kate; s22(1)(a)(ii)
Subject: Optus sitrep - 7am 21 Sept [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Attachments: Optus sitrep.docx; review_into_the_optus_outage_of_8_november_government_response.pdf

OFFICIAL

Hi s22(1)(a)(ii) s22(1)(a)(ii)

As requested, attached is a consolidation of information provided to the MO and a statement of facts as we currently know them. Let me know if you'd like anything else added. I've incorporated ACMA's information about their investigation into the same doc for ease.

I've also attached the Government response to the Bean review for reference.

Sam

Sam Grunhard

a/g Deputy Secretary

Communications and Media Group

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Optus situation report – as at **7am 21 September 2025**

Facts / chronology

- Optus advises that the outage was triggered when a system upgrade was started around 12.30am on Thursday 18 September. The upgrade was related to a firewall upgrade.
- The technical failure impacted over 600 Triple Zero calls. The duration has been reported as between 10 and 14 hours.
- Optus says that they and police services have since conducted welfare checks on all missed calls.
- SA Police says it has since determined that an eight-week-old boy from Gawler West and a 68-year-old woman from the Adelaide suburb of Queenstown have died.
- The Western Australian government confirmed a 74-year-old man has died, and another person may also have died as a result of the outage.
- The Optus CEO said on 20 September that Optus will order an independent investigation into the incident.
- Minister Wells announced on 20 September that the ACMA will be investigating the incident.
- It is not yet clear precisely how the outage occurred, and why internal systems within Optus failed to act faster to restore services.

Background

How does Triple Zero work?

Triple Zero is delivered in coordination across the Australian Government and State and Territory Governments. The Australian Government provides and funds call centres that undertake the initial call answering, and then transfers genuine calls to the relevant police, fire or ambulance service in the appropriate state/territory. Telstra is required by law to provide Triple Zero services, and all telecommunications carriers are required to ensure that their customers' calls are passed through to Triple Zero.

Isn't there a system in place for all emergency calls to be carried even when the 'home' network is down?

Yes, this is called 'camp-on'. It enables mobile calls to be carried to Triple Zero even when the home network is down, by 'camping on' to another mobile network. It is not yet clear whether this system worked in this case, and if not, why not. This will form part of the ACMA's investigation.

When was the Department notified of the Outage?

The Department has a dedicated email address which is used by the telcos to notify of outages. Optus notified at 2.45pm on 18 September of an issue affecting some customers attempting to call Triple Zero. At 2.52pm Optus advised that the matter was resolved and that up to 10 calls may have been impacted.

The Department was then contacted by the ACMA at 3.29pm on 19 September (the next day) to advise that Optus had experienced a 14 hour outage and over 600 calls were impacted.

What did the Bean Review into the 2023 Optus outage find? What action has the Government taken?

- Following the November 2023 Optus outage, the Department undertook a review of the incident to uncover the lessons for Government and the telecommunications industry from the outage, with the focus on the functioning of Triple Zero during the outage.
- The Review was led by Mr Richard Bean and provided a report, making 18 recommendations to the Minister for Communications in April 2024.
- All 18 recommendations were accepted by Government.
- Completed actions include:
 - Additional regulatory obligations on the telco industry around ensuring calls are carried to Triple Zero, including technical changes to network architecture.
 - Additional regulatory obligations on the telco industry around communicating to customers and government about when outages are occurring.
 - Establishment of a testing facility at the University of Technology Sydney to test mobile devices' ability to call Triple Zero in a range of scenarios, to implement a new mandatory testing code
- Ongoing actions include work to establish a Triple Zero Custodian to oversee the end to end operation of the Triple Zero ecosystem, and a review of the Triple Zero contract with Telstra.

Bean Review Recommendations

1	Articulating Obligations and Mandatory Wilting	Complete
2	Triple Zero Custodian Legislation to empower the custodian is currently being drafted.	Ongoing
3	Mandatory Testing Code	With ACMA to register
4	Customer Device Information Code	With ACMA to register
5	Real Time Information Sharing	Complete
6	Outage Reporting	Complete
7	Combined Protocol Documents	Complete
8	ECP Contract Review. Negotiations with Telstra are in the final stages	Under negotiation
9	Protocol for Major Service Disruption Improvement	Complete
10	Customer Communications Standard	Complete
11	Education Initiative	Complete
12	Complaints Handling Standard	Complete
13	Standardised Resolutions Approach	Complete

14	Temporary Outage Roaming The Mobile Network Operators have been working on establishing the capability to enable temporary roaming. Testing is due to commence in November 2025.	Ongoing
15	Mutual Assistance Memorandum of Understanding Industry is considering this action in conjunction with recommendation 14.	Ongoing
16	Remote Access Code	Complete
17	Government Service Continuity	Complete
18	Joint Regulatory and Legislative Review This recommendation will be used to capture emerging matters not addressed in the previous recommendations.	Ongoing

Other recent outages of this type

- 30 June 2025 - [TPG warned for failure to comply with Triple Zero rules | ACMA](#)
 - ACMA issued a formal warning to TPG for failure to notify Telstra in a timely manner that an outage had affected emergency calls from its network.
 - ACMA found the TPG network failed between 12:40am and 2am on 15 August 2024.
 - The investigation found TPG did not notify Telstra until 9:07am.
 - The majority of Triple Zero calls made during the outage were able to camp-on to other networks.
- 4 June 2025 - [Telstra penalised for disruption to emergency call support service | ACMA](#)
 - ACMA fined Telstra \$18,780 for accidentally disabling connect to 106 emergency call relay service for 12 hours and 46 minutes between 5-6 July 2024.
- 11 December 2024 - [Telstra pays \\$3 million penalty for Triple Zero outage | ACMA](#)
 - ACMA fined Telstra just over \$3M for a technical disruption to Telstra's 000 emergency call centre, lasting 90 mins.
 - ACMA found 473 separate breaches of the rules governing Triple Zero
- 8 November 2024 - [Optus pays \\$12 million penalty for Triple Zero outage | ACMA](#)
 - ACMA fined Optus for a whole-of-network outage in November 2023 causing significant disruption to millions of Australians, leaving many without the ability to call Triple Zero.
 - ACMA found Optus failed to provide access to the emergency call service for 2,145 people during the course of the outage. Optus then failed to conduct 369 welfare checks on people who had tried to make an emergency call during the outage.

