

Minister for Innovation, Science and the Digital Economy  
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27 MAY 2026

Mr Roger Jaensch MP  
Liberal Member for Braddon  
C/o [Laura.Ross@parlimanet.tas.gov.au](mailto:Laura.Ross@parlimanet.tas.gov.au)

Dear Mr Jaensch

Thank you for your constituency question on 7 May 2026 regarding concerns raised by your constituents about telecommunications connectivity on the West Coast of Tasmania.

Network congestion and service quality are well known issues nationally. In December 2024, the Regional Telecommunications Independent Review Committee delivered its report to the Australian Government. Among the issues identified, the review confirmed that:

- a) Existing mobile networks in many regional areas are under pressure and facing congestion and capacity issues that require urgent attention to ensure reliable service; and
- b) Extending terrestrial mobile coverage remains prohibitively expensive.

The Tasmanian Government has been working with telecommunications providers through federal initiatives such as Mobile Black Spot Program (MBSP) and Regional Connectivity Program (RCP) to improve network connectivity for affected areas.

We are aware that both Telstra and Optus are partnering with satellite communication providers to develop direct-to-handset (DTH) technology, which has the potential to significantly improve connectivity in regional areas. Telstra's Starlink-enabled short message service (SMS) is now available to customers in Tasmania. However, there remains no clear timeline for when this technology will support voice calls, nor certainty about what handset limitations may apply as the service evolves.

The Mobile Black Spot Program (the MBSP), funded under the Australian Government's Better Connectivity Plan, invests in telecommunications infrastructure to improve mobile coverage and competition across Australia.

The Tasmanian Government has contributed a total of \$880,000 towards Tasmanian projects over the eight rounds, including support for Granville Harbour and Trial Harbour.

Historically, Tasmania has benefitted from the Australian Government practice of ensuring that funding and projects are allocated across Australia's states and territories.

The Tasmanian Government will continue to work with the Federal Government to ensure future MBSP grant rounds improve telecommunications infrastructure across the state, including the West Coast – to ensure it meets the same standard as our mainland counterparts.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'M. Ogilvie', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Hon Madeleine Ogilvie MP

**Minister for the Innovation, Science and the Digital Economy**