

**Senate Environment and Communications References Committee
Inquiry into the Triple Zero service outage**

Questions on notice – Australian Communications and Media Authority

Canberra hearing – 3 November 2025

Senator Henderson:

1. Copy of information received from Optus in response to s521 notices.
2. Copy of all other correspondence, messages and briefing notes in relation to the outage between ACMA and Optus.
3. “Senator HENDERSON: What seems to have happened is that the threshold has now been raised so much higher that a limited outage which affects only triple 0 calls and not all calls would not be captured by the notification requirements under your regulations. You are the regulator, so doesn't it concern you that maybe you have presided over changes in the rules which mean that carriers have fewer obligations to notify you and the department and emergency services?

Ms O'Loughlin: We would need to look at the detail of that with the different parameters that Ms Rainsford has pointed out. I'm happy to take that on notice.”

Senator Hanson-Young

4. Provide information on how ACMA is improving its internal processes.
5. Provide information on changed Standard Operating Procedures around the internal processes.

Answer:

1. The ACMA is concerned that the disclosure of information received in response to statutory information gathering notices issued, or correspondence otherwise exchanged, as part of an open investigation might reasonably be expected to prejudice the current investigation into a possible breach of the law. The ACMA confirms that Optus entities have responded to those notices and the information provided is being analysed as part of our ongoing investigation.
2. See the response to question 1. See attachments A to F for correspondence where disclosure would not be expected to prejudice the current investigation.

Attachment A: 3 emails from Optus 18 September 2025

Attachment B: ACMA internal email

Attachment C: Optus email to ACMA 20 September 2025

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Attachment D: Optus email to ACMA 22 September 2025

Attachment E: Optus email to ACMA 25 September 2025

Attachment F: ACMA letter to Optus 25 September 2025

3. Recommendation 10 of the *Review into the Optus Outage of 8 November 2023* recommended that the ACMA make a standard or determination to require carriers to communicate specific information to customers during and about outages. The then Minister for Communications directed the ACMA to make an industry standard.

The *Telecommunications (Customer Communications for Outages) Industry Standard 2024* (the Standard) was made on 12 November 2024. It introduced the concept of reporting against Major Outages (notification requirements commenced on 31 December 2024). The ACMA made further rules for reporting notifications against Significant Local Outages on 24 April 2024, with the notification requirements commencing on 30 June 2025.

A major outage is when there is an unplanned adverse impact to a telco network supplying carriage services to end-users, which:

- results in an end-user being unable to establish and maintain a carriage service; and
- affects, or is likely to affect:
 - 100,000 or more services in operation; or
 - all carriage services supplied using the network in a state or territory; and
- is expected to be, or is, longer than 60 minutes.

A significant local outage is when there is an unplanned adverse impact to a telco network supplying carriage services to end-users, which:

- results in an end-user being unable to establish and maintain a relevant carriage service; and
- is not a major outage; and
- affects or is likely to affect:
 - 250 or more services in operation in remote Australia that is expected to last for 3 or more hours
 - 1,000 or more services in operation in regional Australia that is expected to last for 6 or more hours.

Recommendation 5 of the *Review into the Optus Outage of 8 November 2023* recommended that the ACMA make rules to require carriers to provide notifications about outages to emergency service organisations. From 1 November 2025, amendments to the *Telecommunications (Emergency Call Service) Determination 2019* (the Determination) require carriers to notify emergency service organisations (police, fire,

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ambulance) in the state or territory impacted by a Major Outage or Significant Local outage that may be impacting emergency calls.

Together the Standard and Determination have significantly increased the amount of information being provided to government agencies (the ACMA; Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts (the Department); National Emergency Management Agency; Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman; Emergency Call Persons (Telstra for 000/112, Concentrix for 106)), state and territory operated emergency service organisations, and the public and consumers.

The Standard requires carriage service providers to notify customers impacted by a Major Outage or Significant Local Outage on their website, and through methods directly to customers including in apps, email or SMS. Therefore, more information is being provided to consumers and the public than ever before.

4. The ACMA has amended its internal processes to adjust to the volume of reporting being received and the reporting requirements that have come into effect. The notification requirements that commenced on 30 June 2025 for Significant Local Outages have resulted in a high volume of data being provided, and processes have been established to record the data, and analyse it for compliance issues.