Information from the ACMA on its investigation and powers – all below information provided by the ACMA on 20 September

Investigation Focus

The ACMA will investigate Optus compliance with the following regulations:

- [Telecommunications \(Emergency Call Service\) Determination 2019](#)
- [Telecommunications \(Customer Communications for Outages\) Industry Standard 2024](#)
- [Industry Code C536: Emergency Call Service Requirements](#)

Telecommunications (Emergency Call Service) Determination 2019

The ECS Determination requires telcos to ensure that emergency calls are successfully carried to the Emergency Call Service.

The investigation will examine Optus compliance with:

- **Section 11- Networks** - requires carriers and carriage service providers (CSPs) to maintain, as far as practicable, the proper and effective functioning of their controlled networks and their controlled facilities that are used for the carriage of emergency calls to the Emergency Call Service.
- **Section 14 – Carriage service providers must ensure controlled networks and controlled facilities give access to end users** – requires the network to be configured to ensure end-users have access to emergency call services (this is a single breach provision).
- **Section 15** – requirement to give every end-user who makes an emergency call access to the Emergency Call Service (this section could have multiple breaches, one breach for each customer unable to connect to Triple Zero).
- **Section 19** – requires the CSP to ensure that that an emergency call made using the service is carried to the relevant termination point for the call (the relevant termination point in this case is the point of interconnect between the Optus network and the Telstra network for receipt of emergency calls).
- **Section 27 – Notification requirements – significant network outages** - CSPs experiencing a Significant Network Outage must, as soon as possible after becoming aware of the outage, notify, or arrange to notify the Emergency Call Person for 000 and 112, and the Emergency Call Person for 106; and each CSP in relation to whom the carrier or CSP has an obligation to provide access under section 10 (their resellers).
- **Section 28 – Welfare checks – significant network outages** – requires a CSP, as soon as practicable after becoming aware of a Significant Network Outage, or being notified of a Significant Network Outage, to undertake, or arrange to be undertaken, a welfare check on an end-user who made an unsuccessful emergency call during the outage.

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The communications for outages standard commenced on 31 December 2024 for major outages and 30 June 2025 for significant local outages.

In a major outage or a significant local outage, a telco must communicate information about the outage to:

- Customers and the public
- Other carriers and carriage service providers
- Relevant stakeholders (the ACMA, Dept, NEMA, TIO, Emergency Call Persons for 000/112 and 106).

Telcos must also:

- put relevant and up-to-date information on their website
- keep customers up to date using methods including apps, email, SMS, other media, call centres and, for major outages, social media.

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- Section 4.6 of the Code requires a carrier or CSP, after becoming aware of a Significant Network Outage in its network, must provide the ACMA via email, on or before the next Business Day with a copy of the notifications which the carrier or CSP sent to the ECP for 000/112 and ECP for 106 under section 27(2)(a) of the ECS Determination.

Background

Should camp-on and network wilting have worked during this incident?

- A mobile phone will 'camp-on' to another mobile network when it is outside the mobile coverage provided by the home mobile network, including in some circumstances where its home mobile network is experiencing an outage.
- A mobile phone will attempt make a call using its own mobile network if the radio access network of that mobile network is available (if the mobile bases station/antenna are radiating a signal).
- New rules for wilting of mobile networks will commence on 1 November 2025 (when the [Telecommunications \(Emergency Call Service\) Amendment Determination 2025 No.1](#) commences).
- The new rules to commence on 1 November 2025 require a mobile carrier to 'wilt' the network if the core network is experiencing a 'core network outage'.
- We need to establish the facts of this issue to determine whether, had the new rules been in place (which they are not), whether this outage was a core network outage. On the information currently available, it may not, as all voice and data services other than Triple Zero appear to have been operating. In these circumstances, wilting the network would shutdown the network to all users in the relevant states/territories, so that could itself have a detrimental impact to customers and the public. It is also important to note that Optus were apparently unaware of the failure in connecting triple zero calls.

Welfare Checks

- Welfare checks are required to be undertaken under section 27 of the ECS Determination.
- A CSP must undertake a welfare check as soon as practicable after becoming aware of a Significant Network Outage, or being notified of a Significant Network Outage.
- A welfare check for mobile customers may be undertaken using an SMS that requests the customer confirms via return text if they require assistance.
- A welfare check for a fixed-line service requires a phone call to the number.

From: Grunhard, Samuel
Sent: Sunday, 21 September 2025 9:38 AM
To: Kerdel, Barnaby (A. Wells, MP); CHISHOLM, James; Kerdel, Barnaby
Cc: s22(1)(a)(ii) s22(1)(a)(ii) Silleri, Kathleen; Sparreboom, Shanyn; McMullan, Kate; French, Angela
Subject: RE: draft words for Minister [SEC-PROTECTED, CAVEAT-CH-CABINET]

~~PROTECTED, CH-CABINET~~

Hi Barnaby,

Just looping back to this conversation string. s47C

and await further views from you and the Minister on Optus' announced 'independent investigation'.

Kind regards
 Sam

Sam Grunhard

a/g Deputy Secretary

Communications and Media Group

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EA: s22(1)(a)(ii) • E: s22(1)(a)(ii) communications.gov.au • P +61 2 s22(1)(a)

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*I would like to acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land on which we meet, work and live.
 I recognise and respect their continuing connection to the land, waters and communities.
 I pay my respects to Elders past and present and to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.*

~~PROTECTED, CH-CABINET~~

From: Kerdel, Barnaby (A. Wells, MP) <Barnaby.Kerdel@aph.gov.au>
Sent: Saturday, 20 September 2025 12:30 PM
To: CHISHOLM, James <James.CHISHOLM@infrastructure.gov.au>; Grunhard, Samuel <Samuel.Grunhard@COMMUNICATIONS.gov.au>; Kerdel, Barnaby <Barnaby.Kerdel@mo.communications.gov.au>
Cc: s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)@mo.communications.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)@mo.communications.gov.au>; Silleri, Kathleen <Kathleen.Silleri@infrastructure.gov.au>; Sparreboom, Shanyn <shanyn.sparreboom@infrastructure.gov.au>; McMullan, Kate <kate.mcmullan@infrastructure.gov.au>; French, Angela <Angela.French@infrastructure.gov.au>
Subject: Re: draft words for Minister [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Appreciate the work, at this point we think we need to get more facts before next steps

OFFICIAL

From: CHISHOLM, James <James.CHISHOLM@infrastructure.gov.au>
Sent: Saturday, 20 September 2025 12:26 PM
To: Grunhard, Samuel <Samuel.Grunhard@COMMUNICATIONS.gov.au>; Kerdel, Barnaby (A. Wells, MP) <Barnaby.Kerdel@aph.gov.au>; Kerdel, Barnaby <Barnaby.Kerdel@mo.communications.gov.au>
Cc: s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)@mo.communications.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)@mo.communications.gov.au>; Sillieri, Kathleen <Kathleen.Sillieri@infrastructure.gov.au>; Sparreboom, Shanyn <shanyn.sparreboom@infrastructure.gov.au>; McMullan, Kate <kate.mcmullan@infrastructure.gov.au>; French, Angela <Angela.French@infrastructure.gov.au>
Subject: RE: draft words for Minister [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

