# Telstra 3G Closure.

## General Overview.

- When 3G launched in 2006 we used our mobile devices for calls, texting and accessing basic information online.
- Today, demand on our mobile network has grown by 3.5 times over the past five years to June 2024, and is currently growing at approximately 20 per cent per annum. As our technology and use cases change, you need a network that's fit for today and the future. 4G and 5G technologies allow us to listen to music, stream HD and 4K videos, have access to remote security and even monitor livestock.
- Once we have closed the 3G network, we will repurpose the spectrum so that we can use it to expand our 5G network which will provide greater network capacity and speed for customers across Australia.
- We started talking to our customers about saying goodbye to 3G back in October 2019, five years ago, to make sure that they had enough time to understand what changes they need to make.
- Customers can check if their handset is impacted by using our SMS tool - text "3" to 3498 (or 3G XT)
- We are upgrading areas that only have 3G coverage to deliver equivalent 4G coverage, which will be available by the time the 3G network closes.
- If you have a handset that is 3G only, doesn't support Voice on 4G (VoLTE), has 4G coverage limitations (not 700mhz compatible), or is 4G enabled but does not have VoLTE Emergency Calling, you need to upgrade your handset before the 3G closure on 28 October to stay connected.

# Frequently asked questions.

## 1. Why are you closing the 3G network?

- Ultimately, it's about providing a better experience for our customers. When 3G launched in 2006, we used our mobile devices for calls, texting and accessing basic information online. Since then, technology and customer usage trends have significantly changed, and so too must our network.
- Traffic on our 3G network has declined significantly and is now less than 1% of all mobile traffic.
- Closing our 3G network will allow us to repurpose spectrum to support our 5G rollout and open the door to more digital opportunities.

## 2. What does closure of the 3G network mean for me?

- If you have a device that is only able to connect to 3G you will be unable to connect to Telstra's network post 3G closure. Likewise, if you have a mobile device that does not have Voice over LTE (VoLTE) technology including VoLTE Emergency Calling, even if the mobile device is 4G, it will not be able to make voice calls or call Triple 0 after 28 October 2024.
- You will need to upgrade your device to a 4G/5G VoLTE capable and compatible device before 28 October 2024. Doing so will ensure that you can access Telstra's network and will have both data access and voice calling compatibility.
- You can find out more about VoLTE, including what it is, what devices are compatible, and how to check or enable VoLTE on your phone here: How do I enable VoLTE on my mobile device? | Telstra Support. Also see Question 7 below for more information.
- Customers using 3G mobile, IoT and network extension devices, some EFTPOS machines, medical devices and antennas that operate on the 3G network only will be able to continue using their device or antenna until 28 October 2024. After this date, if the device has not been updated to be 4G or 5G compatible, it will no longer work.

**3. Will my 3G only mobile device work on Telstra's 4G network?**

- No, 3G only mobile devices will not work on Telstra's 4G network. We will work with customers and stakeholders around any concerns they have about changing devices or technology types to be ready for the change.

**4. If I decide not to upgrade my 3G mobile device to a 4G/5G device or I forget to upgrade prior to 28 October 2024, can I still make an emergency call after that date?**

- No, as Telstra will no longer have 3G mobile coverage from 28 October 2024.
- Mobile devices have special roaming capabilities when calling Triple Zero (000), so you may be able to make a 000 call if another carrier has 3G coverage in the area. Other providers are closing their 3G networks too though, so you can't depend on that in an emergency.
- We strongly encourage all customers to ensure that they have a 4G/5G VoLTE capable and compatible device before 28 October 2024. For further assistance please refer to How do I enable VoLTE on my mobile device? | Telstra Support.

**5. Will all 3G only areas be upgraded to 5G as well as 4G?**

We are committed to upgrading all 3G only areas with equivalent 4G coverage. Our 5G coverage, like all new technologies, builds outwards from population centres over time (and is now at over 80% population coverage). In areas where there is not 5G, our 4G coverage can meet end user demands. Current coverage information can be found at Our Coverage & Rollout Maps - Telstra.