The ACMA has also reviewed processes for escalation of outage information when deemed necessary.

Since 31 October 2025, the Triple Zero Custodian has been formally established following the passage of relevant legislation in the Department. Its legislated functions include aiding preparation for, response to or recovery from an emergency call service outage event, and overseeing the effective functioning of the emergency call services and the proper functioning of emergency call service matters. This complements the ACMA's regulatory role, which focusses on assessing compliance after the fact.

5. Standard operating procedures (SOP) are regularly reviewed and updated. The SOP was reviewed following the 18 September Optus outage to include more information on escalation of outage notifications. The most recent change was introduced on 31 October 2025, to reflect the establishment of the Triple Zero Custodian role.

The ACMA expects to further update its internal processes and SOPs, including those about outage notifications, when further information is available about how the Custodian intends to discharge its functions.

From: [REDACTED]
To: [# IMO Triple Zero Support](#); emergencycontact@relayservice.com.au; [OB Network SD](#); [Emergency Contact](#); MOTripleZeroSupport@team.telstra.com
Cc: [Wholesale Service Desk](#); [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [Regulatory](#); [REDACTED]; [Service Assurance Managers](#); [Network Assurance ? Leadership Team](#); [Emergency Call Services](#); [REDACTED]; [000 Welfare Check Response Team](#); [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Significant Network Outage Affecting 000 Emergency Calls - Open/Resolve notification
Date: Thursday, 18 September 2025 3:27:47 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

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Team,

Correction to the date:

Incident number IM1919357 commenced at 00:40 AEST and resolve at 14:34 AEST on **18/09/2025**

Thanks,

[REDACTED]
Principal Major Incident Management | Operations
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]@optus.com.au
Sent: Thursday, 18 September 2025 3:26 PM
To: [# IMO Triple Zero Support](#) <imotriplezerosupport@team.telstra.com>; emergencycontact@relayservice.com.au; [OB Network SD](#) <OBNetworkSD@optus.com.au>; [Emergency Contact](mailto:EmergencyContact@relayservice.com.au) <emergencycontact@relayservice.com.au>; MOTripleZeroSupport@team.telstra.com
Cc: [Wholesale Service Desk](#) <Wholesale.SD@optus.com.au>; [REDACTED]@optus.com.au; [REDACTED]@optus.com.au; [REDACTED]@optus.com.au; [REDACTED]@optus.com.au; [Regulatory](#) <Regulatory@optus.com.au>; [REDACTED]@optus.com.au; [Service Assurance Managers](#) <ServiceAssuranceManagers@optus.com.au>; [Network Assurance ? Leadership Team](#) <NetworkAssuranceLeadershipTeam@optus.com.au>; EmergencyCallServices@acma.gov.au; [REDACTED]@optus.com.au; [000 Welfare Check Response Team](#) <000WelfareCheckResponseTeam@optus.com.au>; [REDACTED]@optus.com.au; [REDACTED]@optus.com.au; [REDACTED]@optus.com.au; [REDACTED]@optus.com.au; [REDACTED]@optus.com.au
Subject: RE: Significant Network Outage Affecting 000 Emergency Calls - Open/Resolve notification

+ IMOTripleZeroSupport@team.telstra.com

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 18 September 2025 3:17 PM
To: MOTripleZeroSupport@team.telstra.com; emergencycontact@relayservice.com.au; OB Network SD <OBNetworkSD@optus.com.au>; Emergency Contact <emergencycontact@relayservice.com.au>; MOTripleZeroSupport@team.telstra.com
Cc: Wholesale Service Desk <Wholesale.SD@optus.com.au>; [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@optus.com.au](mailto:[REDACTED]@optus.com.au)>; [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@optus.com.au](mailto:[REDACTED]@optus.com.au)>; [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@optus.com.au](mailto:[REDACTED]@optus.com.au)>; [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@optus.com.au](mailto:[REDACTED]@optus.com.au)>; Regulatory <Regulatory@optus.com.au>; [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@optus.com.au](mailto:[REDACTED]@optus.com.au)>; Service Assurance Managers <ServiceAssuranceManagers@optus.com.au>; Network Assurance ? Leadership Team <NetworkAssuranceLeadershipTeam@optus.com.au>; EmergencyCallServices@acma.gov.au; [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@optus.com.au](mailto:[REDACTED]@optus.com.au)>; 000 Welfare Check Response Team <000WelfareCheckResponseTeam@optus.com.au>; [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@optus.com.au](mailto:[REDACTED]@optus.com.au)>; [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@optus.com.au](mailto:[REDACTED]@optus.com.au)>; [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@optus.com.au](mailto:[REDACTED]@optus.com.au)>; [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@optus.com.au](mailto:[REDACTED]@optus.com.au)>; [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@optus.com.au](mailto:[REDACTED]@optus.com.au)>; [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@optus.com.au](mailto:[REDACTED]@optus.com.au)>
Subject: Significant Network Outage Affecting 000 Emergency Calls - Open/Resolve notification