OFFICIAL

Barnaby – **this sentence** provides a strong hook to broader issues that remain unresolved and that this incident gives a solid opportunity to tackle.
 James

OFFICIAL

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From: Grunhard, Samuel <Samuel.Grunhard@COMMUNICATIONS.gov.au>
Sent: Saturday, 20 September 2025 12:24 PM
To: barnaby.kerdel@aph.gov.au; Kerdel, Barnaby <Barnaby.Kerdel@mo.communications.gov.au>
Cc: s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)@mo.communications.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)@mo.communications.gov.au>; CHISHOLM, James <James.CHISHOLM@infrastructure.gov.au>; Sillieri, Kathleen <Kathleen.Sillieri@infrastructure.gov.au>; Sparreboom, Shanyn <shanyn.sparreboom@infrastructure.gov.au>; McMullan, Kate <kate.mcmullan@infrastructure.gov.au>; French, Angela <Angela.French@infrastructure.gov.au>
Subject: draft words for Minister [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

OFFICIAL

Hi Barnaby – as promised, some words for you to consider for the Minister's public statement.

Draft Minister Statement

The Government is deeply concerned and disappointed to learn of the catastrophic Optus outage that occurred on Thursday, meaning people could not access Triple Zero when they were most in need. The Australian Government will not tolerate these failures. The Australian community must be able to access Triple Zero when and if they need

to. The fact that, in this case, it would appear that over 600 calls were not able to connect to Triple Zero is totally unacceptable. I want to express my deepest sympathies to the families who have lost loved ones.

I have spoken with the Optus CEO and advised him that I am commissioning an independent review into this incident. The review will focus on what went wrong within Optus that could lead to such a catastrophic failure, including the remedies required within Optus to prevent this occurring again. **The review will also consider broader implications for network management, resilience and public safety.**

The independent review will investigate Optus' management of its network and the integrity of its internal systems and processes, as well as whether recent reforms to mandatory reporting, testing requirements and other obligations should be further strengthened and built upon. I will release terms of reference in the coming days.

In parallel, the regulator (the ACMA) will investigate Optus' compliance with the current regulations with a particular focus on the Emergency Call Service Determination. I understand that the South Australian Government will also be conducting its own investigation of the incident.

There are many questions to be answered in this matter and it may take some time before we have a clear picture about what actually went wrong. In the meantime, Optus has assured me that it will cooperate unreservedly with the independent review and with investigations by regulators and other agencies.

Background

How does Triple Zero work?

Triple Zero is delivered in coordination across the Australian Government and State and Territory Governments. The Australian Government provides and funds call centres that undertake the initial call answering, and then transfers genuine calls to the relevant police, fire or ambulance service in the appropriate state/territory. Telstra is required by law to provide Triple Zero services, and all telecommunications carriers are required to ensure that their customers' calls are passed through to Triple Zero.

Isn't there a system in place for all emergency calls to be carried even when the 'home' network is down?

Yes, this is called 'camp-on'. It enables mobile calls to be carried to Triple Zero even when the home network is down, by 'camping on' to another mobile network. It is not yet clear whether this system worked in this case, and if not, why not.

What do you know about the circumstances of the three fatalities?

At this stage we have limited information about the fatalities. The Emergency Service Organisations in each of the impacted states will be investigating these issues.

The Department has reached out to its contacts in WA, SA and NT Emergency service organisations to seek additional information on the circumstances of the incidents.

How will this Review be different to Bean Review?

The Bean Review focused on the operation of the Triple Zero ecosystem and regulation. This review will focus on Optus internal systems and process, specifically those in place to ensure network upgrades do not trigger unintended consequences.

What will the ACMA's investigation focus on?

That is a matter for the ACMA, though it will likely consider Optus's compliance with the Emergency Call Service Determination.

When was the Department notified of the Outage?

The Department has a dedicated email address which is used by the telcos to notify of outages. Optus notified at 2.45pm on 18 September of an issue affecting some customers attempting to call Triple Zero. At 2.52pm Optus advised that the matter was resolved and that up to 10 calls may have been impacted.

The Department was then contacted by the ACMA at 3.29pm on 19 September (the next day) to advise that Optus had experienced a 14 hour outage and over 600 calls were impacted.

Sam Grunhard

a/g Deputy Secretary

Communications and Media Group

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From: Grunhard, Samuel
Sent: Sunday, 21 September 2025 4:35 PM
To: s22(1)(a)(ii) s22(1)(a)(ii)
Cc: barnaby.kerdel@aph.gov.au; CHISHOLM, James; Silleri, Kathleen; McMullan, Kate; s22(1)(a)(ii)
Subject: RE: Optus sitrep - 5pm 21 Sept [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Attachments: Optus sitrep 5pm 21st Sept.docx

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Hi s22(1)(a)(ii) and s22(1)(a)(ii) Updated sit rep attached. Next update tomorrow or as needed.

Worth noting that while a lot remains very unclear, it is clear that this was a very different type of outage to the 2023 outage. After much investigation we know why 'camp-on' did not work in the 2023 outage; if camp-on has failed in this scenario it is highly likely to be for a different reason, something that the new mandatory device testing process (recommendation 3 of the Bean Review) can explore, in addition to Optus' and the ACMA's investigation of this incident.

Sam

Sam Grunhard

a/g Deputy Secretary

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From: Grunhard, Samuel <Samuel.Grunhard@COMMUNICATIONS.gov.au>
Sent: Sunday, 21 September 2025 7:06 AM
To: s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)@communications.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)@communications.gov.au>
Cc: barnaby.kerdel@aph.gov.au; CHISHOLM, James <James.CHISHOLM@infrastructure.gov.au>; Silleri, Kathleen <Kathleen.Silleri@infrastructure.gov.au>; McMullan, Kate <kate.mcmullan@infrastructure.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)@infrastructure.gov.au>
Subject: Optus sitrep - 7am 21 Sept [SEC=OFFICIAL]

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Hi s22(1)(a) s22(1)(a)(ii)

As requested, attached is a consolidation of information provided to the MO and a statement of facts as we currently know them. Let me know if you'd like anything else added. I've incorporated ACMA's information about their investigation into the same doc for ease.