**6. How do I know if Telstra 4G is available in my location?**

- If you have a 4G/5G mobile device, you will see the 4G symbol appear at the top right of the device if 4G is available in your location. You can check Our Coverage & Rollout Maps - Telstra.

## 7. What is VoLTE and what do I need to do before the 3G Closure?

- VoLTE is the international standard all mobile networks use to carry voice calls over 4G networks. We are contacting customers we have been able to identify as using one of these devices to let them know they need to check their device and will likely need to upgrade.
- Voice over LTE (VoLTE) lets you make phone calls over our 4G (LTE) network. Your mobile device will use 4G to make and receive these calls in areas where 4G (LTE) is available. When our 3G network closes on 28 October 2024, VoLTE will be required to make or receive phone calls on the Telstra mobile network. It is important to note that:
- 3G phones do not have VoLTE; and
- Not all 4G phones have VoLTE and/or are compatible with the Telstra network.
- Some 4G phones may have VoLTE but do not have VoLTE Emergency Calling. These phones will not be able to make emergency calls to Triple zero from 28 October 2024
- If you have a 3G mobile device, you must upgrade to a 4G/5G mobile device that is VoLTE capable and compatible prior to 28 October 2024.
- If you already have a 4G mobile device, we strongly recommend that you check that your device is VoLTE capable and compatible, including to VoLTE Emergency Calling. You can check your mobile device by following the instructions on the Telstra website that you can find here: How do I enable VoLTE on my mobile device? | Telstra Support.

## 8. I have a 4G phone, why am I getting messages about upgrading?

- Some older 4G mobile phones require a 3G network to make voice and Triple Zero calls. This is a hardware feature built into the design of the phone by the manufacturer and it is a global, industry-wide issue that many countries have already worked through as they have closed their 3G networks.
- Following the closure of Australia's 3G networks customers with these devices will not be able to make Triple Zero calls despite the device otherwise working normally. To be able to make an emergency call to Triple Zero once the 3G mobile networks are closed, 4G devices must support VoLTE emergency calling.
- If you have a device purchased from second-hand sellers or overseas vendors – it may be 4G capable, but does not operate on Telstra's main 4G coverage frequency (700Mhz). Once the 3G network is switched off these devices are very likely to have reduced and intermittent network connectivity, as they will only be able to access the supplementary spectrum bands we use in certain locations for additional 4G capacity.

## 9. How will my network experience change from 3G when it moves to 4G coverage?

- Your network experience should improve, and in most cases, you'll notice a substantial improvement in speeds when you move from 3G only coverage to 4G coverage. Our 4G service accesses greater bandwidths and is more efficient than 3G, leading to higher end user speeds.

- The speed you experience is determined by a range of factors including how close you are to a tower, how much traffic the site is carrying, if there's any obstructions impeding the network (i.e. buildings, hills, vegetation etc.) and what sort of device you're using.

## 10. Will you match your existing 3G coverage with 4G before you switch off 3G?

- We have been rapidly rolling out and adjusting our 4G and 5G networks over the past few years to ensure that we have equivalent coverage available ahead of the 3G closure. Check your expected coverage here.

- This work involves upgrading all existing 3G sites with 4G technology, adding new 4G sites and optimising others to create equivalent 4G coverage in areas that 3G coverage exists today. As we approach 3G closure further changes in network software will also be made to ensure existing 4G is optimised.

- Our 3G network will remain open until 28 October 2024

- We have committed to ensure that 4G coverage is accessible everywhere we offer 3G coverage today prior to 3G closure, using equivalent devices (e.g. if using a 3G blue tick device today, you should upgrade to a 4G blue tick device).

- While coverage maps depict where coverage is usually available, the quality of your experience using the Telstra mobile network can be affected by the number of people using the network, the type of technology you're using, and the performance of things beyond our control like the website you are looking at or service you're using.

## 11. Can you guarantee I will have 4G coverage in a location that currently only has a 3G signal?

- In areas that currently only have a 3G signal, we're committed to providing 4G coverage prior to the closure of the 3G network.

