

## Media Statement

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### Stanage Bay mobile issue being addressed - but there is no spy conspiracy

Federal Member for Capricornia Michelle Landry says Telstra and the Department of Defence are working hard to resolve issues with mobile and digital networks being experienced in the Stanage Bay area north of Rockhampton.

But the MP has dismissed conspiracy theories that international military had deliberately 'jammed' the region's telecommunications system as part of a secret war game.

"Some concerns have been raised in that area that people are having problems with phone and digital networks. I have contacted Defence and Telstra and the issue appears to stem from the huge influx of military personnel simply using their private phones and internet devices to call out, which has caused congestion. Solutions are being put in place to help fix it as soon as possible," Ms Landry said.

Thousands of troops from the United States and Australia have converged on the area for the joint military Exercise Talisman Sabre at Shoalwater Bay.

"I have heard some crazy conspiracy theories that the military is deliberately jamming the system as part of a spy program; or that it wants to stop people eavesdropping on defence communications during the exercise. This is gossip and pure nonsense," Ms Landry said, "it appears a simple case of a lot of people converging on one remote location at once."

Ms Landry said Telstra has provided this response: *"Telstra is aware of issues that our customers are experiencing north of Rockhampton in Queensland, particularly in the Stanage Bay and Kunwarara communities. An influx of people to the region has placed a strain on the existing mobile network infrastructure and we are taking steps to bolster our infrastructure in the area to improve services.*

*"We have reconfigured the existing base station in the area to maximise the available capacity, however during peak usage times customers may still experience issues. We are also working with Defence to expand a temporary mobile network facility that has been deployed to the Shoalwater Bay Training Area, which should improve the overall experience of customers in the region."* - **Telstra**

Ms Landry said the temporary mobile networks, sometimes dubbed 'cows', were often used in regional areas where there was a sudden increase in population for major events such as the Gympie Country Music Muster.

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