I've also attached the Government response to the Bean review for reference.

Sam

Sam Grunhard

a/g Deputy Secretary

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Optus situation report – as at 5pm 21 September 2025 (updates highlighted)

Clearance: Sam Grunhard, a/g Deputy Secretary Communications and Media Group, DITRDSCA

Facts / chronology

- Optus advises that the outage was triggered when a system upgrade was started around 12.30am on Thursday 18 September. The upgrade was related to a firewall upgrade.
- The technical failure impacted over 600 Triple Zero calls in SA, NT, WA, and two calls in NSW. The duration has been reported as between 10 and 14 hours.
- Optus says that they and police services have since conducted welfare checks on all missed calls.
- On 21 September the Optus CEO said that Optus has now identified five calls to its call centres raising Triple Zero concerns, but these were not acted upon; internal escalation protocols failed. Optus says it has commenced “24/7” monitoring of its Triple Zero function.
- SA Police says it has since determined that an eight-week-old boy from Gawler West and a 68-year-old woman from the Adelaide suburb of Queenstown have died. SA Police now says the infant death is unlikely to have been caused by the outage.
- The Western Australian government confirmed a 74-year-old man has died, and another person may also have died as a result of the outage.
- State investigations will be held, including possible coronial proceedings.
- The Optus CEO said on 20 September that Optus will order an independent investigation into the incident.
- Minister Wells announced on 20 September that the ACMA will be investigating the incident.
- It is not yet clear precisely how the outage occurred, and why internal systems within Optus failed to act faster to restore services.

Background

How does Triple Zero work?

Triple Zero is delivered in coordination across the Australian Government and State and Territory Governments. The Australian Government provides and funds call centres that undertake the initial call answering, and then transfers genuine calls to the relevant police, fire or ambulance service in the appropriate state/territory. Telstra is required by law to provide Triple Zero services, and all telecommunications carriers are required to ensure that their customers’ calls are passed through to Triple Zero.

Isn’t there a system in place for all emergency calls to be carried even when the ‘home’ network is down?

Yes, this is called ‘camp-on’. It enables mobile calls to be carried to Triple Zero even when the home network is down, by ‘camping on’ to another mobile network. It is not yet clear whether this system worked in this case, and if not, why not. This will form part of the ACMA’s investigation. Optus informed the Department on 21 September by phone call that it is clear some calls did not successfully camp on, though the number of calls is TBD.

When was the Department notified of the Outage?

The Department has a dedicated email address which is used by the telcos to notify of outages. Optus notified at 2.45pm on 18 September of an issue affecting some customers attempting to call

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Triple Zero. At 2.52pm Optus advised that the matter was resolved and that up to 10 calls may have been impacted.

The Department was then contacted by the ACMA at 3.29pm on 19 September (the next day) to advise that Optus had experienced a 14 hour outage and over 600 calls were impacted.

What did the Bean Review into the 2023 Optus outage find? What action has the Government taken?

- Following the November 2023 Optus outage, the Department undertook a review of the incident to uncover the lessons for Government and the telecommunications industry from the outage, with the focus on the functioning of Triple Zero during the outage.
- The Review was led by Mr Richard Bean and provided a report, making 18 recommendations to the Minister for Communications in April 2024.
- All 18 recommendations were accepted by Government.
- Completed actions include:
 - Additional regulatory obligations on the telco industry around ensuring calls are carried to Triple Zero, including technical changes to network architecture.
 - Additional regulatory obligations on the telco industry around communicating to customers and government about when outages are occurring.
 - Establishment of a testing facility at the University of Technology Sydney to test mobile devices' ability to call Triple Zero in a range of scenarios, to implement a new mandatory testing code
- Ongoing actions include work to establish a Triple Zero Custodian to oversee the end to end operation of the Triple Zero ecosystem, and a review of the Triple Zero contract with Telstra.

Bean Review Recommendations

1	Articulating Obligations and Mandatory Wilting	Complete
2	Triple Zero Custodian Legislation to empower the custodian is currently being drafted.	Ongoing
3	Mandatory Testing Code	With ACMA to register
4	Customer Device Information Code	With ACMA to register
5	Real Time Information Sharing	Complete
6	Outage Reporting	Complete
7	Combined Protocol Documents	Complete
8	ECP Contract Review. Negotiations with Telstra are in the final stages	Under negotiation
9	Protocol for Major Service Disruption Improvement	Complete

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10	Customer Communications Standard	Complete
11	Education Initiative	Complete
12	Complaints Handling Standard	Complete
13	Standardised Resolutions Approach	Complete
14	Temporary Outage Roaming The Mobile Network Operators have been working on establishing the capability to enable temporary roaming. Testing is due to commence in November 2025.	Ongoing
15	Mutual Assistance Memorandum of Understanding Industry is considering this action in conjunction with recommendation 14.	Ongoing
16	Remote Access Code	Complete
17	Government Service Continuity	Complete
18	Joint Regulatory and Legislative Review This recommendation will be used to capture emerging matters not addressed in the previous recommendations.	Ongoing

Other recent outages of this type

- 30 June 2025 - [TPG warned for failure to comply with Triple Zero rules | ACMA](#)
 - ACMA issued a formal warning to TPG for failure to notify Telstra in a timely manner that an outage had affected emergency calls from its network.
 - ACMA found the TPG network failed between 12:40am and 2am on 15 August 2024.
 - The investigation found TPG did not notify Telstra until 9:07am.
 - The majority of Triple Zero calls made during the outage were able to camp-on to other networks.
- 4 June 2025 - [Telstra penalised for disruption to emergency call support service | ACMA](#)
 - ACMA fined Telstra \$18,780 for accidentally disabling connect to 106 emergency call relay service for 12 hours and 46 minutes between 5-6 July 2024.
- 11 December 2024 - [Telstra pays \\$3 million penalty for Triple Zero outage | ACMA](#)
 - ACMA fined Telstra just over \$3M for a technical disruption to Telstra's 000 emergency call centre, lasting 90 mins.
 - ACMA found 473 separate breaches of the rules governing Triple Zero
- 8 November 2024 - [Optus pays \\$12 million penalty for Triple Zero outage | ACMA](#)
 - ACMA fined Optus for a whole-of-network outage in November 2023 causing significant disruption to millions of Australians, leaving many without the ability to call Triple Zero.
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- Section 4.6 of the Code requires a carrier or CSP, after becoming aware of a Significant Network Outage in its network, must provide the ACMA via email, on or before the next Business Day with a copy of the notifications which the carrier or CSP sent to the ECP for 000/112 and ECP for 106 under section 27(2)(a) of the ECS Determination.

