

Media Release

The Hon Jaala Pulford MLC

Minister for Employment

Minister for Innovation, Medical Research and the Digital Economy

Minister for Small Business



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HUNDREDS OF PLACES NOW BETTER CONNECTED

The Andrews Labor Government is helping local business and communities receive better mobile coverage, thanks to the rollout of more than 200 mobile base stations around the state.

The 200th station was recently activated in Knowsley, east of Bendigo, improving reception in and around the community for residents, businesses and tourists.

It comes as the locations for the upcoming construction of an extra 41 stations are revealed, with towns such as Ararat, Winchelsea South and Tarwin Lower all set to benefit.

Minister for Innovation, Medical Research and the Digital Economy Jaala Pulford said upgrading reception in hundreds of areas across Victoria has also improved safety by allowing people to contact emergency services in more locations.

Since 2014, the Labor Government has invested \$56 million to improve mobile coverage around the state.

In November the Government committed a further \$300 million through the *Digital Future Now* initiative, to help more regional Victorians get connected.

Digital connectivity will be a core part of the state's economic recovery, with the Government committed to improving online access to as many people as possible.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Innovation, Medical Research and the Digital Economy Jaala Pulford

"Victorians across the state deserve to have reliable mobile coverage – and we're delivering. It helps connect residents, support businesses and attract tourists, allowing local economies grow and thrive."

"Getting rid of black spots also makes communities much safer when natural disasters like bushfires and floods hit."

Quotes attributable to Minister for Regional Development Mary Anne Thomas

"Reliable mobile coverage is so important for regional communities because it helps regional Victoria attract more people to live, work and visit."

"These investments open the door for more of the state's workers to live in regional Victoria, because they'll be able to connect with people from around the world."

Quotes attributable to Knowsley Fire Brigade CFA Captain Robert Long

"Mobile connections are vital in today's world, particularly during emergencies, with people now able to access information through the Emergency Vic App and call family and friends when fires or floods happen."

"Better coverage in town will also benefit our fire brigade, because we're now able to access the new mobile based alert system that supplements pagers for emergency services."

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