



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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MEDIA RELEASE

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Windsor asks new Communications Minister to clarify CDMA switch off

Clarification from the new Federal Communications Minister of the timing and conditions of the switch-off of the CDMA mobile phone network is being sought by the Independent Member for New England Tony Windsor.

Mr Windsor has been contacted by many people from across the New England electorate seeking clarification as to what the situation is with those who have not yet made the change and who are now receiving a letter from Telstra indicating that "If you do not upgrade before January 28 you risk losing your current mobile number."

Mr Windsor said that the previous Coalition Government Minister Senator Helen Coonan through the then Attorney General Philip Ruddock on 17th September this year 'made a decision to vary conditions on Telstra's carrier licence to protect users in the transition from CDMA to Next G' the intent of which was 'to ensure that Telstra meets its public assurances that the CDMA network will continue to operate until Next G provides the same or better level of coverage and services that apply with Telstra's CDMA network and to ensure that consumers in regional areas who can currently receive services from the CDMA network will be able to access equivalent services from the Next G network.'

"With the change of Government, I am now seeking clarification from the new Minister for Communications, Stephen Conroy, of what the Labor Government's position is in relation to the switching off of the CDMA network.

From correspondence now being sent by Telstra to CDMA network users who have not changed over yet, it appears that Telstra is maintaining its stance on switching the CDMA network off on January 28 and making a thinly veiled threat that if people don't make the change then they 'risk' losing their current mobile phone number many of which people would have had for a number of years and be very disruptive.

This is despite there being a condition placed on them by the former Government requiring them to continue to operate the CDMA network until 'equivalence' of service is reached.

Telstra may well achieve this 'equivalence' of service by January 28 - the independent ACMA Audit will show this - however I am asking the new Minister to clarify the new Government's position and what they can do to hold Telstra to their commitment without people 'risking' the loss of their long held phone numbers if they haven't moved across to the Next G network by then," Mr Windsor said.

For further information contact Tony Windsor, Ph (02) 6761 3080 or 0427 66 8868