

From: Burnett Electorate Office BURNETT@parliament.qld.gov.au
Subject: Telstra Mobile Phone Reception at Palm Lakes
Date: 23 Feb 2021 at 12:15:30
To: PLRB ResidentsAssociation
residentsassociation.plrb@gmail.com

Dear Karen,

Thanks again for keeping in touch with me on behalf of residents about the ongoing problems with mobile phone reception at Palm Lakes. I understand that this has been a frustrating time for many people who struggle to get mobile reception inside and outside at Palm Lakes.

While I would love to say that there is an easy solution or upgrade, unfortunately this isn't the case. There are three main problems that Telstra has advised are facing residents at Palm Lakes.

First, the fire retardant building materials that the estate must use in construction in the walls and doors of each unit. This material is a major cause of the poor mobile coverage inside at many of the units. Simply, it stops the penetration of mobile phone reception.

Second, mobile coverage needs "line of sight" from mobile phone towers. While some units at Palm Lakes have reasonable line of sight and hence better outdoors reception, many units don't have that line of sight. This explains why there is inconsistency across the estate, depending on each unit's ability to get signal from the mobile tower.

Thirdly, when reception is available, there is a large number of people all trying to get mobile reception at once. This causes congestion on the tower and is another cause of poor and patchy reception.

Telstra has an obligation under the *Universal Service Obligation* to provide a phone service for emergency and medical communication. However this applies only to fixed line telephone services – not mobile.

It is the reason why Telstra encourage people in Palm Lakes to instead consider putting in a fixed line phone service to be sure you can make a call in case of emergency and have reliable phone reception. This will be dependent on the type of fibre available to residents, but should be possible as part of the NBN fibre service at Palm Lakes.

I want to assure you that even if your local mobile service is poor, emergency calls to 000 are always possible if you have coverage from any other mobile service provider

Residents do have the option of installing their own personal mobile

network extender/booster on their unit, at a cost estimated at around \$1,000 or so. I understand it can be paid off over a 24 month period. However this is not guaranteed to address the indoor reception problem.

Alternatively, the Palm Lakes management may be willing to consider a Small Cell Tower to improve mobile reception, with a very rough cost estimate of \$50,000-70,000.

I understand that the Telstra regional team will be reaching out to the Palm Lakes account manager to talk further about options for the Bargara development including whether they are willing to consider investment in a locally-based solution.

I hope this helps to explain the situation. Be assure that I will keep in touch with Telstra as other options emerge in the near future.

Regards,

Stephen Bennett MP

Stephen Bennett MP | Member for Burnett

Shadow Assistant Minister for Tourism Industry Development



[@Bennett4Burnett](#)



[StephenBennettMP](#)



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