Background**Should camp-on and network wilting have worked during this incident?**

- A mobile phone will 'camp-on' to another mobile network when it is outside the mobile coverage provided by the home mobile network, including in some circumstances where its home mobile network is experiencing an outage.
- A mobile phone will attempt make a call using its own mobile network if the radio access network of that mobile network is available (if the mobile bases station/antenna are radiating a signal).
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Subject: RE: Optus sitrep - 5pm 21 Sept [SEC=OFFICIAL]

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Acknowledged s22(1)(a)(ii)

Sam

Sam Grunhard

a/g Deputy Secretary

Communications and Media Group

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From: s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)@mo.communications.gov.au>
Sent: Sunday, 21 September 2025 5:01 PM
To: Grunhard, Samuel <Samuel.Grunhard@COMMUNICATIONS.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii)@mo.communications.gov.au
Cc: barnaby.kerdel@aph.gov.au; CHISHOLM, James <James.CHISHOLM@infrastructure.gov.au>; Silleri, Kathleen <Kathleen.Silleri@infrastructure.gov.au>; McMullan, Kate <kate.mcmullan@infrastructure.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii)@infrastructure.gov.au
Subject: RE: Optus sitrep - 5pm 21 Sept [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

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Thanks Sam.

At this stage Minister is meeting with ACMA chair tomorrow morning and possible media.

If anything changes to the situation overnight – can we please get an update by 7.30am tomorrow.

Regards

s22(1)(a)(ii)

Advisor • Office of the Hon Anika Wells MP

Minister for Communications • Minister for Sport • Member for Lilley

s22(1)(a)(ii) mo.communications.gov.au • s22(1)(a)(ii)

Suite M1.19, Parliament House, Canberra ACT 2600, Australia • 1176 Sandgate Rd, Nundah QLD 4012

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I recognise and respect their continuing connection to the land, waters and communities.

I pay my respects to Elders past and present and to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.

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From: Grunhard, Samuel <Samuel.Grunhard@COMMUNICATIONS.gov.au>

Sent: Sunday, 21 September 2025 4:35 PM

To: s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)> mo.communications.gov.au; s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)> mo.communications.gov.au

Cc: barnaby.kerdel@aph.gov.au; CHISHOLM, James <James.CHISHOLM@infrastructure.gov.au>; Silleri, Kathleen

<Kathleen.Silleri@infrastructure.gov.au>; McMullan, Kate <kate.mcmullan@infrastructure.gov.au>; s22(1)(a)(ii)

<s22(1)(a)(ii)> infrastructure.gov.au

Subject: RE: Optus sitrep - 5pm 21 Sept [SEC=OFFICIAL]

s22(1)(a)(ii) - duplicate email

From: s22(1)(a)(ii)
Sent: Sunday, 21 September 2025 6:46 PM
To: Grunhard, Samuel; s22(1)(a)(ii)
Cc: barnaby.kerdel@aph.gov.au; CHISHOLM, James; Silleri, Kathleen; McMullan, Kate; s22(1)(a)(ii)
Subject: Re: Optus sitrep - 5pm 21 Sept [SEC=OFFICIAL]

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Thanks Sam - it might be worth just looping the media team from the dept in as well?
 In case I need anything from them tomorrow

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From: "Grunhard, Samuel" <Samuel.Grunhard@COMMUNICATIONS.gov.au>
Date: Sunday, 21 September 2025 at 4:35:02 pm
To: s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)@mo.communications.gov.au>, s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)@mo.communications.gov.au>
Cc: "barnaby.kerdel@aph.gov.au" <barnaby.kerdel@aph.gov.au>, "CHISHOLM, James" <James.CHISHOLM@infrastructure.gov.au>, "Silleri, Kathleen" <Kathleen.Silleri@infrastructure.gov.au>, "McMullan, Kate" <kate.mcmullan@infrastructure.gov.au>, s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)@infrastructure.gov.au>
Subject: RE: Optus sitrep - 5pm 21 Sept [SEC=OFFICIAL]

s22(1)(a)(ii) - duplicate email

From: Grunhard, Samuel
Sent: Monday, 22 September 2025 6:55 AM
To: s22(1)(a)(ii) s22(1)(a)(ii)
Cc: barnaby.kerdel@aph.gov.au; CHISHOLM, James; Silleri, Kathleen; McMullan, Kate; s22(1)(a)(ii)
Subject: Re: Optus sitrep - 5pm 21 Sept [SEC=OFFICIAL]

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s22(1)(a)(ii) I can't see anything in reporting which changes the sitrep, nor have we become aware of any new information. Let us know if you need anything else.

Sam

Sam Grunhard

a/g Deputy Secretary

Communications and Media Group

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From: s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)@mo.communications.gov.au>

Date: Sunday, 21 September 2025 at 5:00:50 pm

To: "Grunhard, Samuel" <Samuel.Grunhard@COMMUNICATIONS.gov.au>, s22(1)(a)(ii)

<s22(1)(a)(ii)@mo.communications.gov.au>

Cc: "barnaby.kerdel@aph.gov.au" <barnaby.kerdel@aph.gov.au>, "CHISHOLM, James"

<James.CHISHOLM@infrastructure.gov.au>, "Silleri, Kathleen" <Kathleen.Silleri@infrastructure.gov.au>, "McMullan,

Kate" <kate.mcmullan@infrastructure.gov.au>, s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)@infrastructure.gov.au>

Subject: RE: Optus sitrep - 5pm 21 Sept [SEC=OFFICIAL]

s22(1)(a)(ii) - duplicate email

From: Grunhard, Samuel
Sent: Monday, 22 September 2025 1:15 PM
To: Kerdel, Barnaby (A. Wells, MP)
Cc: s22(1)(a)(ii)
Subject: RE: Call from Optus [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Thanks, will do.

Sam

Sam Grunhard

a/g Deputy Secretary

Communications and Media Group

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From: Kerdel, Barnaby (A. Wells, MP) <Barnaby.Kerdel@aph.gov.au>
Sent: Monday, 22 September 2025 1:14 PM
To: Grunhard, Samuel <Samuel.Grunhard@COMMUNICATIONS.gov.au>
Cc: s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)@mo.communications.gov.au>
Subject: Call from Optus

Hello,

I just got a call from Optus s47F who told me they had find another 7 calls they didn't previously know about, taking total to 631

Welfare checks had not been done but are proceeding.

I asked s47F if state emergency services and state Premiers had been informed and s47F said they hadn't, I told s47F to hang up and make sure that immediately happened and call me back.

Can you please make sure ACMA and other relevant people are informed.