Optus advises that it has become aware of a Significant Network Outage that adversely affects the carriage of emergency calls over the Optus network before handover to the Emergency Call Person. This notification is in accordance with Section 27 of the Telecommunications (Emergency Call Service) Determination 2019 ("Determination") This incident has now been resolved.

Incident number IM1919357 commenced at 00:40 AEST and resolve at 14:34 AEST on 19/09/2025

Mobile users unable to dial Emergency calls from South Australia, Western Australia, and Northern Territory.

Thanks,

[REDACTED]
Principal Major Incident Management | Operations

[REDACTED]
1 Lyonpark Road, Macquarie Park NSW 2113 Australia

[REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@optus.com.au](mailto:[REDACTED]@optus.com.au)>

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 18 September 2025 2:52 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Optus Triple Zero call issues today [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Hi [REDACTED], no action required, just keeping you informed, Optus just called and around 10 Triple Zero calls from WA and SA may have failed since an upgrade was implemented at 3am last night. The problem has only impacted fixed-line calls, so the volumes are low. Optus has rolled back the upgrade that caused the outage and is undertaking welfare checks now. I would not be surprised if the volume of calls is higher than 10, and raised this with Optus, but that is the information they currently have (and the problems have only just been noticed this afternoon).

[REDACTED]
Manager National Interests

[REDACTED]

OFFICIAL

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Adam Suckling](#)
Subject: Optus Updates - Fourth fatality and Media Conference statement
Date: Saturday, 20 September 2025 5:44:55 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.gif](#)
[image003.gif](#)
[image004.png](#)

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Dear Adam

I wanted to provide you with the below detail regarding the sad news of a fourth fatality, from WA – along with Stephen’s media statement for your records: [20 September 2025 CEO Stephen Rue Update](#)

My mobile number is [REDACTED] if you wish to discuss, call me at anytime.

Thanks

[REDACTED]

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Fourth Fatality

We are saddened to learn of a new fatality in Western Australia which appears to have occurred during the outage period, and we have been advised by WA Police that they believe the individual likely attempted to contact triple zero for assistance. We will continue to work with WA Police and other agencies to understand more of what has occurred.

CEO Stephen Rue said:

“I am deeply saddened by this further news and extend my heartfelt condolences to the person’s family and friends.

As stated earlier today I have asked for a full review into the circumstances relating to the failed network upgrade and impact on the triple zero network. I will also be working with my Board and executive team to enable a full independent review of the entire incident including all the impacts and related information. This includes working closely with relevant agencies to establish the full facts.”

[REDACTED]
Head of Government and Regulatory Affairs
[REDACTED]

1 Lyonpark Road, Macquarie Park, NSW 2113 Australia

 [@optus.com.au](mailto: @optus.com.au)

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From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Optus Media Statement - 22 September
Date: Monday, 22 September 2025 3:44:31 PM
Attachments: [kathleen.siller](#) [Adam.Suckling](#)
[image001.png](#)
[image002.gif](#)
[image003.gif](#)
[image004.png](#)

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Please see below media statement which will go live on our website shortly - Thanks

MEDIA UPDATE:

In reviewing our call logs of customers who could not contact triple zero on Thursday, we have identified an additional seven customers.

Our investigations have revealed there was a period from 12.17am to 12.30am, as the upgrade was being readied for deployment, during which the ability of these customers to get through to emergency services was affected.

