

Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications
Answers to Senate Estimates Questions on Notice
Additional Estimates Spill-over hearing March 2017
Communications Portfolio
Department of Communications and the Arts

Question No: 302

Program 1.1

Hansard Ref: Page 49, 24/03/2017

Topic: MBSP – Round 3 base stations – Labor electorates

Senator Urquhart, Anne asked:

Senator URQUHART: The Mobile Black Spot Program was a 2013 federal election commitment, wasn't it, Minister? Is that correct?

Mr Patterson: Round 1 was.

Senator Fifield: Round 3.

Senator URQUHART: Yes, round 3. How many of the 499 base stations awarded funding from round 1 of the Mobile Black Spot Program have been switched on, as of today?

Senator Fifield: It is 100-plus.

Mr Patterson: As of a week ago, it was 124. We are rolling out between two and five per week. To get a number for today, I would have to take that on notice, but we would be getting close to 130 today, I would expect.

Senator URQUHART: Given that a number of them were electorate commitments, does that mean that Labor electorates will not get any in round 3?

Mr Patterson: My understanding is there were election commitments that do relate to Labor electorates, but I do not have that information with me.

Senator URQUHART: Do you know which ones?

Mr Patterson: It will be clear from the list, but I do not have that information in front of me.

Senator URQUHART: You can provide that?

Mr Patterson: Yes. You will get the list by location, but I think we could run it by electorate as well. That should be possible. There is the crossbench as well. Mr Robinson just reminded me that it is not just Labor and coalition; there is also the crossbench.

Answer:

As at 10 April 2017, 133 mobile base stations funded under round 1 of the Mobile Black Spot Program were operational (116 Telstra and 17 Vodafone).

The list of election commitment locations is available on the Department of Communications and the Arts' website at www.communications.gov.au/mobile_coverage.