Thanks,

Barnaby

Barnaby Kerdel
Chief of Staff
Office of Anika Wells
Minister for Communications and Minister for Sport
t: s22(1)(a)(ii)

From: Grunhard, Samuel
Sent: Monday, 22 September 2025 1:31 PM
To: Kerdel, Barnaby (A. Wells, MP)
Cc: s22(1)(a)(ii) Silleri, Kathleen; CHISHOLM, James; McMullan, Kate
Subject: RE: Call from Optus [SEC=OFFICIAL]

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Barnaby, in case s47F didn't outline these details, I received a similar call from s47F (apologies if you already know the below detail)

- 7 additional calls have been identified between 12:17am and 12:30am – these have not been welfare checked.
- 3 in SA, 4 in WA.
- Welfare checking happening right now. I asked for an update once welfare checking is complete – s47F agreed.
- Optus is also advising SA & WA police and Premiers.
- I asked if checking would continue to reveal additional missed calls. s47F said these additional 7 calls resulted from Optus realising it needed to look before 12:30am. Unclear whether further gaps would emerge.

I passed your message on to ACMA also.

Sam

Sam Grunhard

a/g Deputy Secretary

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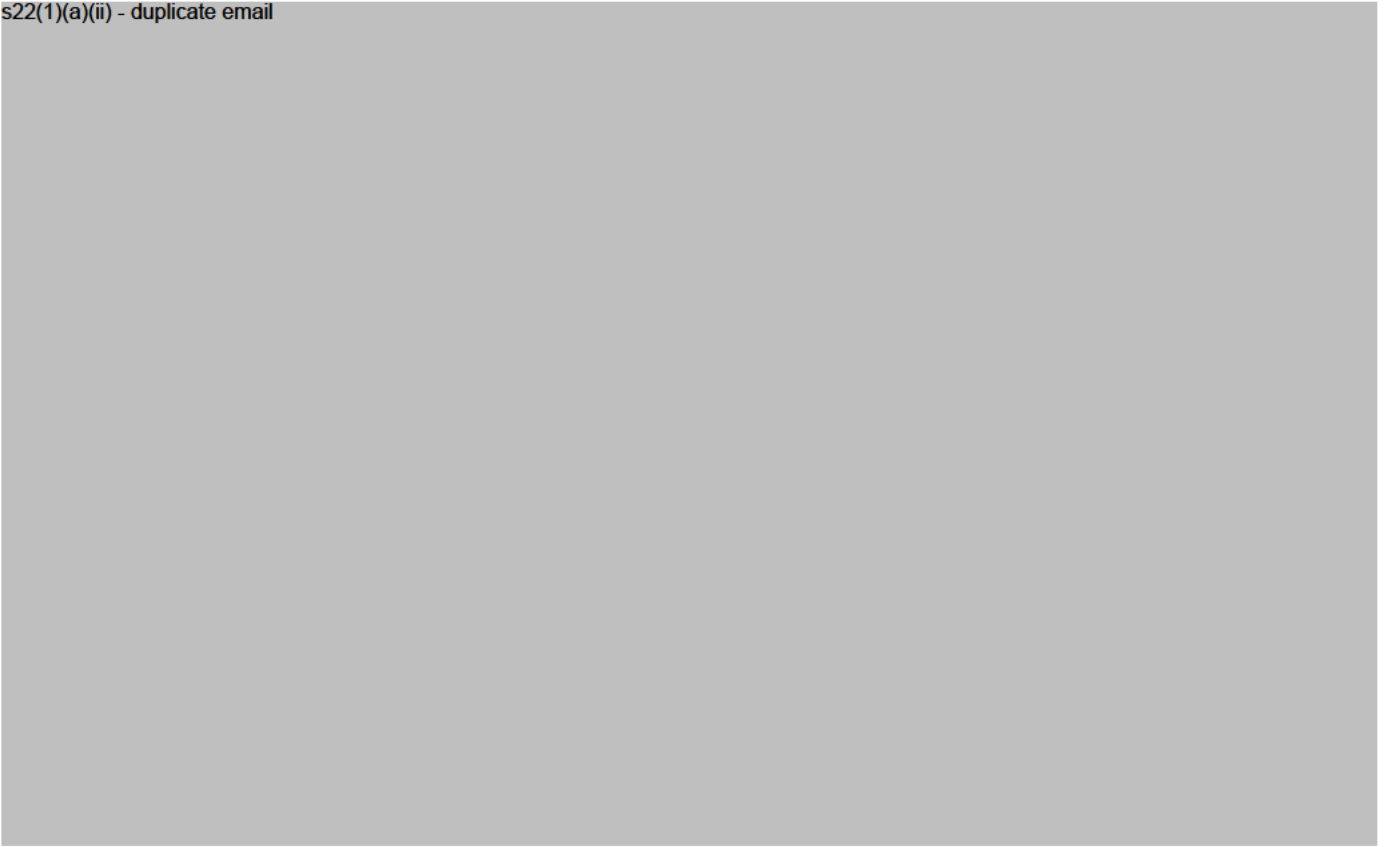
OFFICIAL

From: Kerdel, Barnaby (A. Wells, MP) <Barnaby.Kerdel@aph.gov.au>
Sent: Monday, 22 September 2025 1:14 PM
To: Grunhard, Samuel <Samuel.Grunhard@COMMUNICATIONS.gov.au>

Cc: s22(1)(a)(ii) <s22(1)(a)(ii)@mo.communications.gov.au>

Subject: Call from Optus

s22(1)(a)(ii) - duplicate email



From: Silleri, Kathleen
Sent: Monday, 22 September 2025 4:22 PM
To: barnaby.kerdel@aph.gov.au; s22(1)(a)(ii)
Cc: Grunhard, Samuel; s22(1)(a)(ii) McMullan, Kate; s22(1)(a)(ii) s22(1)(a)(ii)
Subject: custodian - timeline [SEC=OFFICIAL]

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Hello Barnaby

Below is a timeline detailing the steps taken to date to establish the Triple Zero Custodian.

Please let me know if you need additional information.

