

TELECOMMUNICATIONS — 3G NETWORK

**246. Hon WILSON TUCKER to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Regional Development:**

I refer to the imminent shutdown of 3G services in Australia and I note the not insignificant difference between 3G and 4G network coverage across regional Western Australia.

- (1) Does the minister know or have an estimate of how many residents of regional Western Australia will be impacted?
- (2) What support is the government providing to impacted communities?

**Hon KYLE MCGINN replied:**

I thank the member for some notice of the question. The following answer has been provided by the Minister for Regional Development.

- (1) Telecommunications is primarily the responsibility of the Australian government. TPG/Vodafone commenced switching off its 3G network on 15 December 2023. Telstra will commence switching off 3G from 30 June 2024, and Optus from September 2024. Carriers have committed to providing 4G, and in some areas 5G, to replicate their current 3G footprints in metropolitan and regional Australia as closely as possible.
- (2) Given carrier commitments, it is uncertain whether and/or which regional communities will be impacted by the change, noting it has been communicated across Australia by the carriers over several years. The Cook Labor government continues to co-invest with the Australian government and carriers to improve digital connectivity and address mobile network blackspot and resilience issues across regional, rural and remote Western Australia.