- It is important to note that to access the 4G network benefits you need to be using compatible devices. This includes using appropriate devices for your requirements – for example, if currently using a Blue Tick 3G device you will need a Blue Tick 4G device, or if currently relying on a 3G T-Go or TMSA coverage extension device, you will need an equivalent 4G device to ensure equivalent coverage.

**12. Will people get coverage where they currently don't have coverage?**

- Potentially, but it's not something we'd guarantee. 4G and 3G spectrum are different bandwidths so different environmental landmarks could impact the network coverage and in some areas that may mean more and in others less.

**13. There is still feedback from upgraded areas that they've "lost coverage", why is that if you're so close to being done?**

- The coverage you receive depends on your location, the specifications or the capabilities of the mobile device you're using and how you are using it.

- Not all devices are created equal when it comes to network sensitivity – how your device actually detects and connects with our network, particularly at the very edge of coverage, matters. Our 'Blue Tick' devices have been thoroughly tested to ensure they're able to maximise coverage reach.

- The way a device is used will also affect coverage, for example whether held to the head while outdoors or at waist level in a vehicle. These factors and others mean that customers' experience of coverage will always be variable.

- The signal bars displayed on devices can also give a false impression of variable coverage. There are no standards between mobile device manufacturers for signal bars. This means that an identical signal received between two different devices will often display different signal bar strength. It's also important to note that more advanced technologies (e.g. 4G and 5G) are designed to use lower signal levels so will typically show less bars even when the connectivity is strong.

- The local environment is also a major factor. While coverage predictions do factor in the effects of larger terrain features such as mountains and hills, the actual outdoor coverage at any specific location can be degraded or non-existent due to certain localised geographic features such as trees or new buildings, that may reduce or block outdoor coverage. Where these changes to geographic features are expected to have a lasting and material impact on our coverage, we monitor our network and aim to reflect this information in our map updates.

**14. I have fewer bars of coverage on my phone, have I lost coverage during the 4G upgrade?**

- No, this is a common misconception. Signal bars differ between technologies and mobile devices, therefore they are not a good indicator of coverage and performance. Almost every device is different when it comes to this as there are currently no standards uniformly shared across all manufacturers. Comparing bar readings between different devices could be like comparing apples to oranges.
- 4G is a newer, more efficient technology which uses a different frequency to 3G, so it's not a like for like comparison.

**15. I have a 4G mobile device but it still uses the 3G network for voice calls. what will happen once the 3G network has closed?**

- Some 4G mobile devices do not support what is known as "Voice over LTE" (VoLTE), so when voice calls are made on these 4G phones these calls are carried on the 3G network and not the 4G network.
- In order to make voice calls on the Telstra 4G network, customers with 4G mobile devices that do not support voice calling will need to upgrade to VoLTE capable and compatible 4G/5G devices before we close the 3G network on 28 October 2024.
- If a 4G non-VoLTE mobile device remains on our network after the closure of Telstra's 3G network, it will still be able to use data, but it will not be able to make or receive voice calls including Triple Zero (000) emergency calls.

**16. Will wearables continue to work on Telstra's mobile network after the closure of the 3G Network?**

- Yes, however older generation wearables (typically 2019 or earlier) may experience limited or intermittent coverage. This is usually caused by the device not supporting the main frequency we use for our 4G coverage (700 MHz). This is less likely to be an issue for newer cellular capable models. For more information, please see Other devices and services affected - Wearables.

**17. Will the 3G network be closed at one point or will it be a phased approach (geographically)?**

- While it's not quite as simple as flicking a switch, the closure will commence from 28 October 2024 and will happen relatively quickly. Customers will need to be ready before 28 October 2024 to avoid disruptions to services.

## 18. Why can't Telstra keep the 3G network open indefinitely?

- The 3G network is old technology and is not fit for today's purpose and the needs of our customers, where data demand on our mobile network has grown by 3.5x over the last five years to end FY24, and is currently growing at approximately 20% per annum
- The 3G network currently accounts for less than one per cent of mobile traffic on the Telstra network
- There is a cost to running a network and it is not feasible for us to maintain 3G/4G/5G at the same time. We want to deliver our customers the best experiences and to do so we need to invest in newer technology solutions rather than maintaining older solutions.
- Closing the 3G network allows us to re-use that spectrum to provide our customers with better 4G and 5G services.