Regards

Kath

- **May 2024** – Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman (TIO) leads first of several Triple Zero Custodian Steering Committee meetings made up of government, industry and consumer groups.
- **November 2024** – TIO provides final report on behalf of the Steering Committee to the then Minister for Communications, the Hon Michelle Rowland MP.
- **December 2024** – Minister Rowland accepts the findings of the report and opts to set up the Custodian within the department.
- **3 March 2025** – Minister Rowland agrees to a framework to establish the Custodian within the department and the pursuit of legislative amendments to support the Custodian.
- **15 May 2025 – 1 September 2025** – department holds stakeholder meetings with Emergency Service Organisations, State/Territory Government agencies, commonwealth government agencies and telecommunications companies outlining the role of the Custodian and exploring potential opportunities and challenges to investigate within the Triple Zero ecosystem (19 meetings are held).
 - **10 September 2025** - Department provides an initial information request to Carriers regarding policies and processes, regarding communications/notification policies and processes, welfare check processes, Post-incident prioritization and outage testing/wargaming for response by 1 October.
- s34(3) [REDACTED]
- **2 July 2025** – Department provides initial drafting instructions to OPC.
- **18 July 2025** – OPC respond with an initial Bill Plan.
- **1 August 2025** - Department issues updated drafting instructions to OPC based on initial Bill Plan.
- **9 September 2025**– Department meets with OPC resource to discuss the Custodian Bill.
- **15 September 2025** - OPC provides back an updated Bill Plan.
- **22 September 2025** - Department responds to the updated Bill Plan.

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From: Grunhard, Samuel
Sent: Monday, 22 September 2025 5:37 PM
To: Kerdel, Barnaby (A. Wells, MP); Kerdel, Barnaby
Cc: Goodman, Daniel; CHISHOLM, James; s22(1)(a)(ii) s22(1)(a)(ii); McMullan, Kate; Silleri, Kathleen
Subject: Optus sitrep - 5pm 22 Sept [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Attachments: Optus sitrep 5pm 22 Sept.docx

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Hi Barnaby,

Please find attached updated sitrep. Next one tomorrow or as information unfolds.

Sam

Sam Grunhard
a/g Deputy Secretary
Communications and Media Group
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OFFICIAL**Optus situation report – as at 5pm 22 September 2025 (updates highlighted)****Clearance: Sam Grunhard, a/g Deputy Secretary Communications and Media Group, DITRDSCA****Facts / chronology**

- Optus advises that the outage was triggered when a system upgrade was started around 12.30am on Thursday 18 September. The upgrade was related to a firewall upgrade.
- The technical failure impacted 624 Triple Zero calls in SA, NT, WA, and two calls in NSW. The duration has been reported as between 10 and 14 hours.
 - On 22 September (1:20pm) Optus advised that it has identified an additional 7 calls (3 in SA, 4 in WA), taking the number to 631. These calls occurred between 12:17am and 12:30am. Welfare checks had not been undertaken but are being done now.
- Optus says that they and police services have since conducted welfare checks on all missed calls.
- On 21 September the Optus CEO said that Optus has now identified five calls to its call centres raising Triple Zero concerns, but these were not acted upon; internal escalation protocols failed. Optus says it has commenced “24/7” monitoring of its Triple Zero function.
- SA Police says it has since determined that an eight-week-old boy from Gawler West and a 68-year-old woman from the Adelaide suburb of Queenstown have died. SA Police now says the infant death is unlikely to have been caused by the outage.
- The Western Australian government confirmed a 74-year-old man has died, and another person may also have died as a result of the outage.
- State investigations will be held, including possible coronial proceedings.
- The Optus CEO said on 20 September that Optus will order an independent investigation into the incident.
- It is not yet clear precisely how the outage occurred, and why internal systems within Optus failed to act faster to restore services.
- Minister Wells announced on 20 September that the ACMA will be investigating the incident. On 22 September in a joint press conference with the Minister, the ACMA Chair announced that the ACMA’s investigation would focus on (1) the requirements in the Emergency Call Service Determination, (2) outage notification requirements, and (3) welfare check obligations. The ACMA will also consider ‘whether there has been sufficient investment in Optus’ network... and the systems and processes in place to alert Optus to when things are going wrong’.

Background**How does Triple Zero work?**

Triple Zero is delivered in coordination across the Australian Government and State and Territory Governments. The Australian Government provides and funds call centres that undertake the initial call answering, and then transfers genuine calls to the relevant police, fire or ambulance service in the appropriate state/territory. Telstra is required by law to provide Triple Zero services, and all telecommunications carriers are required to ensure that their customers’ calls are passed through to Triple Zero.

Isn’t there a system in place for all emergency calls to be carried even when the ‘home’ network is down?

Yes, this is called ‘camp-on’. It enables mobile calls to be carried to Triple Zero even when the home network is down, by ‘camping on’ to another mobile network. It is not yet clear whether this system

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worked in this case, and if not, why not. This will form part of the ACMA's investigation. Optus informed the Department on 21 September by phone call that it is clear some calls did not successfully camp on, though the number of calls is TBD. Telstra has told the Department it is looking into its own data and will collaborate with Optus to understand what happened.

When was the Department notified of the Outage?

The Department has a dedicated email address which is used by the telcos to notify of outages. Optus notified at 2.45pm on 18 September of an issue affecting some customers attempting to call Triple Zero. At 2.52pm Optus advised that the matter was resolved and that up to 10 calls may have been impacted.

The Department was then contacted by the ACMA at 3.29pm on 19 September (the next day) to advise that Optus had experienced a 14 hour outage and over 600 calls were impacted.

What did the Bean Review into the 2023 Optus outage find? What action has the Government taken?

- Following the November 2023 Optus outage, the Department undertook a review of the incident to uncover the lessons for Government and the telecommunications industry from the outage, with the focus on the functioning of Triple Zero during the outage.
- The Review was led by Mr Richard Bean and provided a report, making 18 recommendations to the Minister for Communications in April 2024.
- All 18 recommendations were accepted by Government.
- Completed actions include:
 - Additional regulatory obligations on the telco industry around ensuring calls are carried to Triple Zero, including technical changes to network architecture.
 - Additional regulatory obligations on the telco industry around communicating to customers and government about when outages are occurring.
 - Establishment of a testing facility at the University of Technology Sydney to test mobile devices' ability to call Triple Zero in a range of scenarios, to implement a new mandatory testing code
- Ongoing actions include work to establish a Triple Zero Custodian to oversee the end to end operation of the Triple Zero ecosystem, and a review of the Triple Zero contract with Telstra.