We have completed welfare checks and can confirm that three of the households have confirmed they require no further assistance. Two customers have been referred to SA Police and two to WA Police as we have been unable to make contact. This is in line with standard welfare check protocol.

[REDACTED]
Head of Government and Regulatory Affairs

[REDACTED]
1 Lyonpark Road, Macquarie Park, NSW 2113 Australia
[REDACTED]

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Australian
Communications
and Media Authority

Chair and Agency Head

Mr Stephen Rue
Chief Executive Officer
Singtel Optus Pty Limited
Building C, Level 4
1-7 Lyonpark Road
Macquarie Park NSW 2113

ACMA file reference ACMA2025/1113

Dear Mr Rue

Optus 18 September 2025 emergency call service outage

As I have previously advised, the Australian Communications and Media Authority (**the ACMA**) has commenced an investigation into the entities in the Optus Group listed at **Attachment A** under paragraphs 510(1)(a), (aa), and (c) of the *Telecommunications Act 1997* (**the Act**) in relation to the Optus outage to emergency call services of 18 September 2025.

The ACMA will investigate the entities at Attachment A for compliance with:

- > the obligations on carriers and CSPs set out in Part 2 of the *Telecommunications (Emergency Call Service) Determination 2019* (**the Determination**)
- > the notification, communication and assistance requirements set out in Part 2 of the *Telecommunications (Customer Communications for Outages) Industry Standard 2024*
- > subsection 148(1) of the *Telecommunications (Consumer Protection and Service Standards) Act 1999* (**TCPSS Act**) which requires carriers and CSPs to comply with the Determination and section 128 of the Act which requires participants in a section of the telecommunications industry to comply with industry standards
- > sections 68 and 101 of the Act which require carriers and CSPs to comply with carrier licence conditions and service provider rules (compliance with the Act and TCPSS Act is a carrier licence condition and service provider rule)
- > the C536:2020 Emergency Call Service Requirements Industry Code.

The ACMA proposes to shortly give a notice under section 521 of the Act to each of the entities at Attachment A to obtain information and documents relevant to this investigation.

I request that Optus retain all relevant records pertaining to the outage, including but not limited to network logs, to inform our investigation.

The ACMA contact for this matter is Elizabeth Quinn, A/g General Manager, Consumer Division on

Yours sincerely

Nerida O'Loughlin PSM
25 September 2025

Encl: Attachment A: initial Optus entities being investigated

Attachment A: Optus entities being investigated

- > Optus Mobile Pty Limited ACN 054 365 696
- > Optus Networks Pty Limited ACN 008 570 330
- > Optus Internet Pty Limited ACN 083 164 532
- > Optus Mobile Migrations Pty Limited ACN 092 726 442
- > Optus ADSL Pty Limited ACN 138 676 356
- > Optus Fixed Infrastructure Pty Limited ACN 092 450 783
- > Optus Wholesale Pty Limited ACN 092 227 551

[REDACTED]

From: Adam Suckling
Sent: Thursday, 25 September 2025 9:49 PM
To: Elizabeth Quinn
Cc: Cathy Rainsford
Subject: FW: Response to ACMA re query on 112 and 106 performance in incident [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Fyi Liz

my <[REDACTED]@optus.com.au>
Sent: Thursday, 25 September 2025 6:29 PM
To: Adam Suckling
Cc: [REDACTED]@optus.com.au; [REDACTED]@optus.com.au; [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]@optus.com.au
Subject: Response to ACMA re query on 112 and 106 performance in incident

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Hi Adam

Following our discussion last night and your request, we have sought clarity on how the Triple Zero incident impacted 112 and 106 numbers.

I have been advised that 112 followed the same path as 000 (i.e. both impacted in the same way).

Review has found that 106 was **not** impacted and did **not** react the same way as 000 or 112 did. I.e. 106 was operational and worked as intended.

This is because only registered TTY devices via fixed lines can access 106 (this has been confirmed by the Operations Manager of the National Relay Service who are the ECP for 106).

Thanks

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Head of Government and Regulatory Affairs

[REDACTED]
1 Lyonpark Road, Macquarie Park, NSW 2113 Australia
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