## 19. What about inside buildings (in-building coverage)?

- Our 3G network includes some equipment which supplies in-building coverage. In many cases our 4G network will already have replicated the in-building coverage provided by this equipment, and where this is not the case, we plan to augment our 4G coverage. The exception to this is where customers have procured coverage extension devices to augment indoor coverage, such as the T-Go or TMSA. To obtain equivalent 4G coverage these devices need to be upgraded to 4G if they are not already 4G capable.
- Indoor coverage can be highly variable and there may be locations where indoor coverage is indicated on our publicly available maps but the location, density and material of buildings and other physical structures may reduce performance.
- Things that may reduce or block indoor coverage include basements, lifts, underground car parks, concrete buildings, tunnels and road cuttings, steel framing and metallic window film. Devices such as the Telstra GO Repeater may help improve indoor coverage.

## 20. What sort of 4G/5G mobile device do I need?

- It is important to note that some 4G devices (particularly devices originally sourced from overseas markets) are not compatible with all of Telstra's 4G frequencies and so it is important to make sure that you select a device that is compatible with Telstra's 4G/5G network. If you live in a regional or rural area, we recommend you select a Telstra Blue Tick device, see more here: Telstra Blue Tick devices.
- Also see question 6 below for more information about the need to ensure your mobile device is VoLTE capable and compatible with Telstra's network.

**21. What does this mean for the Mobile Black Spot Program? How many of those mobile base stations are affected by this decision?**

- All mobile base stations built under the first four rounds of the Federal Government's Mobile Black Spot Program have 3G and 4G coverage. The 4G network will continue to operate in these areas, even after we have closed the 3G network. We stopped including 3G in our MBSP proposals from Round 5 onwards given our 2019 announcement to exit this technology.

**22. Is almost 5 years long enough for people to make the transition?**

- It is common for customers to upgrade their equipment every few years. We made a public announcement in October 2019 that we'd be closing our 3G service. We have been, and will be, there to help customers and ensure the transition is as seamless as possible.
- We are seeing a consistent, steady decline in the number of people using our 3G network. We launched our 4G service in 2011 and customers have progressively upgraded their devices to make use of the increased speeds and services available on this network. In May 2019 we also launched our 5G network which now covers more than 89 per cent of Australia's population.

**23. Are any other Australian telcos closing their 3G network?**

- Yes, Vodafone closed in December 2023 and Optus will all begin closing their from 28 October 2024. For more details check in with the relevant carrier.

**24. Is there anywhere else in the world where mobile operators are closing their 3G network?**

- Yes, a number of other mobile network operators have announced intentions to close, or have already closed, their 3G networks. This includes operators such as AT&T and Verizon in North America and, British Telecom in the UK.

**25. What is the expected lifespan for Telstra's 4G network?**

- We continue to deploy new 4G coverage and do not have a closure date for our 4G network. LTE-M and NB-IoT have been adopted into the 5G family of technologies. This allows our customers to embrace LTE-M and NB-IoT with confidence in the technology's long-term future.

**26. What about your Business or Enterprise customers who have multiple 3G devices?**

- We have been talking to our Business and Enterprise customers about the steps they need to take to migrate to 4G since we announced 3G was closing. If you are a Business or Enterprise customer, we can work with you to show you which of your Telstra services use 3G, and in some cases we're even able to see when and where those services last connected to 3G.

- For IoT devices, we won't be able to advise exactly what the device is, or what it's being used for, but in most cases we will be able to advise the module, make and model and service number associated with the device.

**27. How will Telstra help me with the transition or device replacement?**

- If you are using a 3G device and need help transitioning or finding a suitable replacement device, if you are a Personal customer, please don't hesitate to ask a team member at your local Telstra store, Telstra dealer or contact us and we'll be happy to help you. If you are a Small Business customer, please contact your Telstra Business and Technology Centre. If you are an Enterprise customer, please contact your Telstra representative.

**28. Do I need a new plan to use 4G/5G devices or other technologies?**

- No, if you change to a 4G or 5G device and intend to use it in the same way as your current device you should not need to change your plan.