Bean Review Recommendations

1	Articulating Obligations and Mandatory Wilting	Complete
2	Triple Zero Custodian Legislation to empower the custodian is currently being drafted.	Ongoing
3	Mandatory Testing Code	With ACMA to register
4	Customer Device Information Code	With ACMA to register
5	Real Time Information Sharing	Complete

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6	Outage Reporting	Complete
7	Combined Protocol Documents	Complete
8	ECP Contract Review. Negotiations with Telstra are in the final stages	Under negotiation
9	Protocol for Major Service Disruption Improvement	Complete
10	Customer Communications Standard	Complete
11	Education Initiative	Complete
12	Complaints Handling Standard	Complete
13	Standardised Resolutions Approach	Complete
14	Temporary Outage Roaming The Mobile Network Operators have been working on establishing the capability to enable temporary roaming. Testing is due to commence in November 2025.	Ongoing
15	Mutual Assistance Memorandum of Understanding Industry is considering this action in conjunction with recommendation 14.	Ongoing
16	Remote Access Code	Complete
17	Government Service Continuity	Complete
18	Joint Regulatory and Legislative Review This recommendation will be used to capture emerging matters not addressed in the previous recommendations.	Ongoing

Other recent outages of this type

- 30 June 2025 - [TPG warned for failure to comply with Triple Zero rules | ACMA](#)
 - ACMA issued a formal warning to TPG for failure to notify Telstra in a timely manner that an outage had affected emergency calls from its network.
 - ACMA found the TPG network failed between 12:40am and 2am on 15 August 2024.
 - The investigation found TPG did not notify Telstra until 9:07am.
 - The majority of Triple Zero calls made during the outage were able to camp-on to other networks.
- 4 June 2025 - [Telstra penalised for disruption to emergency call support service | ACMA](#)
 - ACMA fined Telstra \$18,780 for accidentally disabling connect to 106 emergency call relay service for 12 hours and 46 minutes between 5-6 July 2024.
- 11 December 2024 - [Telstra pays \\$3 million penalty for Triple Zero outage | ACMA](#)
 - ACMA fined Telstra just over \$3M for a technical disruption to Telstra's 000 emergency call centre, lasting 90 mins.
 - ACMA found 473 separate breaches of the rules governing Triple Zero

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- 8 November 2024 - [Optus pays \\$12 million penalty for Triple Zero outage | ACMA](#)
 - ACMA fined Optus for a whole-of-network outage in November 2023 causing significant disruption to millions of Australians, leaving many without the ability to call Triple Zero.
 - ACMA found Optus failed to provide access to the emergency call service for 2,145 people during the course of the outage. Optus then failed to conduct 369 welfare checks on people who had tried to make an emergency call during the outage.

Information from the ACMA on its investigation and powers – all below information provided by the ACMA on 20 September

Investigation Focus

The ACMA will investigate Optus compliance with the following regulations:

- [Telecommunications \(Emergency Call Service\) Determination 2019](#)
- [Telecommunications \(Customer Communications for Outages\) Industry Standard 2024](#)
- [Industry Code C536: Emergency Call Service Requirements](#)

Telecommunications (Emergency Call Service) Determination 2019

The ECS Determination requires telcos to ensure that emergency calls are successfully carried to the Emergency Call Service.

The investigation will examine Optus compliance with:

- **Section 11- Networks** - requires carriers and carriage service providers (CSPs) to maintain, as far as practicable, the proper and effective functioning of their controlled networks and their controlled facilities that are used for the carriage of emergency calls to the Emergency Call Service.
- **Section 14 – Carriage service providers must ensure controlled networks and controlled facilities give access to end users** – requires the network to be configured to ensure end-users have access to emergency call services (this is a single breach provision).
- **Section 15** – requirement to give every end-user who makes an emergency call access to the Emergency Call Service (this section could have multiple breaches, one breach for each customer unable to connect to Triple Zero).
- **Section 19** – requires the CSP to ensure that that an emergency call made using the service is carried to the relevant termination point for the call (the relevant termination point in this case is the point of interconnect between the Optus network and the Telstra network for receipt of emergency calls).
- **Section 27 – Notification requirements – significant network outages** - CSPs experiencing a Significant Network Outage must, as soon as possible after becoming aware of the outage, notify, or arrange to notify the Emergency Call Person for 000 and 112, and the Emergency Call Person for 106; and each CSP in relation to whom the carrier or CSP has an obligation to provide access under section 10 (their resellers).
- **Section 28 – Welfare checks – significant network outages** – requires a CSP, as soon as practicable after becoming aware of a Significant Network Outage, or being notified of a Significant Network Outage, to undertake, or arrange to be undertaken, a welfare check on an end-user who made an unsuccessful emergency call during the outage.

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OFFICIAL**Telecommunications (Customer Communications for Outages) Industry Standard 2024**

The communications for outages standard commenced on 31 December 2024 for major outages and 30 June 2025 for significant local outages.

In a major outage or a significant local outage, a telco must communicate information about the outage to:

- Customers and the public
- Other carriers and carriage service providers
- Relevant stakeholders (the ACMA, Dept, NEMA, TIO, Emergency Call Persons for 000/112 and 106).

Telcos must also:

- put relevant and up-to-date information on their website
- keep customers up to date using methods including apps, email, SMS, other media, call centres and, for major outages, social media.

Industry Code C536: Emergency Call Service Requirements

- Section 4.6 of the Code requires a carrier or CSP, after becoming aware of a Significant Network Outage in its network, must provide the ACMA via email, on or before the next Business Day with a copy of the notifications which the carrier or CSP sent to the ECP for 000/112 and ECP for 106 under section 27(2)(a) of the ECS Determination.

Background**Should camp-on and network wilting have worked during this incident?**

- A mobile phone will 'camp-on' to another mobile network when it is outside the mobile coverage provided by the home mobile network, including in some circumstances where its home mobile network is experiencing an outage.
- A mobile phone will attempt make a call using its own mobile network if the radio access network of that mobile network is available (if the mobile bases station/antenna are radiating a signal).
- New rules for wilting of mobile networks will commence on 1 November 2025 (when the [Telecommunications \(Emergency Call Service\) Amendment Determination 2025 No.1](#) commences).
- The new rules to commence on 1 November 2025 require a mobile carrier to 'wilt' the network if the core network is experiencing a 'core network outage'.
- We need to establish the facts of this issue to determine whether, had the new rules been in place (which they are not), whether this outage was a core network outage. On the information currently available, it may not, as all voice and data services other than Triple Zero appear to have been operating. In these circumstances, wilting the network would shutdown the network to all users in the relevant states/territories, so that could itself have a detrimental impact to customers and the public. It is also important to note that Optus were apparently unaware of the failure in connecting triple zero calls.

Welfare Checks

- Welfare checks are required to be undertaken under section 27 of the ECS Determination.
- A CSP must undertake a welfare check as soon as practicable after becoming aware of a Significant Network Outage, or being notified of a Significant Network Outage.

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- A welfare check for mobile customers may be undertaken using an SMS that requests the customer confirms via return text if they require assistance.
- A welfare check for a fixed-line service requires a phone call to the number.

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