



Media Statement

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Landry jubilant as Clarke Creek and Capricornia reaps major black spot win

Federal Member for Capricornia Michelle Landry once described it as place 'worse than Africa' when it comes to mobile phone black spots and internet coverage.

But today she was jubilant with news that the small Capricornia community of Clarke Creek, north-west of Marlborough, has won a major Federal Government windfall to provide better mobile coverage.

Clarke Creek was one of **four** key Capricornia sites to be awarded funding for new Telstra base stations to vastly improve mobile coverage under the Federal Government's \$100 million mobile black spots programme.

The communities include:

- Clarke Creek
- Marlborough
- Mt Chalmers Road (between Rockhampton and Yeppoon)
- And Gargett in the Pioneer Valley area of Capricornia, west of Mackay.

- Major mobile black spots on the Bruce Highway between Marlborough and Sarina and on the main road between Rockhampton and Yeppoon will also be beefed up.

Clarke Creek a significant Coalition milestone:

Ms Landry has been lobbying hard for the better black spot coverage since taking office in late 2013.

"This announcement is amazing news. It is major windfall for Capricornia – particularly in places like Clarke Creek which has been fighting for nearly a decade to get better access to mobile services," Ms Landry said.

"The Clarke Creek community is a great example how people in a remote country area can pull together to help themselves – in this case solving a major communication issue."

Ms Landry praised Clarke Creek resident Lynise Conaghan for spearheading the long campaign to get a new mobile tower.

Mrs Conaghan said today's news was 'the best' the community had received in a decade.

"It has been long time coming and this will make such a difference to schooling of country children, business communication and importantly safety in this area where you can't use a mobile to call for help in the event of an accident," Mrs Conaghan said.

“We are so grateful to Michelle Landry for taking up our cause in Parliament and pushing our case forward at a senior government level.”

The Clarke Creek project, in the Issac Regional Shire, involves a \$100,000 community contribution from Anglo American Coal, a major commitment from Telstra and a Federal Government grant.

On one of her many visits to Clarke Creek, Ms Landry had previously questioned why people in Central Africa could make a mobile phone call, while residents around Clarke Creek could not.

Last year Ms Landry took the Federal Parliamentary Secretary for Communication, Paul Fletcher, to Clarke Creek listen to a case put forward by locals.

Mr Fletcher was greeted by 36 residents from nearby farming properties.

“Clarke Creek is in a dreadful black spot where mobiles just don’t work,” Ms Landry said, “Not only that, the associated internet technology is so slow it takes the local school 20 hours to download curriculum. This is simply not good enough

“I am so pleased that our Federal Government in conjunction with Telstra and community input can deliver them a better service,” the MP said.

Big news for other parts of Capricornia:

Federal Communications Minister Malcom Turnbull made the black spot projects announcement today in Parliament House.

In summary, in Capricornia under round one of the Federal Black Spot Programme:

- Four new base towers will be funded at Clarke Creek, Marlborough, Mt Chalmers Road and Gargett
- \$3.14 million will be spent in a deal involving contributions from the Federal Government, Telstra, local communities and private enterprise
- 15 of the 71 mobile blackspots nominated in Capricornia will be addressed
- Coverage will be provided (by handheld or external antenna) to all or part of the following locations in the Livingstone, Issac, Pioneer Valley, Sarina and Mackay districts:

Cawarral Road	Finch Hatton	Pinevale
Keppel Sands Road	Gargett	Pinnacle
Marlborough	Mia Mia	Septimus
Clarke Creek	Mirani	Svendson Road

Mobile service will also improve on sections of the Bruce Highway and other main roads including:

- Between Marlborough and Sarina
- Mt Chalmers Road (at intersection of Sleipner Rd and Mt Chalmers Rd)
- Yeppoon Road (between Rockhampton and Yeppoon)

Photos:

- Flashback: Michelle Landry takes Paul Fletcher to Clarke Creek, with Lynise Conaghan
- Michelle Landry MP and Communications Minister Malcolm Turnbull.

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