**29. Will International Roaming be impacted as a result of the closure of Telstra's 3G network?**

- For Australians traveling overseas (Outbound Roaming) International Roaming will continue to operate as it does today, as long as your device is compatible with the roaming partner's network. For those travelling to Australia, you will need a device that is compatible with our 4G network.

- For those travelling into Australia, Some countries do not use the same version of 700MHz to deliver their 4G as Australia does, and as a result manufacturers may have not included this capability in such region-specific model which may result in visitors having intermittent coverage

**30. What is Telstra doing to provide equivalent 4G coverage?**

- Our team has identified areas of unique 3G coverage, which we have committed to uplift with 4G prior to our 3G network closure.

- Once an area of unique 3G coverage is identified, we design a suitable solution and proceed to build or upgrade of our mobiles sites.

- When we complete the build or upgrade of a site, we then undertake further network optimisation work to deliver optimal coverage.
- We verify all site upgrades and coverage via detailed network data checks. The checks assess the signal levels of the site and the predicted coverage footprint as displayed on our public coverage maps (Our Coverage & Rollout Maps - Telstra).
- If any checks highlight that we haven't achieved equivalent coverage we will resolve this prior to 3G closure, usually within a short period after being identified.

**31. How can I recycle my old devices, and reduce the amount of e-waste?**

- There are several options available to help you recycle old mobiles, chargers, and accessories.
- Drop them off at any Telstra store – just look for the "mobile muster" collection point.
- Use the mobile muster website to find your nearest collection point Recycle a mobile - MobileMuster.
- Mail your old device to mobile muster for recycling. Satchels are available from your local Australia Post office or JB Hi-Fi store.

**32. What spectrum does Telstra's 3G network use?**

- Telstra's 3G network operates on 850MHz spectrum.

**33. What spectrum does Telstra's 4G network use?**

- Telstra's 4G network mainly operates on 700MHz spectrum. We also use 1800MHz, 900MHz, 2100MHz and/or 2600MHz spectrum in some locations.

**34. What spectrum does Telstra's LTE-M and NB-IoT network use?**

- Telstra is currently using the 700MHz spectrum band for its LTE-M and NB-IoT network.

**35. What spectrum does Telstra's 5G network use?**

- Telstra 5G operated on 3.6GHz spectrum, supplemented with 850MHz and 26GHz mmWave in selected areas. By reallocating our 3G 850MHz spectrum to use it for our 5G network, we can provide 5G coverage to larger areas of regional Australia and better in-building coverage in metro areas. This is because 850MHz spectrum has better propagation characteristics, meaning it has better reach and penetrates further into buildings.

# IoT – Frequently asked questions.

**36. I have recently invested in 3G IoT devices, do I need to upgrade?**

- Yes, you will need to upgrade all 3G only IoT devices. If you need help transitioning or finding a suitable replacement device, please don't hesitate to ask a team member at your local Telstra store, Telstra dealer or contact us and we'll be happy to help you, or if you are an Enterprise customer by contacting your Telstra representative

**37. Will my 3G only IoT device work on Telstra's 4G network?**

- 3G only IoT devices will not work on Telstra's 4G network. This includes some IoT and network extension devices that operate on the 3G network only, such as some EFTPOS machines and 3G only antennas. We will work with customers and stakeholders around any concerns they have about changing devices or technology types to be ready for the change.
- Some customers may have brought their own (BYO) device to use on the Telstra mobile network or bought IoT devices from a third-party supplier. In these cases we'll do our best to provide people with information on 4G or LTE-M/NB-IoT mobile technology (where relevant) for IoT use cases.

**38. What specific 3G products/devices available today will not be easily upgradable to 4G/5G?**

- If a device is 3G only, the radio hardware is not upgradable to 4G. In most cases the radio hardware is embedded in the device and hence the whole device will need to be replaced with one that supports 4G, 5G or LPWAN.
- Most typical IoT use cases (devices) have a 4G LTE or LPWAN migration solution available now.
- We are unable to comment on the timings for individual device manufacturers. We recommend you contact device manufacturers directly if you have questions about the availability of compatible replacement devices.